

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



Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

Strategic matters

CITES STRATEGIC VISION

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 13.1, which extended the validity of the *Strategic Vision through 2005*, and its associated Action Plan, until the end of 2007.
3. At its 14th meeting (The Hague, 2007), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 14.2 on the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013*.
4. At its 15th meeting (Doha, 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 15.10 on *Post-2010 biodiversity targets*, where it directed the Standing Committee to "review the adopted post-2010 biodiversity targets and, if necessary, make adjustments to the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013* as appropriate."

Adjustment of the Strategic Vision

5. At the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC61, Geneva, August 2011), the Secretary-General introduced documents SC61 Doc. 14.1, on "Progress report on the implementation of the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013*", and SC61 Doc. 14.2, on "Planning for 2014-2016". In the discussion that followed, there was considerable support for extending the validity of the existing Strategic Vision to 2016, 2019 or 2020, with some adaptation to integrate indicators of the contribution of CITES to the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the implementation of the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
6. The Standing Committee established an intersessional working group on the Strategic Vision to report at its 62nd meeting (SC62, Geneva, July 2012) on:
  - a) whether to extend the validity of the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013* to 2016, 2019 or 2020; and
  - b) how to incorporate the Post-2010 Biodiversity Targets into the Strategic Vision.
7. The members of the Working Group were specified as follows: China, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, IWMC – World Conservation Trust, Species Survival Network and TRAFFIC. The Chair of the Standing Committee agreed to chair the Working Group, which worked through electronic means.
8. The Secretariat prepared a revised draft of the Strategic Vision, incorporating the Post-2010 Biodiversity Targets and taking into account the comments made at SC61, and distributed it to the Working Group on 4 November 2011.

9. The Secretariat then prepared a further revised draft of the Strategic Vision that took into account all of the comments received from the Working Group. It was circulated to the Working Group on 2 March 2012. There were no negative comments received and this further revised draft was presented at SC62 as an Annex to document SC62 Doc. 13.
10. At SC62, the Standing Committee reviewed the new draft, and requested the Secretariat to revise it on the basis of the interventions made during the discussion and to forward the resulting document for consideration at the present meeting.
11. The final draft Strategic Vision is attached as an Annex to the present document. All the proposed changes to the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013* are shown in "track changes", with proposed additions underlined and proposed deletions crossed out.

#### Recommendations

12. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:
  - a) adopt the revisions to the Strategic Vision shown in the Annex; and
  - b) extend the validity of the revised Strategic Vision to 2020.

CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-204320

**General introduction**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was concluded on 3 March 1973. It entered into force after ratification or accession by 10 States, on 1 July 1975.

Since then, the number of countries that have ratified, approved, accepted or acceded to the Convention has continued to increase. With ~~472~~176 Parties, CITES is widely regarded as one of the most important international conservation instruments. During this period, the Conference of the Parties has shown itself to be capable of adapting to changing circumstances and, through the adoption of Resolutions and Decisions, has demonstrated an ability to construct practical solutions to increasingly complex wildlife trade and conservation problems.

At its ninth meeting (Fort Lauderdale, 1994), the Conference of the Parties commissioned a review of the Convention's effectiveness. The principal purposes of the review were to evaluate the extent to which the Convention had achieved its objectives and the progress made since CITES came into being and, most importantly, to identify deficiencies and requirements necessary to strengthen the Convention and help plan for the future. At its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997), the Conference agreed to an Action Plan for implementing certain findings and recommendations of the review. A central finding was the need for a strategic plan and, at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000), the Conference of the Parties adopted the *Strategic Vision through 2005*, and an *Action Plan*.

At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 13.1, which extended the validity of the Strategic Vision and Action Plan until the end of 2007. It also established a procedure for developing a new Strategic Vision through 2013, particularly to contribute to the achievement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. The present document is the result of this process.

At its 16th meeting (Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 16.X, which extended the validity of the Strategic Vision and Action Plan to 2020 and included amendments to contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and to the relevant outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

With this new Strategic Vision, the Conference of the Parties to CITES outlines the Convention's direction in the new millennium and takes into account, within the context of its mandate, issues such as:

- contributing to the UN Millennium Development Goals relevant to CITES;
- ~~– contributing to the WSSD target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;~~
- ~~– contributing to the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the implementation of the *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to the extent that they are relevant to CITES;~~
- ~~– contributing to the implementation of the relevant outcomes of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (2012), including to promote the development of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;~~
- contributing to the conservation of wildlife as an integral part of the global ecosystem on which all life depends;
- cultural, social and economic factors at play in producer and consumer countries;
- promoting transparency and wider involvement of civil society in the development of conservation policies and practices; and

- ensuring that a coherent and internationally agreed approach based on scientific evidence is taken to address any species of wild fauna and flora subject to unsustainable international trade.

### **Purpose**

The twofold purpose of the Strategic Vision is:

- to improve the working of the Convention, so that international trade in wild fauna and flora is conducted at sustainable levels; and
- to ensure that CITES policy developments are mutually supportive of international environmental priorities and take into account new international initiatives, consistent with the terms of the Convention.

### **Structure**

In order to achieve this purpose, three broad goals, of equal priority, have been identified as the key components of the Strategic Vision:

- **Goal 1:** Ensure compliance with and implementation and enforcement of the Convention.
- **Goal 2:** Secure the necessary financial resources and means for the operation and implementation of the Convention.
- **Goal 3:** Contribute to significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss and to achieving relevant globally-agreed goals and targets by ensuring that CITES and other multilateral instruments and processes are coherent and mutually supportive.

The goals aim at consolidating the existing strengths of CITES, ensuring the implementation of the mandate of the Convention, and further improving the relationship with relevant multilateral environmental agreements and related conventions, agreements and associations.

Within the framework provided by each of these goals, this Strategic Vision identifies a number of objectives to be achieved. Corresponding indicators of progress are to be developed by the Standing Committee and reviewed by the Conference of the Parties.

This document provides a framework for the future development of the existing body of Resolutions and Decisions. While it should provide guidance on how the goals and objectives are to be achieved, the Conference of the Parties, the Committees or the Secretariat as appropriate will take required action. The document also serves the Parties as a tool for the prioritization of activities, and decisions on how best to fund them, in light of the need for the rational application of costs and the efficient and transparent use of resources.

It should be noted that all references to 'trade' in the Strategic Vision refer to trade as defined in Article I of the Convention.

## **CITES vision statement**

Conserve biodiversity and contribute to its sustainable use by ensuring that no species of wild fauna or flora becomes or remains subject to unsustainable exploitation through international trade, thereby contributing to the significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss and making a significant contribution towards achieving the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

## THE STRATEGIC GOALS

### GOAL 1 ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH AND IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CONVENTION

#### ***Introduction***

The effectiveness of the Convention depends upon its full implementation by all Parties, whether they are consumers or producers of wild animals and plants. Full implementation relies, in turn, upon each Party's:

- commitment to the Convention and its principles;
- scientific expertise and analyses;
- capacity building; and
- enforcement.

#### ***Commitment to the Convention and its principles***

The proper functioning of the Convention depends to a great extent on the commitment of Parties to comply with and implement the Convention and its principles.

- Objective 1.1** Parties comply with their obligations under the Convention through appropriate policies, legislation and procedures.
- Objective 1.2** Parties have in place administrative procedures that are transparent, practical, coherent and user-friendly, and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens.
- Objective 1.3** Implementation of the Convention at the national level is consistent with decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
- Objective 1.4** The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation needs of species.
- Objective 1.5** Best available scientific information is the basis for non-detriment findings.
- Objective 1.6** Parties cooperate in managing shared wildlife resources.
- Objective 1.7** Parties are enforcing the Convention to reduce illegal wildlife trade.
- Objective 1.8** Parties and the Secretariat have adequate capacity-building programmes in place.

### GOAL 2 SECURE THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MEANS FOR THE OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

- Objective 2.1** Financial resources are sufficient to ensure operation of the Convention.
- Objective 2.2** Sufficient resources are secured at the national/international levels to ensure compliance with and implementation and enforcement of the Convention.
- Objective 2.3** Sufficient resources are secured at the national/international levels to implement capacity-building programmes.

GOAL 3 CONTRIBUTE TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING THE RATE OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS AND TO ACHIEVING RELEVANT GLOBALLY-AGREED GOALS AND TARGETS BY ENSURING THAT CITES AND OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS AND PROCESSES ARE COHERENT AND MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE

**Objective 3.1** Cooperation between CITES and international financial mechanisms and other related institutions is enhanced in order to support CITES-related conservation and sustainable development projects, without diminishing funding for currently prioritized activities.

**Objective 3.2** Awareness of the role and purpose of CITES is increased globally.

**Objective 3.3** Cooperation with relevant international environmental, trade and development organizations is enhanced.

**Objective 3.4** The contribution of CITES to the relevant Millennium Development Goals and the sustainable development goals set at WSSD, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the relevant outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is strengthened by ensuring that international trade in wild fauna and flora is conducted at sustainable levels.

**Objective 3.5** Parties and the Secretariat cooperate with other relevant international organizations and agreements dealing with natural resources, as appropriate, in order to achieve a coherent and collaborative approach to species which can be endangered by unsustainable trade, including those which are commercially exploited.