



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2008/053

Geneva, 22 August 2008

CONCERNING:

Explanatory notes for the export quotas

Background

1. The Secretariat publishes every year on its website details of export quotas established for CITES-listed species.
2. The export quotas are of four types:
 - a) voluntary national export quotas communicated to the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph a), under 'RECOMMENDS' in section VIII of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14) on Permits and certificates, and paragraph 15 of Resolution Conf 14.7 on Management of nationally established export quotas;
 - b) export quotas recommended by the Conference of the Parties, Standing Committee or the Animals Committee or the Plants Committee;
 - c) export quotas for raw elephant ivory, submitted in compliance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP14) on Trade in elephant specimens; and
 - d) export quotas for Acipenseriformes established in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) on Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish.

Quotas for Acipenseriformes

3. With regard to annual catch and export quotas for Acipenseriformes, Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) recommends that:
 - a) *Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States¹ unless export quotas have been set in accordance with the following procedure:*
 - i) *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;*

¹ *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.*

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- 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);*
 - v) if the quotas have not been communicated to the Secretariat by 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*
 - vi) the Secretariat shall communicate the agreed quotas to the Parties 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*
 - c) 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.*
4. The catch and export quotas for species of Acipenseriformes from stocks shared between different range States that are published on the Secretariat's website were submitted in compliance with Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14), and the Secretariat has confirmed, on

the basis of information provided on the status of the stocks of the species concerned, that these quotas were agreed by the relevant range States.

5. Parties are reminded that they should only authorize import of caviar harvested or processed in the current quota year (1 March – last day of February).

Quotas for other species

6. Unless otherwise specified, the quotas published on the website were established by the Party concerned.
7. The publication of quotas on the CITES website does not imply endorsement by the Secretariat. Voluntary export quotas are established by the Parties and the Secretariat has no indication as to whether these quotas are based on the determinations that Parties are required to make in accordance with Article IV, paragraph 2 (a) of the Convention, namely that exports should not be detrimental to the survival of the species.
8. Quotas established by the Conference of the Parties are marked with '*'. Those resulting from recommendations of the Standing, Animals or Plants Committee in the context of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on the Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species are marked with '+ '.
9. Quotas established represent the maximum number of specimens that are authorized for export in the current calendar year (January to December) unless otherwise indicated.
10. Unless otherwise specified, quotas refer to specimens of wild origin.
11. Quotas communicated to the Secretariat for any particular year should not include specimens that were obtained for export in preceding years but for which no export permit was issued in these years.
12. In Resolution Conf. 14.7 on *Management of nationally established export quotas*, in paragraph 19 of the Annex, the Conference of the Parties recommends that, "once the Secretariat has received and published details of an annual export quota from a Party, it should publish the same quota for following years until it receives a revised quota from that Party." The Secretariat interprets this so that, when it receives from a Party a list of annual export quotas for a specified year, it assumes that the list contains all of the export quotas set for that year unless otherwise indicated by that Party. This means that, if the list of export quotas for the year excludes species for which quotas were set in the previous year, it will be assumed that no quota has been set for these species in the current year, and none will be published on the CITES website.

Export permits

13. Management Authorities are referred to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14), section VIII, paragraph b) under 'RECOMMENDS', concerning references to quotas on export permits. Each export permit issued for specimens of a species subject to an export quota should indicate the total number of specimens exported to date (including those covered by the permit) and the annual quota for the species, in the following format:

1250/4000 (200X)

In this example 1,250 specimens of the species concerned have been authorized to be exported to date (**including those on the current permit**), out of an annual quota of 4,000 in the year 200X. This information should be provided in block 11a of the standard permit form [see Annex 2 to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14)]. By implication, Management Authorities should keep a running total of all exports authorized for species subject to quotas.

14. When submitting their nationally established export quotas, and when issuing permits, Parties should follow the standard nomenclatures contained in Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP14) to indicate the names of species. An easy reference to these names is provided to all Parties in the *Checklist of CITES species* as well as in the database of CITES-listed species accessible through the CITES website [see Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14), section I, paragraph I].
15. The terms used on permits to indicate the types and sources of the specimens being traded and the purpose of the trade should follow those indicated in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14) and in the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports.
16. Where, for any species, separate annual export quotas have been established according to the source of the specimens, for example wild specimens ('W') and ranched specimens ('R'), the information specified on each export permit should refer to the export quota in relation to the source, and not to the total export quota for the species.
17. When the established export quota for a species refers only to one source, (e.g. 'W'), Parties should not accept specimens from another source (e.g. 'C') as part of the same quota.
18. The Secretariat will recommend to potential importing countries the rejection of permits that do not, where appropriate, include the details referred to in paragraph b) under 'RECOMMENDS' in section VIII of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14).

Further improvements to the establishment and management of quotas

19. The Secretariat recommends that Parties make quotas as specific as possible, i.e. to refer to a number or other restrictions (weight, measure, age class, etc.), to indicate a requirement for tagging or labelling where applicable, and to describe precisely the type of specimens to be exported (e.g. live specimens, hunting trophies, etc.) and their source (e.g. wild taken, ranched or bred in captivity).

Updating quotas during the current year

20. The Secretariat will publish additional quotas and amendments to quotas on the CITES website throughout the year. It will be clearly indicated where additions or changes have been made, and on what date.
21. No further Notifications will be issued to announce such additional quotas or amendments, but Parties and organizations that have problems in accessing updated quotas from the website may request updates to be provided via email or by post.