

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

Summary record of the second plenary session

14 March 2010: 09h15-12h30

Chair: Dr Faleh Al-Thani (Qatar)
Secretariat: W. Wijnstekers
J. Barzdo
Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell
C. Lippai
C. McLardy
T. Inskipp

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The Secretariat presented document CoP15 Doc. 1 (Rev. 1) for adoption. Botswana requested clarification on whether proposal CoP15 Prop. 6 was consistent with Article XV of the Convention. The Secretary-General doubted the relevance of this issue to the adoption of the agenda, but considered that proposal CoP15 Prop. 6 had been submitted in accordance with the Convention, even if not in accordance with Article XV. The agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of the working programme

The Secretariat presented document CoP15 Doc. 2 (Rev. 2) for adoption. The United States of America noted the opportunities for collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) that CoP15 presented. They proposed that paragraph 25 of document CoP15 Doc. 10.2 be referred to Committee I for discussion. With this amendment, the working programme was adopted.

3. Rules of Procedure

Noting the limited space in the room allocated to Committee II, the Secretariat presented document CoP15 Doc. 3 that suggested that Rule 11 of paragraphs 2 and 4 of the Rules of Procedure be waived. This was agreed.

4. Credentials Committee

The Secretary-General announced that nominations for the Credentials Committee had been received from Canada, Guyana, India and Israel. Kuwait asked to participate in the Credentials Committee. All nominations including Kuwait were accepted.

5. Admission of observers

The Secretariat sought formal acceptance of the observers listed in document CoP15 Doc. 5. This was agreed.

7. Committee reports

7.1 Standing Committee

The Secretariat announced that the Chair of the Standing Committee had not submitted a report and that he would not be able to attend the meeting.

7.2 Animals Committee

7.2.1 Report of the Chair of the Animals Committee

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document CoP15 Doc. 7.2.1. He noted that the Animals Committee had met twice since CoP14, with both meetings being held in Geneva. He felt that this was an opportunity missed to raise awareness of CITES in another region, and encouraged Parties to offer to host future meetings. He confirmed that all the tasks allocated to the Committee at CoP14 had been fulfilled, and noted that it was important to provide funding for the Chair's activities and the Periodic Review of the Appendices.

He highlighted that the Committee had concluded that the fundamental question to address in the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade was the contribution the process made to the application of Article IV of the Convention. He also suggested that the Conference may wish to consider the effectiveness of the Periodic Review. He noted that adoption of his report would also include the recommendation in paragraph 38 regarding the prolongation of Decision 13.93 until CoP16.

Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, thanked the members of the Animals Committee on their constructive efforts since CoP14 and noted their general support for the Committee's recommendations. They underscored the positive work on species considered under the Review of Significant Trade, including *Mantella* spp., *Tursiops aduncus* and *Huso huso*, in addition to sea cucumbers. They also supported the collaborative efforts that had taken place with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on several issues, and supported the request for additional funds to be made available for the Periodic Review.

Regarding the draft decision contained in the Secretariat's comments in the document, they supported this in principle but proposed an amended text suggesting that the Rules of the Animals and Plants Committees should include a provision regarding conflict of interest in line with those used for other organizations.

The representative of New Zealand, as the Animals Committee member for Oceania, supported by Egypt, the United States, Humane Society International and TRAFFIC acknowledged the achievements of the Animals Committee Chair since his appointment and wished him well for his retirement.

Mexico agreed with the recommendation regarding funding and suggested that the recommendation in paragraph 38 should be discussed under agenda item 19. They also expressed disappointment with the draft decision concerning conflicts of interest proposed by the Secretariat and reiterated that the Plants and Animals Committees had already rejected the proposal. Iceland noted that the draft decision was more aligned to codes of conduct than rules of procedure. Japan considered that the justification for the draft decision was unclear. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supported the draft decision but felt that it should be the Animals and Plants Committees that established their own Rules. New Zealand supported the draft decision on the basis that it protected the representatives of these Committees, and also supported the amendment proposed by the European Union. The Committee Chair confirmed that the draft decision was not supported by his Committee. He explained that each representative served in a personal scientific capacity and was a regional representative, and many issues could touch on these roles.

The Secretary-General explained that it was the Secretariat's opinion that the draft decision was necessary for reasons of transparency where conflicts of interest may occur within the Committees and to ensure representatives were impartial and independent. He reiterated that the integrity of representatives was not under question. He supported the suggested amendment proposed by Spain on behalf of the European Union. China supported by Japan, New Zealand and the United States proposed that the matter should be referred to the Standing Committee, which should report at CoP16.

Egypt suggested that, in future, the Chair's report could include species common names alongside the scientific names and expressed their support for the continuation of the Periodic Review. They also drew attention to the important work on sea cucumbers and offered to present a report on the degradation of fisheries in the Red Sea. China highlighted the useful case studies on sea cucumbers that had been presented to working groups. TRAFFIC, supported by the Humane Society International, congratulated the Animals Committee on the detailed work undertaken on sea cucumbers and the positive collaboration with the FAO, and highlighted the need for these efforts to continue. They further stressed the necessity for capacity building in Madagascar to support non-detriment findings.

The Islamic Republic of Iran elaborated on the implementation of effective conservation and management strategies for sustainable use of sturgeon stock in the Caspian Sea, including the development of a National Action Plan, and said that they abided by all CITES rules and regulations in this regard and therefore any type of restriction on catch, exploitation and trade for sturgeon species should not be imposed upon them.

The Secretary-General noted that there were two decisions to be taken. Firstly, to refer the recommendation in paragraph 38 of the document to Committee II to be discussed under Agenda item 19. Secondly, that the issue raised by the Secretariat referring to conflicts of interest be referred to the Standing Committee for reporting to CoP16. These were both agreed and document CoP15 Doc. 7.2.1 was noted.

7.3 Report of the Chair of the Plants Committee

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document CoP15 Doc. 7.3.1 (Rev. 1), which had been prepared in consultation with the Plants Committee and the CITES Secretariat, and drew attention to the results achieved with respect to a number of Decisions and Resolutions, many of which would be dealt with in the discussions of other relevant CoP15 documents. She highlighted certain aspects of the report including Reviews of Significant Trade, concerns regarding medicinal plants, the Periodic Review of Appendices I and II, cooperation with other multilateral instruments, timber issues, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. She concurred with the Animals Committee Chair regarding financial support for the work of the Chairs of the scientific committees, particularly in the event that Chairs were from developing countries. She thanked the members of the Committee as well as the Secretariat and other supporting organizations and individuals.

Egypt referred to a report on medicinal plants in Egypt, produced by the Global Environment Facility, which summarized the progress on a project to protect local populations of species. They welcomed the coordinated initiatives with regard to biodiversity indicators and the 2010 targets to reduce biodiversity loss.

Namibia noted that their report on the listing status of *Welwitschia*, referred to in paragraph 13 of document CoP15 Doc. 7.3.1 (Rev. 1), would be presented later in the meeting.

India stated that *Taxus wallichiana*, *Pterocarpus santalinus* and *Rauvolfia serpentina* were banned from export in their country and were, therefore, not relevant in the context of the Review of Significant Trade.

Spain, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union, noted that they supported the recommendations of the Committee, and referred to successes in relation to various issues, including the review of the listings, the Review of Significant Trade, and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. They drew attention to the accomplishments of the Committee in relation to non-detriment findings for timber species and other taxa subject to trade.

The report was noted.

10 Cooperation with other organizations

10.2 Cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 10.2, summarizing the main points and adding that a newly-adopted port State measures treaty would be presented as an information document at the present meeting.

The representative of FAO agreed with the report. He referred to an update of the technical guidelines for the sustainable management of sea cucumber fisheries, which was available at the present meeting or could be downloaded from the FAO website. In addition, identification guides to sea cucumbers and humphead wrasse would be published shortly. FAO would review the impact of CITES listing on currently listed shark species. Work on Caspian sturgeon species had come to an end, but FAO was willing to participate if it were to be renewed. They also referred to the need to examine the issues relating to look-alike aquatic species, including the absence of criteria for listing such species in the CITES Appendices. Other aspects being dealt with by FAO included the International Plan of Action for sharks, high sea species, and the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

China proposed the adoption of a draft decision, directed to the Standing Committee as follows: "the Standing Committee should analyse the current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CITES and FAO, determine the cooperative scheme between CITES and FAO on forestry issues and ensure that future cooperation between FAO and CITES is carried out under the framework of the MoU."¹

Switzerland questioned whether the Rules of Procedure allowed for the adoption of their draft decision if it was not circulated in writing in advance. The Secretary-General stated that this was possible in accordance with Rule 25.1.

Malaysia said that they did not support the conclusion in paragraph 27 of document CoP15 Doc. 10.2 regarding UN-REDD as they considered that the limited resources available to the Secretariat ought to be restricted to the core responsibilities of the Convention.

The representative of TRAFFIC said that they were hopeful that the collaboration between the Secretariat and the FAO would be reflected in discussions on fisheries and bushmeat trade at this meeting.

10.3 CCAMLR: report on toothfish

No document on this agenda item had been received and no relevant person was present at the meeting.

10.5 Statements from representatives of other conventions and agreements

The representative of UNEP, on behalf of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), said that, as a global biodiversity-related convention focusing on species, CMS would like to reinforce its already positive cooperation with the CITES Secretariat as illegal trade was often one of the key threats to species survival. She highlighted the joint work programme with the CITES Secretariat on conservation and sustainable use of species, as well as collaboration on enforcement, livelihoods, harmonization of species nomenclature and cooperation on administrative and fundraising activities. She gave several examples of alignment of conventions including a new MoU for the conservation of migratory sharks, an instrument for the conservation of West African elephants and a plan to develop a similar instrument for elephants in Central Africa, as well as proposed collaboration on achieving conservation goals for the saiga antelope and gorillas through efforts to combat illegal trade in these species.

Thailand, in connection with the Global Tiger Initiative, said that, in recognition of the urgency to combat illegal trade, the Royal Thai Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment had launched an initiative to train enforcement personnel and raise awareness of illicit trade with a view to reducing demand for products, particularly tiger parts and ivory products. They said that, as a result of training workshops, staff awareness and skills had been enhanced and collaboration between the Customs and police agencies had resulted in recent seizures of illegal ivory. They informed the Parties that legislative text dating from 1992 was being revised to protect wild species and that they were redoubling their efforts to protect elephants against ivory trade. Efforts were being made to increase public awareness of the new legal text and they were encouraging collaboration with NGOs and the private sector.

The representative from the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) noted the collaboration with CITES on timber issues and thanked the European Union and the United States for their financial

¹ Note from the Secretariat: this draft decision was recorded in document CoP15 Plen. Doc. 2 and distributed during the meeting.

support to this project. He listed specific inputs on species distribution and forest inventories, guidelines and case-studies for non-detriment findings and providing advice on proposals to list timber species in the Appendices, and said that the collaborative project played an important role in implementing the recommendations of the Plants Committee on Appendix-II timber species, such as mahogany, ramin and afrormosia. He concluded by saying that ITTO was working with the World Customs Organization (WCO) to improve efforts to combat illegal trade in timber.

The Secretariat read a statement provided by the WCO Secretary-General that reminded delegates that Customs administrations played active roles in enforcing CITES at national boundaries. It noted that a global one-day intensive CITES control in 2009 had resulted in seizures of 4,630 specimens of over 80 species of wildlife, including 23 tonnes of ivory. Additional notable achievements included: a harmonized system that enabled Customs officers to identify and monitor CITES-listed species; the creation of a database of global seizure records and analysis of the data to determine trends in illicit trade; and capacity-building initiatives at the regional level that had resulted in an empowered Customs community. It concluded by renewing the WCO's commitment to collaborate with CITES.

11. Cooperation with international financial institutions

It was agreed that this agenda item would be considered by Committee II.

Other business

The Secretary-General's 2010 Certificate for Commendation was awarded to Hai Phong Customs of Viet Nam in recognition of the exemplary enforcement work carried out by Viet Nam under less-than-ideal working conditions. The head of delegation of Viet Nam accepted the award on behalf of Hai Phong Customs.

After some announcements from the Secretariat, the session was closed at 12h30.