

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

Summary record of the fourth session of Committee II

27 September 2016: 9h25 - 11h55

Chair: J. Barzdo (Switzerland)

Secretariat: D. Morgan
S. Flensburg
J-C. Vasquez

Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell
J. Gray
P. Cremona
E. King

Strategic matters

12. Potential conflicts of interest in the Animals and Plants Committees

The Chair of the Standing Committee introduced document CoP17 Doc. 12, which included a report on implementation of Decisions 16.9 and 16.10 and proposed extending the period of validity of these with the aim of reviewing the conflict of interest policy and providing proposals for possible amendment to Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) on *Establishment of committees*, as necessary.

The United States of America, supported by the European Union and its member States, agreed with the overall recommendations in document CoP17 Doc. 12. To accelerate the process outlined in the Decisions, they proposed including “69th and” before “70th meeting” in amended Decision 16.9 and replacing “70th” with “69th” in amended Decision 16.10.

The Chair of the Standing Committee noted that the schedule so proposed might not give the Secretariat sufficient time to compile the necessary data to undertake the review; however, the Secretariat indicated that work could start immediately following the present meeting of the Conference of the Parties and that, at least, a preliminary report could be ready in time for the 69th meeting of the Standing Committee.

The revised Decisions 16.9 and 16.10 in the Annex to document CoP17 Doc. 12, incorporating the amendments proposed by the United States, were accepted.

14. Cooperation with organizations and multilateral environmental agreements

14.1 Cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions

The Chair of the Standing Committee introduced document CoP17 Doc. 14.1, which proposed two draft decisions on cooperation, collaboration and synergies between CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions. The document also included an editorial amendment proposed by the Secretariat to the draft decision directed to the Standing Committee.

Brazil and the European Union expressed support for the draft decisions including the Secretariat's proposed amendment. Brazil, supported by the European Union, proposed an additional amendment to the draft decision directed to the Parties to encourage improved coordination and cooperation between national focal points and strengthen capacity-building activities. The European Union proposed a further amendment to the same draft decision to encourage use of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) also supported the recommendations in document CoP17 Doc. 14.1 and, noting the synergies between CITES and the World Heritage Convention, encouraged both Conventions to work together.

Following a request from the United States of America for further clarification of the amendments proposed, a working group was formed comprising Brazil, the European Union, and the United States of America to agree a revised version of both draft decisions and present these for consideration at a subsequent session.

Species specific matters

86. Review of Resolution Conf. 10.9 on Consideration of proposals for the transfer of African elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II

On behalf of Standing Committee, Botswana, as the chair of its working group to review Resolution Conf. 10.9, introduced document CoP16 Doc. 86, which proposed the revision of Decision 16.160 to extend its mandate to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18).

Botswana outlined further proposed amendments to the text of Decision 16.160 to provide more detail regarding the mandate of the proposed working group. Israel asked for the wording of the revised Decision to be altered so that the Standing Committee, rather than the working group, would present the recommendations to CoP18. The amended Decision read as follows:

“The Standing Committee shall establish a working group to review Resolution Conf. 10.9 as appropriate. The working group could consider, *inter alia*, issues such as the scope of the Resolution; its relationship with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16); and whether or how a more efficient and cost-effective mechanism to review elephant listing proposals could be developed. The Standing Committee will ~~and~~ report its proposals at the ~~17th~~ 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The working group shall work in collaboration and consultation with all African elephant range States. To the extent possible, the working group will operate in English and French.”

The revision to Decision 16.160 in document CoP17 Doc. 86, along with the amendments proposed by Botswana and Israel, was accepted.

Strategic matters

13. Establishment of the rural communities committee of the Conference of the Parties

Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, together with local community representatives and the Namibian Association for CBNRM Support Organizations, introduced document CoP17 Doc. 13 proposing a draft resolution establishing a CITES rural communities committee.

China, Liberia, Egypt, South Africa and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and Balepye Community, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), Conservation Alliance of Kenya, Conservation Force, Inuvialuit Game Council and Livelihood International all supported the document. They cited various reasons for this support, notably a strongly held belief that attempts to conserve biodiversity without engagement of rural and other peoples who live with and adjacent to wildlife would ultimately be futile. South Africa, echoed by Livelihood International, voiced the opinion that funding challenges should not be allowed to act as an obstacle to engagement of rural communities in CITES decision-making processes. They called on the Secretariat and Parties to find a funding mechanism for this. China echoed the view that rural communities should play a part in CITES decision-making. Equatorial Guinea stated that the document could provide Parties with a timely chance to address the important issue of human-wildlife conflict in rural communities, while supporting wildlife conservation. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), speaking also on behalf of TRAFFIC and WWF, supported increasing the role and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in decisions

around their conservation and sustainable use, and called for a structured process to increase their engagement in CITES.

Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Japan, Kenya, Norway, the United States of America expressed understanding and appreciation of the motives that had led to submission of document CoP17 Doc. 13, but were unable to support it. Kenya said it would be important for any new CITES documents pertaining to rural communities to reflect the fact that wildlife was especially valuable as a live resource. The European Union cited the financial implications of the formation of a permanent rural communities committee as an obstacle to its support and also reasoned that establishment of such a committee could create a difficult precedent, as other groups might argue for the setting up of committees, leading to further pressures on the Convention. Norway concurred with several of the obstacles to the setting up of such a committee noted by the Secretariat in the document, while Canada raised logistical issues and expressed concerns regarding the text of the draft resolution in the document. Japan, supported by Brazil, the European Union, the United States of America and IUCN, speaking also on behalf of TRAFFIC and WWF, favoured the establishment of a working group to address issues raised by the document. Brazil, supported by the United States of America, further commented that direct participation of rural community representatives in existing CITES mechanisms and processes would be preferable to the establishment of a new permanent committee.

Zambia, speaking also on behalf of co-proponents of the document, agreed with the suggestion to establish a working group to discuss a way forward to promote issues raised in the document. The Chair established a working group comprising: Botswana, Brazil (Chair), Canada, China, Colombia, the European Union, Guinea, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Namibia, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Balepye Community, Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa, Center for Conservation Biology, China Wildlife Conservation Association, CIC, Conservation Alliance of Kenya, Conservation Force, Creative Conservation Solutions, Humane Society International, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuvialuit Game Council, IWMC World Conservation Trust, IUCN, Livelihood International, Namibia Professional Hunting Association, Natural Resource Defense Council, TRAFFIC, the United Nations Environment Programme and Wildlife Conservation Society.

The meeting was adjourned at 11h55.