

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 23 May – 3 June 2019

Strategic matters

Capacity-building and identification materials

CAPACITY-BUILDING AND IDENTIFICATION MATERIALS

1. This document has been submitted by the Animals and Plants Committees.\*

Background

2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 17.31 to 17.35 on *Capacity-building*:

***Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees, and the Secretariat***

17.32 *The Animals and Plants Committees shall establish a joint working group on capacity-building and identification materials to undertake the following tasks, in consultation with the Secretariat:*

- a) *provide assistance to Parties in identifying CITES-listed taxa and in undertaking capacity-building activities that contribute to the enhanced implementation of the Convention;*
- b) *determine the current availability of capacity building materials, including identification guides and other tools, and enhance their accessibility;*
- c) *review selected capacity building and identification materials, and assess the need for their revision and improvement, taking into account the materials that are being developed or have already been developed by Parties and materials requested in Decisions;*
- d) *undertake, or provide scientific guidance to the Secretariat's undertaking of the revision and development of selected capacity building and identification materials, including materials on the development, establishment and implementation of voluntary national export quotas;*
- e) *review the project proposal on Improvements to the CITES identification materials: Options to promote accuracy and availability of identification material to the Parties to CITES, drafted by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), as well as any other projects or programmes identified by the Secretariat, and consider whether funding should be actively sought to support the activities;*

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\* *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.*

- f) *review Resolution Conf. 3.4 on Technical cooperation and Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on Identification Manual, and make recommendations, including possible amendments to these Resolutions if appropriate, to promote accuracy and availability of capacity building and identification materials; and*
- g) *report on progress with these activities at the next meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees as well as at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

**Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees**

17.33 *The Animals and Plants Committees shall inform the Standing Committee, as necessary, on the progress made in implementing Decision 17.32.*

**Directed to the Secretariat**

17.34 *The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funding where needed:*

- a) *continue to develop and enhance the CITES website as well as the CITES Virtual College as an electronic means of providing capacity-building support to Parties, including the incorporation of the following information:*
  - i) *a list of references to capacity-building found in the current Resolutions and Decisions, as well as the relevant sections of the CITES implementation reports, so as to enhance the continued monitoring of capacity-building activities; and*
  - ii) *a list of possible financial resources and mechanisms to support the implementation of CITES (such as the Global Environment Facility and the African Elephant Fund);*
- b) *within the scope of Goals 1 and 3 of the CITES Strategic Vision, provide targeted technical capacity-building support and deliver general and specialized training, to: CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, customs and law enforcement entities, the judiciary, legislators and other stakeholders, particularly in new Parties, developing country Parties, Parties identified through the compliance mechanism and Small Island Developing States;*
- c) *in consultation and cooperation with the Animals and Plants Committees, undertake the revision and development of selected capacity-building and identification materials, including materials related to the development, establishment and implementation of voluntary national export quotas;*
- d) *issue a Notification to the Parties inviting developing countries and countries with economies in transition to provide to the Secretariat precise information on their capacity-building needs, and report to the Standing Committee at its 69th meeting on the answers received; and*
- e) *further cooperate with institutions and organizations to provide Parties with joint capacity-building assistance of relevance to CITES, for example through the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) (including each of its partners), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the International University of Andalusia, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).*

**Directed to the Standing Committee**

17.35 *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *monitor the implementation of activities related to capacity-building found in the current Resolutions and Decisions through information provided by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 17.34 a) i);*

- b) *review the results of the survey initiated through the Notification to the Parties referred to in Decision 17.34 d), as well as information submitted in the relevant sections of the CITES implementation reports;*
  - c) *review the work of the Animals and Plants Committees in the implementation of Decision 17.32, and provide guidance, as necessary; and*
  - d) *make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate, on how capacity-building activities specified in Resolutions and Decisions may be consolidated, rationalized and made more coherent.*
3. This document mainly concerns the implementation of Decisions 17.32, 17.33, 17.34 b), c), e) and 17.35 c), while document CoP18 Doc. 21.2 reports on the implementation of the other decisions on capacity-building.
4. The Conference of the Parties also adopted Decisions 17.160 and 17.161 on *Identification materials*, as follows:

**Directed to Parties**

17.160 *The Parties are encouraged to support the efforts of the working group on capacity building and identification materials by providing to the Secretariat information on available capacity building materials, and identification and guidance materials that are used by Parties, and particularly by enforcement and inspections officers, to facilitate implementation of the Convention.*

**Directed to the Secretariat**

17.161 *Subject to the availability of funds, the Secretariat is directed to:*

- a) *continue compiling information on available identification and guidance materials, and make them available on the CITES Virtual College;*
  - b) *support the development of databases and other means to make the identification materials available in a user-friendly manner;*
  - c) *continue to explore means to improve and promote the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species, including the development of and identifying financial resources to fund projects or programmes, such as the project proposal on Improvements to the CITES identification materials: Options to promote accuracy and availability of identification material to the Parties to CITES, prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), as well as the addition of functions and technologies to the Wiki Identification Manual on the CITES website.*
5. The Animals and Plants Committees, at their two joint sessions during the current intersessional period (AC29/PC23, Geneva, July 2017 and AC30/PC24, Geneva, July 2018) received the progress report of the Secretariat on its implementation of Decision 17.34. This included the development of a [capacity-building webpage](#) on the CITES website, as well as various general and technical capacity-building support/training to Management and Scientific Authorities.

Implementation of Decision 17.32

6. At the joint session of the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee and the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee (Geneva, July 2017), the intersessional working group on capacity building and identification materials was established with the following terms of reference:
- a) taking into consideration inputs and recommendations made in plenary, consider the work plan and activities outlined in paragraphs 7 to 33 of document AC29 Doc. 9/PC23 Doc. 10;

b) finalize and implement a workplan with timelines, in consultation with the Secretariat, that will result in a determination of the availability of materials and the enhancement of their accessibility, revision or guidance to revise select material, a review of the project proposals as described in part e) of Decision 17.32, and the review of Resolution Conf. 3.4 and Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) and recommendations to promote accuracy and availability of materials; and

c) report to the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee and the 24th meeting of the Plants Committee.

7. The membership was as follows:

Co-Chairs: AC representative of Oceania (Mr. Robertson) and PC representative of Asia (Mr. Lee);

Members: AC representatives of Africa (Mr. Kasoma), North America (Ms. Gnam), and Oceania (Mr. Robertson); acting AC representatives of Asia (Mr. Ishii) and Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Lemus), AC nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk); and PC representatives of Africa (Mr. Mahamane), Asia (Mr. Fernando), Central and South America and the Caribbean (Ms. Rauber Coradin), Europe (Ms. Moser), and North America (Ms. Camarena Osorno), and PC alternate representatives of Africa (Ms. Khayota) and Asia (Ms. Al Salem);

Parties: Australia, Canada, Kenya, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: UNEP-WCMC, IUCN, Born Free USA, German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, and WWF.

8. The intersessional working group, working electronically, considered the draft work plan prepared by the Secretariat. It was however unable to finalize and implement the workplan during its mandated period. The Secretariat also noted that no extrabudgetary funds were available for the revision and development of selected capacity-building and identification materials during this intersessional period.

9. The Animals and Plants Committees, at its subsequent joint session (AC30/PC24, Geneva, July 2018), reviewed the report of the Secretariat<sup>1</sup> and the oral report from the co-Chairs of the intersessional working group. The Committees recommended that future needs for the provision of scientific and technical advice on capacity-building materials would best be sought by the Secretariat as needs arise, and that such an advisory role was already tasked to the Animals and Plants Committees in [Resolution Conf. 11.1 \(Rev. CoP17\)](#) on *Establishment of committees*. It was therefore deemed unnecessary to repeat a stand-alone set of decisions to form a working group and actively review capacity-building materials.

10. With regard to identification materials, the Animals and Plants Committees agreed to submit two draft decisions to the Conference of the Parties as follows:

***Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees***

18.AA The Animals and Plants Committees shall establish a joint working group on identification materials that are used by Parties to identify CITES-listed species and undertake the following tasks, in consultation with the Secretariat:

- a) review selected identification materials and assess the need for their revision and improvement, taking into account the materials that are being developed or have already been developed by Parties and materials requested in Decisions;
- b) review Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on *Identification Manual* and make recommendations, including possible amendments to this Resolution if appropriate, to promote accuracy and availability of identification materials;
- c) provide input to the Secretariat to improve the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species; and

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<sup>1</sup> See document AC30 Doc.9.1/PC24 Doc.9.1.

- d) report on progress with these activities at the next meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees, as well as the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

***Directed to Parties***

- 18.BB Parties are encouraged to support the efforts of the working group on identification materials by providing to the Secretariat information on available identification and guidance materials that are used by Parties, and particularly by enforcement and inspection officers, to facilitate implementation of the Convention.

Recommendation

11. The Conference of the Parties is invited to adopt the two draft decisions in paragraph 10 of the present document.

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat is of the view that the scientific and technical advice of the Animals and Plants Committees remains important in ensuring that capacity-building tools and identification materials are of high scientific quality.
- B. The Secretariat intends to focus on revising and updating the CITES Virtual College during the upcoming intersessional period including its identification materials page and the online course materials. The advice of the Animals and Plants Committees will be sought once external funds are secured to make such a task possible. Accordingly, the proposed draft decisions on *Capacity-building* submitted by the Standing Committee, available in Annex 1 of document CoP18 Doc. 21.2, reflect this particular role of the Animals and Plants Committees.
- C. With regard to the proposed draft decisions 18.AA and 18.BB in paragraph 10 above, the Secretariat suggests that they be combined with the proposed decisions under agenda item 54.1 on *Identification manual* and considered together. The Secretariat suggests that the Conference of the Parties consider Annex 1 of document CoP18 Doc. 54.1, where the complete set of proposed decisions on *Identification materials* (including the decisions in paragraph 10 above with amendments suggested by the Secretariat) can be found.
- D. The Secretariat suggests that the proposed decisions on *Identification materials* found in Annex 1 of document CoP18. Doc. 54.1 replace Decisions 17.160 and 17.161 on *Identification manual*, and the decisions on *Capacity-building activities specified in Resolutions and Decisions* found in Annex 1 of CoP18 Doc. 21.2 replace Decisions 17.31 to 17.35. Decisions 17.31 to 17.35, 17.160 and 17.161 can therefore be deleted.

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.

The costs associated with the draft decisions proposed here are addressed in document CoP18. Doc. 54.1 on *Identification manual*.