

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

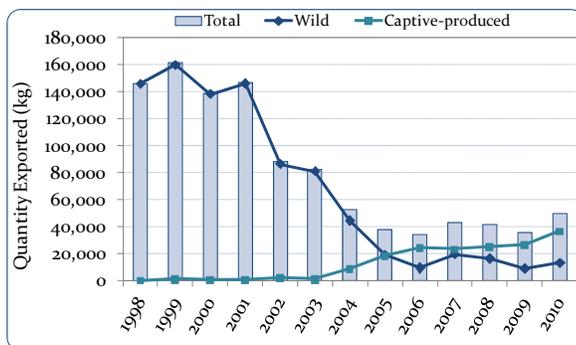
Sturgeons and paddlefish

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish* is based on the merger of two previous resolutions, one dealing with the *Conservation of sturgeons* [Resolution Conf. 10.12 (Rev.), first adopted at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 1997] and another on the *Universal labelling system for the identification of caviar* (Resolution Conf. 11.13, adopted at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2000).
3. The international trade in specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish, particularly caviar, has undergone significant changes during the last decade. As shown in the figure below, approximately 1,060 metric tons of caviar were exported globally between 1998, when all *Acipenseriformes* were listed in the CITES Appendices¹, and 2010. Wild-sourced exports decreased by 87 % from 145,500 kg in 1998 to 18,900 kg in 2005, and exports have remained below 20,000 kg per year since then. Trade in captive-produced caviar, however, has increased over this period, particularly from 2003 onwards, reaching over 35,000 kg in 2010. Notable quantities of meat and live sturgeons (eggs and fish) were also traded over this period, with 456,000 kg of meat, 3,738,000 live eggs and 117,172 live sturgeons recorded as exported in 2010. Trade in meat has shown a similar shift from wild to farmed sources since 1998, with captive-produced meat representing 96 % of exported meat in 2010 compared to 1 % in 1998.



Direct exports of caviar (kg), 1998-2010

Source: *CITES Trade: recent trends in international trade in Appendix II-listed species (1996-2010)*. UNEP-WCMC, 2012.

¹ Two additional species, *Acipenser brevirostrum* and *A. sturio*, are listed in Appendix I and not included here.

4. As a consequence of these substantial changes in trade patterns, certain provisions in the Resolution seem to reflect sturgeon fisheries and trade situations that may no longer correspond to the reality. For example, the shift to aquaculture and captive breeding of sturgeons has reduced the need for agreeing and establishing complex harvest and export quotas for specimens of wild origin. Indeed, range States of several important shared sturgeon stocks, particularly in the Eurasian region, either have banned or are discussing banning all commercial sturgeon catch. At the same time, incentives for the conservation and management of wild stocks are being lost, and the status of many wild populations of sturgeons remains of major concern because of illegal fishing, habitat degradation, pollution, impoundment of spawning rivers, destruction of breeding grounds, and diminishing biodiversity and preys.
5. The actions described in the first URGES in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14), directed to the range States of sturgeons and paddlefish, remain crucial for addressing the environmental challenges indicated above as well as for reducing illegal and unregulated sturgeon fishing. It should be noted that many of the recommendations in document CoP12 Doc. 42.1, which is referred to in paragraph e) of the Resolution, remain valid, particularly those concerning the protection of sturgeon habitats and the genetic integrity of stocks; the improvement of the management and monitoring of sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries and stocks; the regulation of sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries; enforcement; socio-economic considerations; and calls for enhanced collaboration with and technical support from FAO in these areas. The recommendations that were made by the Animals Committee and endorsed by the Standing Committee (see document SC61 Doc. 48.2) remain equally important for conserving and rebuilding sturgeon stocks for a sustainable fishery in the Caspian Sea. The Secretariat therefore proposes to incorporate a reference to these recommendations in the first URGES, paragraph e) as follows:

e) in the case of range States of sturgeons in the Eurasian region, take into account the recommendations in documents CoP12 Doc. 42.1 and SC61 Doc. 48.2 when developing regional conservation strategies and action plans;

Standing Committee amendment to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14)

6. Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) contains the following instruction in paragraph k), under the first RECOMMENDS:

the Secretariat shall submit a written progress report at each meeting of the Standing Committee on the operation of the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database.

7. At its 61st meeting (Geneva, August 2011), the Standing Committee agreed that the regular reporting by the Secretariat on this item was no longer necessary, even though there was also general agreement that input to, and use of, the database remained important. The Standing Committee agreed that the Secretariat should propose the deletion of the above recommendation from the text of the Resolution at the present meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Further amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14)

8. The Resolution contains a number of additional obligations and actions directed to the Secretariat, some of which may have become superfluous in view of the changed nature of the trade in specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish. An additional consideration is the decreasing capacity of the Secretariat to address such broad instructions. In this regard, the Standing Committee noted at its 62nd meeting (SC62, Geneva, July 2012) that the Secretariat would submit a document for consideration at the present meeting proposing a revision of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14).
9. At the 26th meeting of the Animals Committee (Geneva and Dublin, March 2012), the Secretariat drew attention to the comprehensive monitoring, evaluating and reporting obligations placed on the Committee in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14), noting that some aspects might have become redundant or impractical. However, the Animals Committee agreed to maintain all its existing obligations. Subsequently however, the Standing Committee expressed its regret that the Animals Committee had been unable to report in writing at SC62 on this topic and, thus, to fulfil these obligations.
10. The Resolution directs the Animals Committee, on a three-year cycle starting in 2008, to conduct “an evaluation of the assessment and the monitoring methodologies used for stocks of Acipenseriformes species subject to the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a)”. Since 2008, a review has been conducted of the shared stocks in the Caspian Sea, but not for the other stocks that fall into this category (Amur/Heilongjiang River, Azov Sea, North West Black Sea and Lower Danube River, and Saint

John River/Bay of Fundy). A further review of all these stocks is due by 2014, but because of lack of time and funding, it seems most unlikely that this will be accomplished. The Secretariat remains of the opinion that the tasks directed to the Animals Committee in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) would benefit from a thorough review, while instructions such as evaluations of scientific data or fishery management practices could be better articulated in the form of specific and time-bound decisions, taking into account the capacity and resources to conduct such evaluations, and involving the FAO.

Register of exporters of specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish, caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants

11. Paragraphs a) and b) under the first RECOMMENDS provide the following:

- a) *range States license legal exporters of specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species and maintain a register of such persons or companies and provide a copy of this register to the Secretariat. The register should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should distribute this information via a Notification to the Parties and include it in its register on the CITES website;*
- b) *each importing, exporting and re-exporting Party establish, where consistent with national law, a registration system for caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants in its territory and provide to the Secretariat the list of these facilities and their official registration codes. The list should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should distribute this information via a Notification to the Parties and include it in its register on the CITES website;*

12. The Secretariat currently maintains a register of exporters in range States of specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish, caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants. Owing to its stretched resources, however, it has stopped issuing Notifications to the Parties when changes or updates are communicated, which may happen on a monthly basis. Instead, new information is directly incorporated in the register that is available on the CITES website. Parties and the stakeholders concerned by the register seem satisfied with this way of handling and updating the information. To avoid further unnecessary administrative burdens, the Secretariat proposes to replace in paragraph b) "The Secretariat should distribute this information via a Notification to the Parties and include it in its register on the CITES website;" with "The Secretariat should include this information in its register on the CITES website;". The Secretariat proposes to delete paragraph a) (see hereunder), but if it were to be maintained, its last sentence could be amended in a similar way as to what is proposed for paragraph b).

13. The Secretariat notes that the registration requirements in paragraph b) are relevant to the universal labelling system for trade in and identification of caviar, outlined in Annexes 1 and 2 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14). They should therefore be maintained.

14. However, the purpose for range States to maintain and communicate a register of legal exporters of specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species, and for the Secretariat to keep this information in a register, as required under paragraph a), is less clear given that:

- a) Specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species are now being exported from range States, former range States and non-range States of Acipenseriformes. Paragraph b) does not apply to the growing number of exporters that operate outside of range States, and the information gathered through its implementation would offer at best a very patchy and increasingly distorted picture of exporters:
- b) The data seem to be requested for information purposes only, as there are no particular actions associated with it;
- c) The Secretariat is unable to monitor whether the information that is provided is current, complete or accurate, and no measures are foreseen in case range States stop providing this information; and
- d) While demanding upon range States and the Secretariat, the overall usefulness and rationale for having to submit this information and distribute potentially erroneous and incomplete data remain unclear in the Resolution.

The Secretariat therefore proposes the deletion of paragraph a).

UNEP-WCMC caviar database

15. The following is provided in paragraph i) under the first RECOMMENDS:

Parties supply to UNEP-WCMC directly or to the Secretariat copies of all export permits and re-export certificates issued to authorize trade in caviar, no longer than one month after they have been issued, for inclusion in the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database;

Current practice by Parties that comply with this provision routinely is to send directly to UNEP-WCMC their copies of export permits and re-export certificates issued to authorize trade in caviar. In recent years, it is only on very rare occasions that the Secretariat has received relevant documentation. The Secretariat therefore proposes to delete "directly or to the Secretariat" in this paragraph.

Catch and export quotas

16. The second RECOMMENDS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) contains detailed provisions for the establishment of catch and export quotas for caviar and meat of *Accipenseriformes* species from stocks shared between different range States. The provisions entered into effect in 2008. They do not apply to those range States where there is no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks. Quotas do not have to be established for specimens from stocks not shared with other countries, or for captive-breeding or aquaculture operations (quotas communicated for such specimens are voluntary quotas).
17. The shared stocks concerned by the recommendation are those of the Amur/Heilong River, Azov Sea, Caspian Sea, Northwest Black Sea and Lower Danube River, and Saint John River/Bay of Fundy. From 2008 to 2012, the Secretariat published zero quotas for all of these shared stocks in each year, with the exception of stocks from the Amur River in 2008, and from the Caspian Sea in 2008 and 2010. The zero quotas were published because the range States did not comply with or were not concerned by the provisions in the Resolution – typically because of fishing moratoria being put in place.
18. Parties wishing to export specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish under a quota regime are to adhere to the provisions of Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15) on *Management of nationally established export quotas*. As such, and in view of its limited practical application, the deletion of the second RECOMMENDS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) could be considered. In case of concerns about the levels of export of *Accipenseriformes* authorized by range States, Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species* can be applied, as was recently the case for *Huso huso*.
19. However, in case particular elements regarding the establishment of catch and export quotas for caviar and meat of *Accipenseriformes* species from stocks shared between different range States were to be maintained, the Secretariat would recommend to amend the provisions as follows:

RECOMMENDS² further, with regard to catch and export quotas, that:

- a) *Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of *Accipenseriformes* species from stocks shared between different range States unless export quotas have been set in accordance with the following procedure:*
- i) *taking into consideration the provisions and guidance in Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), range States have established export quotas for caviar and meat of *Accipenseriformes* species for that quota year, which from 2008 onwards starts on 1 March and ends on the last day of February of the following year;*
- ii) *the export quotas referred to in subparagraph i) have been derived from catch quotas that are based on an appropriate regional conservation strategy and monitoring regime for the species concerned and are not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild;*

² At CoP13 it was agreed that this recommendation would not apply to those range States where there is no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks. It was also agreed, however, that the Secretariat or any Party would bring to the attention of the Standing Committee or Conference of the Parties any significant changes in the harvest or export of sturgeon products from such stocks.

- ~~iii) the catch and export quotas referred to in subparagraphs i) and ii) should be agreed amongst all States that provide habitat for the same stock of an Acipenseriformes species. However, where a stock is shared by more than two States, and if one of these States refuses to participate or does not participate in the shared stock quota agreement meeting convened in accordance with the agreed decision of all these States, the total and country-specific quotas for the shared stock may be agreed by the remaining range States. This situation must be substantiated in writing by both sides to the Secretariat for information to the Parties. The State not having participated may only export caviar and meat from its allocated quotas after it has notified the Secretariat that it accepts them and the Secretariat has informed the Parties. If more than one range State refuses to participate or does not participate in the process mentioned above, the total and country-specific quotas for the shared stock cannot be established. In case of a stock shared by only two range States, the quotas must be agreed by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, they may call upon a mediator, including the CITES Secretariat, to facilitate the process. They shall have a zero quota until such time as they have reached consensus;~~
- ~~iv) range States have provided to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year, the export quota referred to in subparagraph i) as well as the scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas under subparagraphs ii) and iii);~~
- ~~iv) if the quotas have not been communicated to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year the deadline indicated in subparagraph iv) above, the relevant range States have a zero quota until such time as they communicate their quotas in writing to the Secretariat and the Secretariat in turn informs the Parties. The Secretariat should be informed by the range States of any delay and shall in turn inform the Parties; and~~
- ~~v) the Secretariat shall communicate the agreed quotas to the Parties on its website within one month of receipt of the information from the range States;~~
- ~~b) the Secretariat make all the information mentioned in subparagraph iv) available to Parties upon request; and~~
- ~~e) if a range State of a shared stock of a species of Acipenseriformes decides to reduce its quotas established in accordance with this Resolution under stricter domestic measures, this shall not affect the quotas of the other range States of this stock;~~

Reporting by the Secretariat to the Animals Committee

20. In compliance with the provision in the first DIRECTS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14), the Secretariat submitted written reports to the Animals Committee at its last four meetings (see documents AC23 Doc. 13.1 (Rev. 1), AC24 Doc. 12.1, AC25 Doc. 16.1 and AC26 Doc. 15.1). The reports covered the Secretariat's activities in the field of export quotas, regional collaboration, trade controls and enforcement. The reports were each time simply noted by the Animals Committee.
21. The reports convey that the Secretariat's activities concerning sturgeons and paddlefish have decreased. This principally reflects the rapid change in the nature of the trade in sturgeons and paddlefish, particularly the reduction of the level of trade in caviar, and the shift to aquaculture or captive breeding in an increasing number of countries. Illegal trade in caviar has also become less prominent. Virtually no catch or export quotas for specimens of wild origin were established in recent years, meaning that no relevant "scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas" have been submitted to the Secretariat. The Secretariat was therefore unable to include any "references to relevant documents" in its written reports to the Animals Committee. Finally, sturgeon range States have generally shown little interest in involving the Secretariat in regional collaboration or in their implementation of CITES-generated recommendations concerning sturgeons (despite repeated offers for financial support, for example from the United States of America in the case of Caspian Sea range States).
22. The Secretariat is of the opinion that its reports to the Animals Committee have become repetitive and of limited value to the Committee. They are adding a bureaucratic burden that, otherwise, brings no obvious benefit. Additionally, the Animals Committee can make use of more appropriate instruments to address sturgeon and paddlefish trade issues, such as the Review of Significant Trade in case of concern about the non-detrimental nature of trade in Appendix-II species of sturgeons and paddlefish.

23. Based on the points made in paragraphs 20 to 22 above, the Secretariat proposes to delete the first DIRECTS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14).

International collaboration and financial support

24. The fourth DIRECTS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) provides the following:

DIRECTS the Secretariat:

- a) *in collaboration with range States and international organizations from both industry and the conservation community, to assist with the development of a strategy including action plans for the conservation of Acipenseriformes; and*
 - b) *to provide assistance with securing financial resources from Parties, international organizations, United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and industry;*
25. The development and implementation of conservation and management strategies for *Acipenseriformes*, and particularly of joint stocks, can only be successfully accomplished if they are led by the range States of these species themselves. The range States should be calling upon external resources and expertise in support of their efforts. Recognizing that the Secretariat has limited capacity to contribute meaningfully to any of these activities, it proposes to replace the paragraphs quoted above with the following text:

CALLS UPON the range States of Acipenseriformes species:

- a) *to collaborate in the development and implementation of strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks and for ensuring sustainable fishing, and*
- b) *to seek cooperation with Parties, United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and other expert stakeholders in supporting these strategies;*

URGES Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the industry and other donors to assist with securing financial and other resources for the range States of Acipenseriformes to develop and implement strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks;

26. The Annex to this document shows the proposed revision of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14). New text is underlined and deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~. The Secretariat is aware that the Animals Committee proposes further amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) in document CoP16 Doc. 61.1. Although all supported by the Secretariat, these are not shown in the present Annex.

Recommendations

27. The Conference of the Parties is invited to support the amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) as proposed in paragraphs 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 19, 23 and 25 above, and shown in the Annex to the present document.

**Amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14)* on
Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish**

[New text is underlined and deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~]

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.12 (Rev.), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997) and amended at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000), and Resolution Conf. 11.13, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting;

AWARE that sturgeons and paddlefish of the Order Acipenseriformes represent a valuable renewable biological and economic resource that in recent years has been affected by such negative factors as illegal fishing and illegal trade, regulation of water flow and decrease in natural spawning sites;

RECALLING the concepts endorsed and the progress made toward conservation of Acipenseriformes in the Caspian Sea under the 'Paris Agreement' approved at the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee (Paris, June 2001);

NOTING the need for further research and the importance of scientific monitoring of the status of stocks and an understanding of their genetic structure as the basis for sustainable fisheries management;

CONSIDERING that Eurasian range States of Acipenseriformes species are in need of funds and technical assistance in order to develop regional management and monitoring programmes for conservation, habitat protection, and the combating of illegal fishing and trade;

RECALLING that Article VI, paragraph 7, of the Convention provides that specimens of species listed in the Appendices may be marked to assist in identifying them;

CONSIDERING that the labelling of all caviar in trade would be a fundamental step towards the effective regulation of trade in specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish;

NOTING that, in order to assist the Parties in identifying legal caviar in trade, marking should be standardized and that particular specifications for the design of labels are fundamental, should be generally applied and should also take into account marking systems currently in place and anticipated technological advances in marking systems;

CONSCIOUS that there is a need for improvement of monitoring of caviar re-exports in relation to the original export and the level of exports in relation to annual export quotas;

WELCOMING the establishment of the caviar trade database by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC);

RECOGNIZING that Parties take into account domestic markets and illegal trade when issuing export permits, re-export certificates or when setting export quotas;

RECOGNIZING that the setting of export quotas for sturgeon specimens from shared stocks requires transparency;

* Amended at the 13th and 14th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

URGES the range States of species in the Order Acipenseriformes to:

- a) encourage scientific research and ensure adequate monitoring of the status of stocks³ to promote the sustainability of sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries through appropriate management programmes;
- b) curtail the illegal fishing of and trade in sturgeon and paddlefish specimens by improving the provisions in and enforcement of existing laws regulating fisheries and export, in close collaboration with the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-Interpol and the World Customs Organization;
- c) explore ways of enhancing the participation of representatives of all agencies responsible for sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries in conservation and sustainable-use programmes for these species;
- d) promote regional agreements between range States of sturgeon and paddlefish species aiming at proper management and sustainable utilization of these species; and
- e) in the case of range States of sturgeons in the Eurasian region, take into account the recommendations in documents CoP12 Doc. 42.1 and SC61 Doc. 48.2 when developing regional conservation strategies and action plans;

RECOMMENDS, with regard to regulating trade in sturgeon products, that:

- ~~a) range States license legal exporters of specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species and maintain a register of such persons or companies and provide a copy of this register to the Secretariat. The register should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should distribute this information via a Notification to the Parties and include it in its register on the CITES website;~~
- ~~b) each importing, exporting and re-exporting Party establish, where consistent with national law, a registration system for caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants in its territory and provide to the Secretariat the list of these facilities and their official registration codes. The list should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should distribute this information via a Notification to the Parties and include it this information in its register on the CITES website;~~
- b e) importing countries be particularly vigilant in controlling all aspects of the trade in specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species, including the unloading of sturgeon specimens, transit, re-packaging, re-labelling and re-exports;
- c d) Parties monitor the storage, processing and re-packaging of specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species in Customs free zones and free ports, and for airline and cruise line catering;
- d e) Parties ensure that all their relevant agencies cooperate in establishing the necessary administrative, management, scientific and control mechanisms needed to implement the provisions of the Convention with respect to sturgeon and paddlefish species;
- e f) Parties consider the harmonization of their national legislation related to personal exemptions for caviar, to allow for the personal effects exemption under Article VII, paragraph 3, of the Convention and consider limiting this exemption to no more than 125 grams of caviar per person;
- f g) all caviar harvested in 2007 from shared stocks subject to agreed export quotas must be exported before the end of 2007. From 2008 onwards, all caviar from shared stocks subject to export quotas should be exported before the end of the quota year (1 March – last day of February) in which it was harvested and processed. For this purpose the export permits for such caviar should be valid until the last day of the quota year at the latest. Parties should not import caviar harvested or processed in the preceding quota year;

³ The term 'stock' is regarded, for the purposes of this Resolution, to be synonymous with 'population'.

- g h) no re-export of caviar take place more than 18 months after the date of issuance of the relevant original export permit. For that purpose re-export certificates should not be valid beyond that 18-month period;
- h i) Parties supply to UNEP-WCMC ~~directly or to the Secretariat~~ copies of all export permits and re-export certificates issued to authorize trade in caviar, no longer than one month after they have been issued, for inclusion in the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database;
- i j) Parties consult the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database prior to the issuance of re-export certificates;
- j k) ~~the Secretariat shall submit a written progress report at each meeting of the Standing Committee on the operation of the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database;~~
- l) where available, Parties use the full eight-digit Customs code for caviar, instead of the less precise six-digit code which also includes roe from other fish species; and
- k m) Parties implement the universal labelling system for caviar outlined in Annexes 1 and 2 and importing Parties not accept shipments of caviar unless they comply with these provisions;

RECOMMENDS⁴ further, with regard to catch and export quotas, that:

- a) Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States⁵ unless export quotas have been set in accordance with the following procedure:
 - i) taking into consideration the provisions and guidance in Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), range States have established export quotas for caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species for that quota year, which ~~from 2008 onwards~~ starts on 1 March and ends on the last day of February of the following year;
 - ii) the export quotas referred to in subparagraph i) have been derived from catch quotas that are based on an appropriate regional conservation strategy and monitoring regime for the species concerned and are not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild;
 - iii) the catch and export quotas referred to in subparagraphs i) and ii) should be agreed amongst all States that provide habitat for the same stock of an Acipenseriformes species. ~~However, where a stock is shared by more than two States, and if one of these States refuses to participate or does not participate in the shared stock quota agreement meeting convened in accordance with the agreed decision of all these States, the total and country-specific quotas for the shared stock may be agreed by the remaining range States. This situation must be substantiated in writing by both sides to the Secretariat for information to the Parties. The State not having participated may only export caviar and meat from its allocated quotas after it has notified the Secretariat that it accepts them and the Secretariat has informed the Parties. If more than one range State refuses to participate or does not participate in the process mentioned above, the total and country-specific quotas for the shared stock cannot be established. In case of a stock shared by only two range States, the quotas must be agreed by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, they may call upon a mediator, including the CITES Secretariat, to facilitate the process. They shall have a zero quota until such time as they have reached consensus;~~
 - iv) ~~range States have provided to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year, the export quota referred to in subparagraph i) as well as the scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas under subparagraphs ii) and iii);~~
 - iv) if the quotas have not been communicated to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year ~~the deadline indicated in subparagraph iv) above~~, the relevant range States have a zero quota until such time as they communicate their quotas in writing to the Secretariat and the Secretariat in turn informs

⁴ At CoP13 it was agreed that this recommendation would not apply to those range States where there is no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks. It was also agreed, however, that the Secretariat or any Party would bring to the attention of the Standing Committee or Conference of the Parties any significant changes in the harvest or export of sturgeon products from such stocks.

⁵ Quotas do not have to be established for specimens from endemic stocks, i.e. stocks not shared with other countries, and captive-breeding or aquaculture operations. Quotas communicated for such specimens are voluntary quotas.

~~the Parties. The Secretariat should be informed by the range States of any delay and shall in turn inform the Parties; and~~

~~v) the Secretariat shall communicate the agreed quotas to the Parties on its website within one month of receipt of the information from the range States;~~

~~b) the Secretariat make all the information mentioned in subparagraph iv) available to Parties upon request; and~~

~~e) if a range State of a shared stock of a species of Acipenseriformes decides to reduce its quotas established in accordance with this Resolution under stricter domestic measures, this shall not affect the quotas of the other range States of this stock;~~

~~DIRECTS the Secretariat to provide at each meeting of the Animals Committee a written report, including references to relevant documents, on its activities related to the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish;~~

DIRECTS the Animals Committee, in collaboration with the Secretariat, interested Parties, international organizations and relevant experts, to monitor progress on the relevant provisions of this Resolution and to carry out on a three-year cycle starting in 2008, and using information from preceding years, an evaluation of the assessment and the monitoring methodologies used for stocks of Acipenseriformes species subject to the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a), above;

URGES range States to cooperate with the Animals Committee and the Secretariat with a view to implementing the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a), and the paragraph DIRECTS the Animals Committee above;

DIRECTS the Animals Committee to provide to the Standing Committee its recommendations on actions to be taken based upon the above-mentioned monitoring of progress and three-year cycle evaluation;

CALLS UPON range States, importing countries and other experts and appropriate organizations, such as the IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Animals Committee, to continue to explore the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species to assist in the subsequent identification of the origin of specimens in trade and the development and application of methods for differentiating wild from aquaculture origin caviar in cases where DNA-based methods are not useful;

DIRECTS the Secretariat:

~~a) in collaboration with range States and international organizations from both industry and the conservation community, to assist with the development of a strategy including action plans for the conservation of Acipenseriformes; and~~

~~b) to provide assistance with securing financial resources from Parties, international organizations, United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and industry; and~~

CALLS UPON the range States of Acipenseriformes species:

a) to collaborate in the development and implementation of strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks and for ensuring sustainable fishing, and

b) to seek cooperation with Parties, United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and other expert stakeholders in supporting these strategies;

URGES Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the industry and other donors to assist with securing financial and other resources for the range States of Acipenseriformes to develop and implement strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks;

REPEALS the Resolutions listed hereunder:

- a) Resolution Conf. 10.12 (Rev.) (Harare, 1997, as amended at Gigiri, 2000) – Conservation of sturgeons;
and
- b) Resolution Conf. 11.13 (Gigiri, 2000) – Universal labelling system for the identification of caviar.

Annex 1

CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar

- a) The uniform labelling system applies to all caviar, from wild and aquaculture origin, produced for commercial and non-commercial purposes, for either domestic or international trade, and is based on the application of a non-reusable label on each primary container.
- b) The following definitions apply in relation to trade in caviar:
- Caviar: processed unfertilized eggs (roe) of Acipenseriformes species.
 - Lot identification number: a number that corresponds to information related to the caviar tracking system used by the processing or repackaging plant.
 - Non-reusable label: any label or mark that cannot be removed undamaged or transferred to another container, which may seal the container. If the non-reusable label does not seal the primary container, caviar should be packaged in a manner that permits visual evidence of any opening of the container.
 - Pressed caviar: caviar composed of unfertilized eggs (roe) of one or more sturgeon or paddlefish species, remaining after the processing and preparation of higher quality caviar.
 - Primary container: tin, jar or other receptacle that is in direct contact with the caviar.
 - Processing plant: facility in the country of origin responsible for the first packaging of caviar into a primary container.
 - Repackaging plant: facility responsible for receiving and repackaging caviar into new primary containers.
 - Secondary container: receptacle into which primary containers are placed.
 - Source code: letter corresponding to the source of the caviar (e.g. W, C, F), as defined in the relevant CITES Resolutions. Note that, among other situations, for caviar produced from a female born in captivity and where at least one parent originated in the wild, the “F” code should be used.
- c) In the country of origin, the non-reusable label should be affixed by the processing plant to any primary container. This label must include, as a minimum: a standard species code as provided in Annex 2; the source code of the caviar; the ISO two-letter code for the country of origin; the year of harvest; the official registration code of the processing plant (e.g. xxxx); and the lot identification number for the caviar (e.g. yyyy), for instance:

HUS/W/RU/2000/xxxx/yyyy

- d) When no repackaging takes place, the non-reusable label referred to in paragraph c) above should be maintained on the primary container and be considered sufficient, including for re-export.
- e) A non-reusable label should be affixed by the repackaging plant to any primary container in which caviar is repackaged. This label must include, as a minimum: a standard species code as provided in Annex 2; the source code of the specimen; the ISO two-letter code of the country of origin; the year of repackaging; the official registration code of the repackaging plant, which incorporates the ISO two-letter code of the country of repackaging if different from the country of origin (e.g. IT-wwww); and the lot identification number, or CITES export permit or re-export certificate number (e.g. zzzz), for instance:

PER/W/IR/2001/IT-wwww/zzzz

- f) When caviar is exported or re-exported, the exact quantity of caviar must be indicated on any secondary container in addition to the description of the content in accordance with international Customs regulations.
- g) The same information that is on the label affixed to the container must be given on the export permit or re-export certificate, or in an annex attached to the CITES permit or certificate.

- h) In the event of inconsistencies between information on a label and a permit or certificate, the Management Authority of the importing Party should contact its counterpart in the exporting or re-exporting Party as soon as possible to establish whether this was a genuine error arising from the complexity of information required by these guidelines. If this is the case, every effort should be made to avoid penalizing those involved in such transactions.
- i) Parties should accept shipments of caviar only if they are accompanied by appropriate documents containing the information referred to in paragraph c), d) or e).

Annex 2

Codes for identification of Acipenseriformes species, hybrids and mixed species

Species	Code
<i>Acipenser baerii</i>	BAE
<i>Acipenser baerii baicalensis</i>	BAI
<i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i>	BVI
<i>Acipenser dabryanus</i>	DAB
<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>	FUL
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	GUE
<i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	MED
<i>Acipenser mikadoi</i>	MIK
<i>Acipenser naccarii</i>	NAC
<i>Acipenser nudiventris</i>	NUD
<i>Acipenser oxyrhynchus</i>	OXY
<i>Acipenser oxyrhynchus desotoi</i>	DES
<i>Acipenser persicus</i>	PER
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	RUT
<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i>	SCH
<i>Acipenser sinensis</i>	SIN
<i>Acipenser stellatus</i>	STE
<i>Acipenser sturio</i>	STU
<i>Acipenser transmontanus</i>	TRA
<i>Huso dauricus</i>	DAU
<i>Huso huso</i>	HUS
<i>Polyodon spathula</i>	SPA
<i>Psephurus gladius</i>	GLA
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus fedtschenkoi</i>	FED
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus hermanni</i>	HER
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus kaufmanni</i>	KAU
<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	ALB
<i>Scaphirhynchus platyrhynchus</i>	PLA
<i>Scaphirhynchus suttkusi</i>	SUS
Mixed species (for 'pressed' caviar exclusively)	MIX
Hybrid specimens: code for the species of the male x code for the species of the female	YYYxXXX