

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

Interpretation and implementation matters

Trade control and traceability

PURPOSE CODES ON CITES PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES

1. This document is submitted by the Standing Committee.*
2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 14.54 (Rev. CoP 16) directed to the Standing Committee as follows:

The Standing Committee shall re-establish an intersessional joint working group to review the use of purpose-of-transaction codes by Parties, with the following terms of reference:

- a) *the working group shall be composed of Parties from as many of the six CITES regions as possible, and appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, with expertise in the issuance of CITES documents and use of purpose-of-transaction codes for evaluation within the permit issuance process and trade data analysis;*
 - b) *the working group shall, communicating through electronic media, focus on clearly defining purpose-of-transaction codes to encourage their consistent use, and consider the possible elimination of current codes or the inclusion of new ones;*
 - c) *in evaluating the use and definition of purpose-of-transaction codes, the working group shall take into account any difficulties of implementation by Parties and the potential resource implications of inclusion of any new codes or deletion of current purpose-of-transaction codes; and*
 - d) *the working group shall submit a report and any recommendations for amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16), or to any revision thereof, at the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall report, with its recommendations, at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties*
3. At its 64th meeting (Bangkok, March 2013), the Standing Committee agreed that the joint working group on purpose-of-transaction codes would be continued, with the existing membership, and with Canada as the Chair, in order to initiate implementation of the CoP16 Decision related to this subject.
 4. At the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, January 2016), the Chair of the working group submitted its report for consideration by the Standing Committee (see document SC66 Doc. 37). The Chair proposed to break down the issue of purpose-of-transaction codes into smaller components to ensure clear understanding by all members of the concepts involved in purpose-of-transaction codes. It would then be possible to build up from those smaller components into a complete proposal. It had been apparent, in past discussions of the purpose-of-transaction codes, that different interpretations and points

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

of view were causing difficulties in arriving at full agreement on a proposal to recommend to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties. The proposed approach for dividing the problem to finally arrive at a solution was well received by all members of the working group, and activities had commenced. However, owing to the late start and other factors, the working group had not progressed beyond the first stage of the Chair's proposed strategy. The Chair of the working group therefore proposed to the Standing Committee that the working group be permitted to continue its discussions, and that it be recommended that Decision 14.54 (Rev. CoP16) remain in effect after the 17th meeting of Conference of the Parties (CoP17).

5. The Standing Committee took note of the report and agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties at CoP17 a draft amendment to Decision 14.54 (Rev.CoP16), as set out in the Annex of the present document.

Recommendation

6. The Standing Committee invites the Conference of the Parties to adopt the draft amendments to Decision 14.54 (Rev. CoP16), as set out in the Annex.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopts the proposal by the Standing Committee in paragraph 6.
- B. The Secretariat considers that the workload and budgetary implications for the Secretariat and the permanent committees from this decision can be absorbed within the existing work programme and budget.

DRAFT AMENDMENT OF DECISION 14.54 (REV. COP16)

Directed to the Standing Committee

14.54 (Rev. CoP17)

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- b) the working group shall, communicating through electronic media, focus on clearly defining purpose-of-transaction codes to encourage their consistent use, and consider the possible elimination of current codes or the inclusion of new ones;*
- c) in evaluating the use and definition of purpose-of-transaction codes, the working group shall take into account any difficulties of implementation by Parties and the potential resource implications of inclusion of any new codes or deletion of current purpose-of-transaction codes; and*
- d) the working group shall submit a report and any recommendations for amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16), or to any revision thereof, at the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall report, with its recommendations, at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*