



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2023/008

Geneva, 27 January 2023

CONCERNING:

Membership of Standing Committee intersessional working groups

1. The Notification is issued at the request of the Chair of the Standing Committee.
2. At its 76th meeting (SC76, Panama City, November 2022), the Standing Committee established a number of intersessional working groups to address matters referred to it by the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. These were as follows:
 - a) **Rules of Procedure** with the **United States of America** as Chair and a mandate to review Rule 25.6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties and propose amendments, as appropriate, to the Standing Committee for its consideration.
 - b) **Annotations** with **Canada** as interim Chair and a mandate to:
 - i) in close collaboration with ongoing efforts in the Plants Committee, continue reviewing the appropriateness and practical challenges resulting from the implementation of the annotations to the Appendices, including but not limited to those on the tree species, of the agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.), *Aniba rosaeodora*, *Bulnesia sarmientoi* and orchids, and identify options to streamline these annotations taking into account the guidance provided by Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP19) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*;
 - ii) develop or refine definitions of terms used in current annotations as appropriate, and submit them for adoption by the Conference of the Parties and subsequent inclusion in the *Interpretation section of the Appendices*;
 - iii) review and update the definitions of wood and wood products currently located in paragraph 1 c) of Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for tree species*, for logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, and plywood;
 - iv) conduct any work related to annotations directed to it by the Conference of the Parties, the Standing, Animals or Plants Committee; and
 - v) prepare reports on progress made in addressing the issues tasked to it and submit them for consideration at the 77th and 78th meetings of the Standing Committee.

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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[cites.org](https://www.cites.org)

- c) **Engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities with Canada** as Chair and a mandate to:
- i) consider how to effectively engage indigenous peoples and local communities* in the CITES processes, taking into account the discussions from the previous intersessional periods, including the information contained in document SC74 Doc.20.2 and SC70 Doc. 15, experiences shared by Parties and relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and international organizations, and any information provided pursuant to Decision 18.32 (Rev. CoP19); and present its findings and recommendations to the Standing Committee;
 - ii) consider matters in document CoP19 Doc. 15 should the proponents of that document bring those matters to the attention of the working group;
 - iii) develop non-binding guidance that proponent Parties may use, as appropriate, in consulting with indigenous peoples and local communities as part of the consultations that may take place on proposals to amend the Appendices; and
 - iv) make recommendations on the engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in CITES processes to the Standing Committee for its consideration;
- d) **Livelihoods with Peru and Zambia** as co-Chairs and a mandate to work in collaboration with the Secretariat to:
- i) review new case studies on CITES and livelihoods to draw best practices and lessons learned;
 - ii) review the draft *Guidance on maximising benefits to Indigenous peoples and local communities from trade in CITES-listed species* and provide recommendations to the Secretariat and the Standing Committee; and
 - iii) review the report on *Exploring the use of registered marks of certification and other traceability mechanisms for products of CITES-listed species produced by indigenous peoples and local communities to enhance conservation and livelihood outcomes*, and provide recommendations to the Standing Committee, including possible next steps, as appropriate;
- e) **Electronic systems and information technology with Switzerland** as Chair and a mandate to, in consultation with the Secretariat, undertake the following tasks:
- i) work with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and other relevant partners, to continue the exchange of information and the development and implementation of joint projects that would facilitate Parties' access to electronic permitting systems that comply with CITES requirements and where appropriate are aligned with international trade standards and norms;
 - ii) work with relevant partners on the further development of standards and solutions for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permit and certificate data and the improvement of the validation of CITES permit data by CITES Management Authorities and customs officials;

* For the purpose of these Decisions, "indigenous peoples and local communities" is understood to include rural communities.

- iii) recognizing the importance of the requirement for endorsement of permits and certificates at export, explore possible alternatives to the physical endorsement;
 - iv) monitor and advise on Parties' work related to the development of traceability systems for specimens of CITES-listed species to facilitate their harmonization with CITES permits and certificates;
 - v) monitor the use of HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures in different countries;
 - vi) support the development of the capacity of Management Authorities, especially those with the greatest needs, to electronically collect, secure, maintain, and transmit data using systems compatible with those of the Secretariat and other Management Authorities;
 - vii) consider ways in which electronic CITES permitting systems can simplify procedures for the non-commercial movement of musical instruments; and
 - viii) submit reports on activities undertaken and make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee;
- f) **Jaguars (*Panthera onca*)** with **Brazil** as Chair and a mandate to:
- i) based on the Secretariat's analysis in document SC74 Doc. 75, assess whether a specific draft resolution on jaguars would be appropriate, also taking into consideration the conclusions of the meeting of jaguar range States, where applicable;
 - ii) make recommendations to range States, and transit and destination countries, as appropriate; and
 - iii) report its conclusions and recommendations at the next meeting of the Standing Committee;
- g) **Purpose-of-transaction codes** with **Georgia** as Chair with the mandate to review the use of purpose-of-transaction codes by Parties, based on the following terms of reference:
- i) 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;
 - ii) the working group shall, communicating through electronic media, focus on clearly defining purpose-of-transaction codes, other than those adopted as of CoP19, to encourage their consistent use, and consider the possible elimination or amendment of current codes or the inclusion of new ones. In particular the working group shall continue the discussions on purpose codes 'P' and 'T' which were reported in SC74 Doc 43;
 - iii) the working group shall also clarify the overlap between purpose-of-transaction codes that describe physical locations and purpose-of-transaction codes that describe activities, one or more of which may pertain to any given permit;
 - iv) the working group shall also consider any Resolution related to or affected by purpose-of-transaction codes, taking into account document CoP19 Doc. 42, to ensure coherent interpretation; and
 - v) the working group shall submit a report and any recommendations for amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates*, or to any revision thereof, and recommendations for amendments to any other Resolution identified above to the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall report, with its recommendations, at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

- h) **Labelling system for trade in caviar** with a Chair still to be determined and a mandate to:
- i) examine the analyses and recommendations of the Secretariat once they are available and report to the Standing Committee;
 - ii) consider the report on the use of QR codes in the application of the *CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar* prepared by the Secretariat;
 - iii) taking into account the study on *Identification of species, subspecies, source and origin of sturgeons and paddlefish species and specimens (Acipensiformes spp.) in trade* in the Annex to document SC74 Doc. 47, review the caviar labelling system set out in *CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar*, considering practical challenges in its implementation and opportunities to improve its functioning; and
 - iv) make recommendations to improve the functioning of the caviar labelling system to the Standing Committee, as appropriate for its consideration.
- i) **Species at risk of extinction affected by international trade** with the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** as Chair and a mandate to, in collaboration with the Animals and Plants Committees:
- i) consider under Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building* how to provide Parties requesting it with information from any relevant studies, analyses or other sources on the identification of species at risk of extinction that are not yet regulated under CITES or may receive insufficient CITES regulation and that are or may be affected by international trade, working in coordination with the CITES Secretariat, CITES Parties, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC, FAO, regional competent authorities, and relevant experts as appropriate so that Parties may consider such information, as appropriate, in the preparation of listing proposals under Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) on the *Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II*; and
 - ii) review the recommendations developed by the Animals and Plants Committees and make recommendations on the implementation of i) above.
- j) **Sharks and rays** with the **United States of America** as Chair and a mandate to, in consultation with the Animals Committee:
- i) review the revised *Rapid Guide on the making of legal acquisition findings*, and related assessments as they relate to trade in CITES-listed shark species caught in areas beyond national jurisdiction (including introductions from the sea), and determine if more specific guidance is needed for CITES-listed-shark species, including engagement with RFMOs and any capacity building which might support their role in the making of legal acquisition findings (LAFs) and related assessments;
 - ii) develop new guidance or identify existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II;
 - iii) review the FAO's on-going guidance on Catch Document Schemes, Port State Measures and any other measures to reduce Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing;
 - iv) in consultation with the Animals Committee, discuss challenges related to transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of fisheries management including the context of the provisions on introduction from the sea in Resolution Conf 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) and make recommendations to CoP20; and
 - v) report its findings to the Standing Committee for its consideration;

- k) **Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa** with **Nigeria** as Chair and with representation from all regions and a mandate to:
- i) make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries;
 - ii) consider whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed;
 - iii) consider the report of the Secretariat relating to decisions directed to the Secretariat; and
 - iv) make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee directed to the Parties, the Secretariat, and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate;
- l) **Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade** with **Israel** and **Singapore** as co-Chairs and a mandate to:
- i) review the report of the Secretariat, taking into account the recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees;
 - ii) taking into account the information provided by the Secretariat and the Animals and Plants Committees, consider the establishment of a CITES advisory body to provide guidance based on best available science to Parties, in their efforts to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spill-over and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains, including markets;
 - iii) taking into account proposals in document CoP19 Doc. 23.2 and in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees, consider the need for and development of a Resolution on actions CITES Parties and others could take to advance a 'One Health' approach as it pertains to international wildlife trade; and
 - iv) provide its guidance to the Secretariat and its recommendations, which may include a new draft resolution, to the Standing Committee for consideration;
- m) **Specimens produced through biotechnology** with a Chair still to be determined and a mandate to, in close collaboration with the Animals and Plants Committee:
- i) continue to discuss trade in products of biotechnology, which might potentially affect international trade in CITES-listed specimens in a way that would threaten their survival, including enforcement of CITES provisions. The working group's discussion shall consider the need for new guidance material or updates to existing guidance material on the following issues, in relation to trade in specimens produced through biotechnology:
 - A. whether an update is needed in the *Guidance on the use of the scientific exchange exemption and the simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates*, endorsed by the Standing Committee at SC73 (online, May 2021), to include a section on specimens produced through biotechnology;
 - B. whether there is a need for additional guidance on making legal acquisition findings in relation to specimens produced through biotechnology;
 - C. whether there is a need for guidance on the application of source codes to specimens produced through biotechnology;

- D. whether guidance is needed to improve permitting and enforcement of trade in specimens produced through biotechnology in order to address the risk of natural specimens of illegal origin being passed as synthetic and thereby entering the market with a valid CITES permit;
 - E. whether guidance is needed on traceability issues to improve permitting and enforcement of trade in specimens produced through biotechnology in order to ensure a clear link (e.g., marking, other means of identification) between a specimen produced through biotechnology and CITES documentation in order to prevent misuse;
 - F. whether biotechnology issues concerning animals and plants should be addressed distinctly; and
 - G. any emerging issues or cases not considered in the document AC31 Doc. 17/PC25 Doc. 20, such as hirudin and squalene;
- ii) communicate to the Animals and Plants Committees any matters that may require scientific advice and guidance, as appropriate; and
 - iii) make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee, including appropriate updates to existing guidance materials, the development of new guidance materials on trade in specimens produced from biotechnology or changes to any pertinent Resolution;
- n) **Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement* with Kenya and New Zealand** as co-Chairs and a mandate to:
- i) consider whether the following topics are gaps to be addressed in the content of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*:
 - A. the role of professional bodies and whether they should be held to higher standards with regard to violations/compliance;
 - B. whether to consider additional guidance in the Resolution relating to compliance and enforcement issues unique to trade in CITES-listed marine species, including issues pertaining to introduction from the sea;
 - C. whether to consider adding guidance in the Resolution relating to stockpile management;
 - D. whether to consider adding guidance in the Resolution relating to the One Health approach – a collaborative and transdisciplinary approach to achieving optimal health outcomes for people, animals, plants, and their shared environment;
 - E. whether to consider adding guidance in the Resolution relating to possible outcomes from currently ongoing discussions in Standing Committee working group on Electronic systems and information technologies; and
 - F. whether to update timeframes for providing information in response to requests for information from the Secretariat on a potential compliance matter;
 - ii) identify additional gaps to be addressed in the content of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19). In undertaking its review, the working group shall make efforts not to duplicate other relevant ongoing work and may refer any of the identified topics to be considered under other relevant work of the Standing Committee as appropriate; and
 - iii) make recommendations as appropriate to revise Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) to address gaps identified for consideration by the Standing Committee;

- o) **Review of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes** with the **United States of America** as Chair and a mandate to, taking into consideration document CoP19 Doc. 55, review the application of Resolution Conf 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, for situations where there is a change in the nature of the operation, or in the types of products being produced for export, and other matters raised in document CoP19 Doc. 55 as appropriate, and provide its recommendations to the Standing Committee;
 - p) **Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and of musical instruments** with **Australia** as Chair and a mandate to consider the need for the development of further appropriate mechanisms, including guidance and capacity-building on simplified procedures in accordance with the recommendations in Part XIII of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates*, to facilitate the efficient international movement of wildlife samples for diagnostic purposes and/or conservation purposes and the non-commercial movement of musical instruments for purposes of performance, display or competition, for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
 - q) **Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source** with **Belgium** and **Canada** as co-Chairs and a mandate to:
 - i) in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees, develop specific terms of reference including *modus operandi* and a roadmap as appropriate, to guide the continuation of the review of trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animal and plants not of wild source;
 - ii) continue to consider amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) and Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19), as well as any amendment to other Resolutions concerning provisions on trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animals and plants not of wild source, taking into account findings and suggestions in document SC74 Doc. 56 and any related comments and recommendations from the Standing Committee, Parties, the Secretariat or other stakeholders;
 - iii) review issues and challenges in the application of the Convention for trade in non-wild specimens of both CITES-listed animal and plant species, in particular key elements that may contribute to the uneven application of Article VII, paragraphs 4 and 5, and consider the scientific advice and guidance from the Animals and Plants Committees on the need for implementing these Articles differently for either animal specimens from species bred in captivity or plant specimens that are artificially propagated; and
 - iv) make recommendations for addressing these issues and challenges, including amendments to existing Resolutions or development of a new Resolution or Decisions to address these issues and challenges, for consideration by the Standing Committee.
 - r) **Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC)** with a chair to be elected from among its members. Membership of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee was agreed as reflected in the summary record of SC76.
 - s) **MIKE and ETIS Subgroup** with the composition as reflected in the summary record of SC76 was agreed and a chair to be elected from among its members. The mandate of the Subgroup is to oversee these two programmes according to its previously established [terms of reference](#).
3. The Committee took note of the interest of those Parties and observers present at SC76 to join these intersessional working groups. These Parties and observers are listed in the [summary record of SC76](#).
4. The Committee additionally requests other Parties and other observer organizations that have been accredited to attend past CITES meetings to indicate their interest in joining one or more of these Standing Committee intersessional working groups. Such Parties and observers are

requested to complete the form in the Annex to this Notification and to submit the completed and signed form to the Secretariat through e-mail (thea.carroll@un.org and helene.gandois@cites.org) **by 10 February 2023**.

5. The Committee would like to bring to the attention of Parties and observer organizations the specific requirements relating to the following two intersessional working groups:
 - a) **Engagement of indigenous people and local communities:** The Standing Committee shall endeavour to achieve regional balance of Parties and observers, and give special consideration to participation of representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities.
 - b) **Species at risk of extinction affected by international trade:** The working group should have two co-chairs (and if necessary, a vice-chair) and should have representation from all regions, the Animals and Plants Committees, and observers. The Chair of the Standing Committee will engage members and alternate Members of the Standing Committee as well as the Animals and Plants Committees through the respective Chairs to ensure the composition of the working group meets these requirements.
6. The Standing Committee will confirm the final membership of the intersessional working groups, ensuring respect for its rules of procedure concerning the balance of representation between Parties and observers (Rule 17.1).