

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

Species specific matters

HUMPHEAD WRASSE (*CHEILINUS UNdulATUS*)

1. This document has been submitted by the Standing Committee.*

Background

2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 15.87 (Rev. CoP16), 16.139 and 16.140 on "Humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*)" as follows:

Directed to Parties

16.139 *To implement effectively the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse, Parties should:*

- a) *use existing documents listed in paragraph 13 of document CoP16 Doc. 62 (Rev.1) in their implementation of the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse; and*
- b) *investigate reported violations of the Convention and of related national laws in relation to trade in the humphead wrasse, and take appropriate enforcement actions in accordance with their national legislation; and*

In addition, range States and importing Parties should strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation, including intelligence exchange and enforcement actions.

Directed to the Standing Committee

15.87 *The Standing Committee shall:*
(Rev.

- CoP16)
- a) *review the actions taken by relevant Parties to implement the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse;*
 - b) *consider whether it is necessary to ask range States and importing States to provide further information on their actions taken to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention regarding trade in this species;*
 - c) *develop, as appropriate, recommendations for improving the regulation of international trade in the humphead wrasse, and the enforcement of controls, to ensure the effectiveness of the Appendix-II listing of the species; and*
 - d) *report its conclusions and recommendations for any appropriate follow-up actions at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

* *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.*

Directed to the IUCN

16.140 The IUCN Groupers and Wrasses Specialist Group continue its support to Parties in achieving sustainable fishing of the humphead wrasse and in making non-detriment findings in compliance with CITES.

Implementation of Decisions 15.87 (Rev. CoP16), 16.139 and 16.140

3. To assist in implementing Decision 15.87 (Rev. CoP16), the Standing Committee, at its 65th meeting (SC65, Geneva, July 2014), requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties, seeking updated information from range States and importing States on trade in humphead wrasse and to report back at its 66th meeting (SC66, Geneva, January 2016).
4. Pursuant to this request, the Secretariat issued [Notification to the Parties No. 2015/042](#) on 30 July 2015, inviting range States and importing States to inform the Secretariat of the actions taken to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention regarding trade in humphead wrasse. Two replies were received (from China and Greece), which were summarized in the report of the Secretariat to SC66 (see document [SC66 Doc. 49](#)).
5. At SC66, the Secretariat informed the Standing Committee that, to facilitate the implementation of Decisions 16.139 and 16.140, it had concluded a Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with IUCN, aimed at supporting key range States in achieving sustainable fishing of humphead wrasse by providing guidance on the making of non-detriment findings (NDF) for trade in the species. Activities envisaged under this SSFA included the following:
 - a) convening a workshop on management of humphead wrasse fisheries in Indonesia, with a view to provide information and training for the making of NDFs, and for establishing sustainable export quotas;
 - b) conducting research on alleged violations of the Convention concerning trade in humphead wrasse; and
 - c) presenting to relevant range States and the CITES community the results of six years of research on the trade in, and conservation status of, the species, and assessing the outcomes of management measures.

The implementation of the SSFA was significantly delayed as a result of the implementation of a new United Nations-wide resource-planning system known as 'Umoja'¹.

6. The workshop foreseen under the SSFA took place from 8 to 10 December 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia. As explained by the Secretariat in document SC66 Doc. 49, the outcomes of the workshop could not be included in the official documentation for SC66, but a preliminary meeting report was made available as information document [SC66 Inf. 27](#). Upon the request of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat provided an oral update on the results of the workshop. The final report is expected to be made available as an information document for the present meeting.
7. The contents of information document SC66 Inf. 27 can be summarized as follows.
 - a) The workshop focused on Indonesia as the biggest exporter of humphead wrasse at the moment. To regulate trade in this species, Indonesia had established an export quota of 2000 live specimens per year since 2012, and introduced regulation that only allowed export of specimens of humphead wrasse through air transport. The CITES trade database recorded exports of 1673 specimens in 2012, 585 specimens in 2013 and 1225 specimens in 2014 from Indonesia. Data for 2015 were not yet available
 - b) On two island groups in the north-west of the country, the production method consists of capturing juvenile humphead wrasse while they are only up to a few centimetres in size, and growing them out in nets over several years. Until recently, these fish were exported by boat to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, outside the national quota and contrary to transport prescriptions, which makes those exports illegal. The Indonesian Government is investigating past

¹ See <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2015-018.pdf>

violations of the Convention in this regard, and exploring options to deal with the current stockpile of live humphead wrasse maintained in aquaculture on these islands. It was further considering how to maintain a sustainable fishery in this region in the future, that could ensure that exports will be legal and in accordance with relevant CITES provisions. At the time of the workshop there were currently approximately 300,000 specimens in capture based aquaculture on these islands, and this production was of high socioeconomic importance for the region. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which was also present at the workshop, is assisting in the development of a potential management and capacity support programme.

- c) During the workshop, the IUCN/SSC Specialist Group on Groupers and Wrasses reported the observation of large numbers of humphead wrasse on sale in mainland China. The available CITES trade data and records of trade between Hong Kong SAR and mainland China, kept by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), which is the CITES Management Authority in Hong Kong SAR, did not substantiate the quantities observed, calling into question the source and legality of these fish. This issue is further examined and discussed in the TRAFFIC-IUCN publication mentioned below in paragraph 8.
8. An additional outcome of the SSFA was a joint TRAFFIC-IUCN publication entitled “*Cheilinus undulatus* trade into and through Hong Kong”, which was released in March 2016 and can be found [online](#). It is expected to be made available at the present meeting as an information document.
9. At SC66, following a recommendation by the Secretariat, the Standing Committee agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties an extension of the validity of Decisions 16.139, 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.140, in order to give Parties, the Standing Committee and IUCN more time for their implementation, and for consideration of the information contained in the above-mentioned reports.
10. The Standing Committee further requested the Secretariat to report on this issue at its 69th meeting (SC69).

Recommendation

11. The Conference of the Parties is invited to extend Decisions 16.139, 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.140, with the following amendment to Decision 15.87 (Rev. CoP16), paragraph d):

The Standing Committee shall:

- d) *report its conclusions and recommendations for any appropriate follow-up actions at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

COMMENTS BY THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt the recommendation of the Standing Committee in paragraph 11. It also notes the request from Standing Committee to the Secretariat, to report at SC69, and proposes a corresponding draft decision in paragraph B below, allowing for reporting at one of the regular meetings of the Standing Committee between CoP17 and CoP18.
- B. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has informed the Secretariat that, based on the findings of the humphead wrasse workshop that took place in Jakarta in December 2015, and in response to a request for assistance from the Indonesian Government, it is developing a multi-year project to support Indonesia in achieving sustainable management of the species. According to the CITES trade database, Indonesia is the main exporter of humphead wrasse. One of the aspects of the proposed project is to further research the “ranching” system for early juvenile fish that has been developed in Indonesia, to assess *inter alia* the impacts on wild populations and sustainability of this production method. The Secretariat believes that the outcome of the project will be of relevance to all range States, and inform similar “ranching” (i.e. outgrowth) operations for CITES-listed marine species.

- C. The Secretariat therefore recommends that the Conference of the Parties consider adopting the following draft decisions:

Directed to the Secretariat

- 17.AA Subject to external funds, the Secretariat shall collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in undertaking an FAO project to support Indonesia in achieving sustainable management of, and trade in humphead wrasse, and shall cooperate with FAO to report on the progress and outcomes of this project to the Standing Committee.
- 17.BB The Secretariat shall report on the implementation of the decisions on humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*) at the 69th or 70th meeting of the Standing Committee.

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The authors of this document propose the following tentative budget and source of funding.

1. The project that is being developed by FAO would be implemented over 5 years with an overall estimated cost of up to 2 million USD. According to estimations provided by FAO, the activities that would significantly benefit from support and collaboration with CITES are relating to NDFs, governance, traceability and market regulations, and would cost approximately 300,000 USD over 5 years (60,000 USD per year).