



## NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2020/035

Geneva, 22 April 2020

CONCERNING:

Implementation of Decisions 18.210 to 18.217 on *Marine turtles*  
(*Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.*)

1. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.210 to 18.217 on *Marine turtles (Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.)*. These Decisions are contained in Annex 1 to the present Notification.
2. In accordance with paragraph a) of Decision 18.210, the Secretariat would like to convey to Parties the findings of the study presented in information document [CoP18 Inf. 18](#) on the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles. Sections from the study (Executive summary; Discussion and overarching conclusions; and Recommendations) have been extracted and translated and are presented in Annex 2 to the present Notification.
3. In addition, pursuant to paragraph f) of Decision 18.210, the Secretariat would hereby like to request Parties to submit information on the status of implementation of Decisions 18.211 to 18.214, including any planned implementation activities.
4. In accordance with paragraph g) of Decision 18.210, the Secretariat will report the information received to the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee. The information should be submitted by email to [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) and [karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org) no later than **30 June 2020**.

Decisions on Marine turtles (*Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.*),  
adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019)

**18.210 Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall, subject to available resources:

- a) convey to Parties the findings of the study presented in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 on the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles with a view to inform targeted conservation and management efforts;
- b) refer the study contained in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 to the Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting and the Animals Committee at its 31st meeting for consideration;
- c) support Parties, upon request, with the CITES-relevant aspects of the development, implementation and/or update of management and action plans for the conservation of marine turtles;
- d) assist Parties, upon request, with the identification of inconsistencies, overlaps and gaps in national legislation and regulations relating to the implementation of CITES for marine turtles; and
- e) convey to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) the findings of the study presented in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 to inform efforts, including by Regional Fisheries Bodies, addressing marine turtle bycatch and illegal take, and promote collaboration, as appropriate.
- f) issue a Notification requesting that Parties provide information on implementation of Decisions 18.210 to 18.214 for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting; and
- g) report on the implementation of Decisions 18.210 to 18.215, and on any technical and financial mechanisms and opportunities that can be provided through CITES to assist Parties in marine turtle conservation, to the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee and the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committees as appropriate, and to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

**18.211 Directed to Parties**

Parties are urged to:

- a) review the findings of the study presented in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 and use these to inform targeted conservation and management efforts;
- b) fully implement the provisions of CITES that are relevant to the seven species of marine turtles listed on Appendix I;
- c) develop and/or update management and action plans for the conservation of marine turtles inclusive of the recommendations in information document CoP18 Inf. 18;
- d) use CITES fora, including the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, to raise and discuss challenges relating to illegal trade in marine turtles;
- e) collect in a standardized manner, including at different governance levels, illegal wildlife trade data, that can be used for monitoring trade in CITES-listed marine turtles; and submit comprehensive

- and accurate information on illegal trade in marine turtles in their annual illegal trade reports to the Secretariat;
- f) improve monitoring, detection and law enforcement activities related to marine turtles in coastal areas and at transaction points (e.g. in the marketplace, online, maritime areas, and at air- and seaports);
  - g) collect samples of marine turtles for DNA analysis, including from seized specimens, to determine species involved and populations of origin and provide these to forensic and other research institutions capable of reliably determining the origin or age of the samples in support of, for example, research, investigations and prosecutions;
  - h) improve intra- and interregional cooperation, collaboration and exchange of actionable intelligence regarding illegal take of and trade in marine turtles;
  - i) ascertain key trade routes, methods, volumes, and trade 'hot-spots' using available technologies, and enforce national and international regulations or other mechanisms that apply to marine turtles take and trade;
  - j) improve accountability for the practices undertaken by all vessels and improve the monitoring and control related to CITES-listed marine turtles at landing sites;
  - k) support fisheries management authorities in implementing turtle mitigation and safe handling practices;
  - l) coordinate efforts at the regional level, involving Parties and bodies with relevant mandates, to identify and address trade, use and other threats, such as fisheries' interactions with marine turtles (particularly bycatch), with a view to supporting multilateral environmental agreements; and
  - m) respond to the Notification issued by the Secretariat per Decision 18.210, paragraph f) on the implementation of Decisions 18.210 to 18.214.

**18.212 Directed to Parties that are marine turtle range States**

Parties that are marine turtle range States are urged to:

- a) develop, and where such legislation already exists, conduct a thorough review of legislation that protects marine turtles, taking account of its effectiveness in enforcement and management including direct and incidental harvest, and standardization or alignment with other national and sub-national legislation, neighbouring states, as well as international regulations and commitments;
- b) where domestic harvest of specimens of marine turtles, including eggs, is legal, ensure any domestic harvest quotas are established based on robust science-based methods and the principles of sustainability, including accounting for existing quota or no-take quotas in other States' that share marine turtle stock(s), taking into account national enforcement capacity;
- c) respond to the Notification issued by the Secretariat pursuant to Decision 18.210 paragraph f) on the implementation of Decisions 18.210 to 18.215.

**18.213 Directed to Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and other entities**

Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are invited to provide financial or technical assistance for, *inter alia*:

- a) training and capacity building of relevant authorities at the national and regional level, including on the implementation and enforcement of national and international regulations that apply to marine turtles, and on identification, monitoring, reporting and wildlife enforcement capability;
- b) build community and political awareness on the conservation status of marine turtles and on the importance of promoting the conservation of the species through compliance with CITES at the national level;
- c) research into the socioeconomics associated with the legal and illegal harvest and use of specimens of marine turtles, including eggs, including assessments of the sustainability of alternative livelihood options for communities depending on marine turtles and the motivations for their use;
- d) research that establishes a baseline for the status and distribution of marine turtles in the different countries/regions; and
- e) research into the scale and impact that national (and its international) artisanal, semi-industrial and industrial fisheries, including illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, have on marine turtle populations and their linkage to illegal trade.

**18.214 Directed to the Secretariat, Parties and other organizations**

Parties, the Secretariat and relevant multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), its Indian Ocean and South-East Asia Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA), the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC), and the Ramsar Convention and the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) are encouraged to communicate and collaborate with each other on the management and sustainable use of marine turtles to ensure the compatibility of activities, optimize resources, promote research, and enhance synergies concerning the conservation of marine turtles.

**18.215 Directed to the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC)**

The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) is encouraged to, as appropriate, use data on illegal trade in marine turtles submitted under Decision 18.211, paragraph e) to the Secretariat in Parties' annual illegal trade reports in its activities.

**18.216 Directed to the Animals Committee**

The Animals Committee is asked to:

- a) review, at its 31st meeting, the study contained in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 and any additional information received by the Secretariat in response to the Notification issued under Decision 18.210, paragraph f); and
- b) submit recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

**18.217 Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee is asked to:

- a) review, at its 73rd meeting, the study contained in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 and any additional information received by the Secretariat in response to the Notification issued under Decision 18.210, paragraph f), and the recommendations of the Animals Committee; and
- b) submit its recommendations to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.