



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2023/130

Geneva, 24 November 2023

CONCERNING:

Invitation to provide comments on SC77 documents and agenda items

1. At its 77th meeting, the Standing Committee noted the documents and agenda items in the list below and invited Members, Parties and observers to submit any comments on these agenda items to the Secretariat before 31 December 2023 so that the work mandated by the Conference of the Parties could proceed. Standing Committee Members, Parties and observers are kindly requested to submit their comments **as separate files for each document** at info@cites.org by **31 December 2023**. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to forward comments received to the relevant Chairs of the intersessional working groups or to consider the comments in its further work, as appropriate.
 11. Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties
 12. Emerging operational matters of the committees
 20. World Wildlife Trade Report
 22. Language strategy for the Convention
 26. CITES gender action plan
 30. Demand-reduction to combat illegal trade
 37. Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I
 38. Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement
 44. Conservation and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*)
 48. Purpose-of-transaction codes
 49. Electronic systems and information technology
 50. Stocks and stockpiles
 53. Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments

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

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- 54. Specimens produced through biotechnology
 - 56. Disposal of confiscated specimens
 - 57. Labelling system for trade in caviar
 - 60. Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade
2. For ease of reference, the Secretariat has compiled in the Annex to this Notification the recommendations of each document and a hyperlink to the document.
3. The Secretariat has also included in the Annex to this Notification the recommendations included in documents SC77 Doc. 16, SC77 Doc. 39.3, SC77 Doc. 47 and SC77 Doc. 70, for which the Standing Committee also invited comments as set out in the relevant executive summary:

Agenda item 16. CITES Strategic Vision - see executive summary SC77 Sum. 9

The Committee:

- a) *requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and observers on the mapping of the areas of alignment between the CITES Strategic Vision and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework as contained in Annex 1 to document SC77 Doc. 16 and on the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions contained in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 16;*

Agenda item 39.3. CITES Big Cat Task Force - see executive summary SC77 Sum. 5 (Rev. 1)

The Committee:

- a) *requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to invite perspectives on a possible resolution on all big cats and to prepare an analysis of the merits and drawbacks of developing a resolution on all big cats, in consultation with the Animals Committee, and to submit its conclusions and recommendations to the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting; and*

Agenda item 47. Introduction from the sea - see executive summary SC77 Sum. 7 (Rev. 1)

The Committee:

- c) *noted the revised 10 questions most frequently asked on 'CITES trade from areas beyond national jurisdiction' and the responses prepared by the Secretariat, contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 47 and encouraged Parties to provide further inputs by 31 December 2023;*

Agenda item 70. Annotations - see executive summary SC77 Sum. 8

The Committee noted this interim report and invited comments or guidance regarding the tasks included in the Terms of Reference contained in paragraph 3 and 4 of document SC77 Doc. 70 to be submitted directly to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as Chair of the intersessional working group on annotations.

Document number and title	Recommendations and associated text
11. Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) take note of the progress made in implementation of Decision 18.1; b) provide any advice or comments on document SC77 Doc. 11 or process at this point; and c) agree that the working group continue its deliberations to reach consensus on a proposed text to amend Rule 25.6 with the view to ensuring the effective conduct of the meetings; and submit a report, including its recommendations, to the Standing Committee for consideration at its 78th meeting.
12. Emerging operational matters of the committees	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) consider the guiding principles outlined in paragraph 3 of document SC77 Doc. 12 and the exceptional circumstances described in paragraph 5 and suggest other possible guiding principles or exceptional circumstances; b) request the Secretariat to continue using the risk matrix for convening CITES meetings contained in the present document; c) agree to use the <i>Guidance on the application of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee in an online or hybrid meeting</i> in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 12 when exceptional circumstances warrant the organization of an online or hybrid meeting and request the Secretariat to publish it on the CITES website; d) submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on <i>Establishment of Committees</i> as described in paragraphs 21, 23 and 25 of document SC77 Doc. 12 and as collated in Annex 3 to the document; and e) consider the proposal for an intersessional decision-making procedure for the organization of intersessional work as outlined in paragraphs 18 and 19, and request the Secretariat to develop a proposal for amending Rule 20 of its Rules of procedure taking into account the comments made at the present meeting for its consideration at its 78th meeting. <p style="text-align: center;">PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 18.2 ON <i>ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES</i></p> <p><u>Regarding exceptional circumstances</u></p> <p>9. DECIDES that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>should a meeting of a Committee be postponed due to circumstances that are either global or at the location of the meeting preventing its organization, the postponed meeting should take place no later than six months after its original date. If no alternative location is found within two months, the meeting is to be organized fully online (possibly with an adapted agenda and working programme and ensuring an equitable timing for all regions);</u> b) <u>should exceptional circumstances prevent Committee Members from several regions from being present in person at a meeting and thereby affecting the quorum, the meeting of that Committee should be held in a</u>

	<p><u>hybrid format. The scientific committees' Members who are unable to travel to the location of the meeting would be connected online. The Standing Committee Members who are unable to travel to the location of the meeting and who do not have a diplomatic representation available at the location of the meeting would be connected online; and</u></p> <p>ANNEX 1</p> <p><i>Duties of the regional Members of the Standing Committee</i></p> <p>13. <u>During meetings of the Committee, if so requested by the Management Authority of a Party of its region not present at the meeting, a regional Member may read a short statement presenting concise information on their behalf when a specific agenda item directly affects the absent Party.</u></p> <p>ANNEX 2</p> <p><i>Duties of the Members of the Animals and Plants Committees</i></p> <p>13. <i>The duties of the Members elected to the Animals and Plants Committees and their alternates are as follows:</i></p> <p>[new sub-paragraph to be inserted after sub-paragraph f)]</p> <p>d) <i>when a region has more than one representative, the representatives should also agree which Parties each represents. Contact should also be established with non-Parties in the region;</i></p> <p>e) <i>each Member should increase the awareness of the role and function of the committee, its mandate and the issues of concern to his/her region through mechanisms such as participation in seminars or in related meetings organized by the Secretariat and by other organizations at regional or sub-regional level;</i></p> <p>f) <i>before the meetings of the committee, the Members should inform and consult the Parties in their regions about the agenda and in particular on matters specifically relevant to the countries of the region;</i></p> <p>x) <u><i>during meetings of the Committee, if so requested by the Management or Scientific Authority of a Party of its region not present at the meeting, the Member may read a short statement presenting concise information on their behalf when a specific agenda item directly affects the absent Party;</i></u></p>
<p>16. CITES Strategic Vision</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <p>a) review and possibly amend the areas of alignment between the <i>CITES Strategic Vision</i> and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework as contained in Annex 1 to document SC77 Doc. 16 and request the Secretariat to publish this mapping on the CITES website;</p> <p>b) in order to ensure the long-term contribution of CITES to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework, consider and submit to the Conference of the Parties amendments to Resolution</p>

Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* contained in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 16 as follows (deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~; new text is underlined):

RECOGNIZING the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, developed and adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its ~~10th~~ 15th meeting in ~~Nagoya, Japan~~ Montreal, Canada;

STRESSING that effective implementation of CITES is needed to implement the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* and its monitoring framework *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and to achieve the Aichi targets;

UNDERLINING the commitment of the Convention to demonstrate how the effective implementation of CITES contributes to the implementation of the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* and its monitoring framework *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the relevant Aichi targets;

RECOGNIZING the already existing significant cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions;

COMMENDING the ongoing and important cooperation among the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions, such as thorough the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the Environmental Management Group, and in particular through its Issue Management Group on Biodiversity;

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity*, and Resolution Conf. 13.3 on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)*, and Resolution Conf. 18.5 on *Cooperation and synergy with the World Heritage Convention*, as well as ~~Decision 15.19 and Resolution Conf. 18.3 on CITES Strategic Vision: 200821-20130~~;

WELCOMING the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on cooperation, coordination and synergies with CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions;

RECOGNIZING the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The Future We Want*, that recognizes the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and encouraging the Parties to MEAs to consider further measures to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance cooperation and coordination amongst MEAs;

CONVINCED of the significant potential of increasing cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to enhance coherent national level implementation of each of the conventions;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ENCOURAGES Parties to consider further opportunities to strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions at all relevant levels; and
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties further strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and other partners at the national level to enhance coherent national-level implementation of the Convention;

	<p>3. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to contribute to the monitoring framework of the <i>Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</i> by providing to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) any relevant data it has collected on the indicators for the <i>CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030</i>, if so requested by the CBD Secretariat; and</p> <p>4. ENCOURAGES Parties, through their CITES and CBD focal points, to take into account the information gathered for the development of non-detriment findings when reporting to CBD.</p>
<p>20. World Wildlife Trade Report</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) take note of document SC77 Doc. 20 and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.30; b) invite Parties and observers to provide by 30 November 2023 feedback and views on the pilot <i>World Wildlife Trade Report</i> and the potential utility and drawbacks of producing such a report periodically; and c) request the Secretariat to compile responses from Parties to the report and to present its findings and make recommendations to its 78th meeting. <p><i>Note from the Secretariat: deadline to respond to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/019 has been extended until 31 December 2023</i></p>
<p>22. Language strategy for the Convention</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the Secretariat's update on the implementation of Decision 19.38; and b) consider the future approach to the language strategy of the Convention in order to provide interpretation in all six languages at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, with emphasis on the interpretation at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, subject to extrabudgetary contributions. <p><i>Note from the Secretariat: Kuwait has graciously accepted to review the translation of CITES Resolutions into Arabic and the Secretariat is looking for volunteer Russian-speaking Parties to review the Russian translations of the CITES Resolutions.</i></p>
<p>26. CITES gender action plan</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide comments on the draft outline of the <i>CITES Gender Action Plan</i> contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 26; b) welcome the financial support from the European Union towards the implementation of Decision 19.51; c) encourage other Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide further financial support to facilitate the efforts towards the development and implementation of the <i>Gender Action Plan</i> and to share knowledge, case studies and other relevant experiences with the Secretariat in support of the preparation of the Action Plan; and d) request the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee, to submit a draft <i>CITES Gender Action Plan</i> for its consideration at its 78th meeting.
<p>30. Demand-reduction to combat illegal trade</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the present document and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.55.</p>
<p>37. Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) remind Parties to the Convention that the regulation and penalization of possession of specimens of species included in the Appendices – including Appendix I – is a requirement under Article VIII of the Convention;

	<p>b) consider recommending to the Conference of the Parties amending Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on <i>National laws for implementation of the Convention</i> to require more clearly that domestic measures prohibit possession of specimens obtained in violation of the Convention, to facilitate enforcement of the prohibition of trade in violation of the Convention;</p> <p>c) remind Parties whose legislation is in Category 2 and Category 3 under the National Legislation Project that possession is one of the areas being analysed by the Secretariat in the context of the review of national legislation; and</p> <p>d) invite Parties whose legislation is in Category 1 under the National Legislation Project to identify potential loopholes in their national CITES-implementing legislation, in particular with regard to the possession of illegally traded specimens of CITES-listed species, and to adopt any necessary amendments.</p> <p><i>Note from the Secretariat: On recommendation a), the Secretariat refers to the requirement to regulate and penalize possession of illegally traded specimens of CITES-listed species, as in recommendation d). On recommendation b), the recommendation is that the Secretariat would propose amendments Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting, for further submission to CoP20.</i></p>
<p>38. Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <p>a) take note of document SC77 Doc. 38 and the progress made in implementation of Decision 19.66 on review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on <i>Compliance and enforcement</i>;</p> <p>b) provide any advice or comment on the document or process at this point;</p> <p>c) agree that the working group continue its deliberations to better understand the scope of the issues, reporting to SC78 with recommendations on whether the topics in Decision 19.66 are gaps to be addressed in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) and corresponding amendments to address them; as well as any further gaps to be addressed in the content of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19); and</p> <p>d) consider whether to request the Secretariat in liaison with the co-Chairs of the working group to issue a Notification to Parties seeking responses to the Questionnaire from a broader range of Parties to gain better understanding of the scope of issues outlined in Decision 19.66 to inform any revision of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19).</p>
<p>39.3 CITES Big Cats Task Force</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <p>a) consider the proposal of a resolution on illegal trade in big cats, including the possible revision of Resolution 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on <i>Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species</i> to be applicable to all big cat species and provide guidance to the Secretariat in this regard;</p>
<p>44. Conservation and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope (<i>Pantholops hodgsonii</i>)</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to note document SC77 Doc. 44.</p>
<p>47. Introduction from the sea</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <p>c) review the revised 10 questions most frequently asked on 'CITES trade from areas beyond national jurisdiction' and the responses prepared by the Secretariat, contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 47 and provide further inputs, as appropriate;</p>

<p>48. Purpose-of-transaction codes</p>	<p><i>No document</i></p> <p><i>Note from the Secretariat: The Secretariat will forward any comments related to that agenda item to the Chair of the intersessional working group.</i></p>
<p>49. Electronic systems and information technology</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 49.</p>
<p>50. Stocks and stockpiles</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) consider the work conducted in past intersessional periods as summarized in paragraph 3 to 10 of document SC77 Doc. 50; b) take note of the review of existing provisions on stocks/stockpiles in Resolutions and Decisions and the information on their implementation contained in paragraph 11 of document SC77 Doc. 50; c) consider the suggested definition of stocks/stockpiles contained in paragraph 16 of document SC77 Doc. 50 and agree on a definition to assist Parties with implementation; d) encourage Parties to use the Practical Guidance and Ensuring Effective Stockpile Management: A Guidance Document as needed for the management of stockpiles of rhino horn, elephant ivory, pangolin scales and saiga horn as well as stocks/stockpiles of other species where the guidance can be applied and provide feedback to the Secretariat on the use of the guidance; and e) consider whether additional guidance on management and controls of stockpiles of timber tree species is needed and, if appropriate, develop such guidance with the assistance of the CITES Secretariat. <p><u>Suggested definition of stocks/stockpiles:</u> <i>Stocks, stockpiles: In the context of CITES, the words stocks and stockpiles are used interchangeably to refer to any volume or number of accumulated dead specimens of CITES-listed species held temporarily by public or private entities.</i></p>
<p>53. Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) review the progress made by the working group; and b) offer its comments and suggestions, in particular with respect to work the group could undertake following SC77.
<p>54. Specimens produced through biotechnology</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to note the interim report of the intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology.</p>
<p>56. Disposal of confiscated specimens</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the update provided on the implementation of Decisions 19.169 to 19.174.</p>
<p>57. Labelling system for trade in caviar</p>	<p><i>No document</i></p> <p><i>Note from the Secretariat: The Secretariat will forward any comments related to that agenda item to the Chair of the intersessional working group.</i></p>
<p>60. Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) take note of this interim report and the progress made in implementation of Decisions 19.186 to 19.188 and offer guidance to the working group as it seeks to fulfil its mandate; and

	<p>b) provide any views from their respective regions on the main areas for future discussion described in paragraph 7 of document SC77 Doc. 60, in particular where issues or difficulties have been experienced by any Parties within their region seeking to develop or submit species listing proposals.</p> <p><u>Paragraph 7:</u> Following SC77, the main areas for discussion and developing recommendations within the working group are expected to be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) continue to review methods of identifying species that may be at risk of extinction and threatened by international trade, including any existing assessments that have looked at this previously;b) understand the issues or difficulties Parties face when developing proposals to amend the CITES Appendices;c) review and provide recommendations on the support, materials, guidance or any other capacity building (considering Resolution Conf. 19.2 on Capacity-building) that Parties might benefit from in developing proposals to amend the CITES Appendices; andd) review the recommendations of the joint AC/PC intersessional working group and provide any recommendation of its own to the Standing Committee.
<p>70. Annotations</p>	<p>The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this interim report, and to offer comments or guidance to the working group regarding the tasks included in the Terms of Reference contained in paragraph 3 and 4 of document SC77 Doc. 70.</p> <p><u>Paragraph 3:</u> The Standing Committee re-established the Working Group on Annotations with the following terms of reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) <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;</i>b) <i>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;</i>c) <i>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;</i>d) <i>conduct any work related to annotations directed to it by the Conference of the Parties, the Standing, Animals or Plants Committee; and</i>e) <i>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.</i> <p><u>Paragraph 4:</u> In addition to the mandate, following PC26 and AC32 (July 2023), the Committees invited the working group to:</p>

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) to consider as a priority completion of its tasks under paragraphs a) and c) of its mandate, with a particular focus on the review of annotation #14. (PC26)b) consider paragraphs g) and h) of annotation A10 for <i>Loxodonta africana</i> as part of its mandate. |
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