

## CITES COP14 HIGHLIGHTS:

TUESDAY, 5 JUNE 2007

The fourteenth Conference of the Parties (CoP14) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened in two committees throughout the day. Committee I, chaired by Greg Leach (Australia), considered, *inter alia*, production systems, trade in alien invasive species, species trade and conservation issues, and export quotas for African leopard and black rhinoceros. Committee II, chaired by Chi Sun Cheung (Hong Kong, SAR-China), addressed, *inter alia*, the budget, the strategic vision, and CITES and livelihoods. Working groups were established on the strategic vision, the budget, the review of scientific committees, sea cucumbers, and hawksbill turtle.

### COMMITTEE I

**INTERNATIONAL EXPERT WORKSHOP ON NDF:** MEXICO introduced its proposal for an expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDFs) (CoP14 Doc.35), which was approved by the Committee.

**PRODUCTION SYSTEMS FOR SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES:** AC Chair Althaus reported a lack of consensus in the joint AC and PC intersessional working group on the issue (CoP14 Doc.38), proposing to extend the group's mandate beyond CoP14. AUSTRALIA requested including other production systems such as aquaculture in the mandate, and the proposal was approved.

**TRANSPORT OF LIVE SPECIMENS:** AC Chair Althaus introduced the agenda item (CoP14 Doc.41), including draft decisions on transport of live animals by road, rail and sea, and on data collection for mortality of live specimens during transportation. Committee I approved the draft decisions with a minor amendment by the Secretariat.

**RST IN SPECIMENS OF APPENDIX-II SPECIES:** AC Chair Althaus introduced draft decisions related to *Psittacus erithacus* (African grey parrot) and *Tridacnidae* (giant clams) (CoP14 Doc.14.2), which were approved by the Committee with minor amendments.

**TRADE IN ALIEN INVASIVE SPECIES:** Committee I approved the joint AC and PC recommendation to delete the section contained in Resolution Conf.13.10 (alien invasive species) that instructs the Secretariat and the scientific committees to undertake activities on the issue.

**NOMENCLATURE ISSUES:** Committee I approved the list of standard references proposed by the Nomenclature Committee. On harmonizing CITES' taxonomy and

nomenclature with other MEAs, the EU and MEXICO cautioned against continual changes, which can require legislative adjustments at the national level.

### SPECIES TRADE AND CONSERVATION ISSUES:

**Saiga antelope:** The Secretariat introduced three draft decisions (CoP14 Doc.56), and highlighted the need to manage stockpiles of Saiga parts and derivatives in trading and consuming countries. MONGOLIA urged importing countries to consider alternatives to Saiga horn in traditional medicines. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION announced its intention to sign the range state Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope under the auspices of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS). SINGAPORE questioned references to illegal export from Malaysia and Singapore, and proposed instead referring to "Saiga-trading countries." Delegates adopted the draft decisions as amended by Singapore.

### SPECIES TRADE AND CONSERVATION ISSUES:

**Hawksbill turtle:** The Secretariat introduced the agenda item (CoP14 Doc.58), and recommended no further action on the issue, noting: the limited response from range states; the lack of a regional strategy despite a number of national and bilateral initiatives; and the inability to hold a regional workshop, agreed to at CoP13, due to insufficient funding.

CUBA announced its voluntary moratorium on marine turtle harvesting starting in 2008 and, supported by DOMINICA and COSTA RICA, called for continued CITES involvement in the issue. The US, supported by SAINT LUCIA, drew attention to regional initiatives, notably the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles, and opposed further CITES action on the issue. MEXICO and VENEZUELA urged synergies with regional processes. WWF and TRAFFIC said the regional workshop should not be held under the auspices of CITES. Chair Leach referred the matter to a working group to be chaired by Mexico.

**Sea cucumbers:** AC Chair Althaus introduced the agenda item (CoP14 Doc.62), including four draft decisions concerning sea cucumbers in the families *Holothuriidae* and *Stichopodidae*. Following a number of proposed amendments from parties, Chair Leach established a working group, to be chaired by the EU.

### APPENDIX-I SPECIES SUBJECT TO EXPORT QUOTAS: Leopard export quotas for Mozambique:

MOZAMBIQUE requested approval to increase its annual export quota for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use from 60 to 120 (CoP14 Doc.37.1). Many parties and NGOs supported the proposal, with several stating that the increase was

conservative and would be sustainable. ISRAEL and HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL cautioned that the increase was based on out-of-date data and was not scientifically rigorous. The proposal was approved by consensus, with ISRAEL formally registering its concern.

**Leopard export quotas for Uganda:** UGANDA presented its revised proposal to reduce the annual quota from 50 to 28 specimens. The proposal was approved by the Committee, noting ISRAEL's reservation, and with the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO expressing concern over the threat of increased poaching of its leopard populations.

**Black rhinoceros export quotas for Namibia and South Africa:** KENYA introduced its proposal for repealing Namibia and South Africa's annual quotas of five black rhinoceroses (*Diceros bicornis*) (CoP14 Doc.37.2), citing concerns about sustainability of quota levels and increased poaching. Supported by DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO and RWANDA, he suggested that other African countries could pay Namibia and South Africa for the costs of translocating any unwanted animals. NAMIBIA and SOUTH AFRICA stressed the conservation and livelihood benefits of trophy hunting and refuted claims of unsustainable quota levels and poaching increases. The issue was put to a vote, resulting in Kenya's proposal being rejected.

## COMMITTEE II

**FINANCING AND BUDGET:** Delegates considered and adopted the 2004-2006 financial reports (CoP14 Doc.7.1 (Rev.1)) and estimated expenditures for 2007 (CoP14 Doc.7.2 (Rev.1)).

Following discussions on the strategic vision, Secretary-General Wijnstekers introduced the budget for the next triennium in its new format as a costed work programme (CoP14 Doc.7.3 (Rev.1)). He clarified that the document presents all activities as fully funded through the core trust fund, stressing that parties may decide to prioritize activities by making some activities, or elements of them, conditional upon voluntary or external sources of funding.

The EU supported the new costed work programme and stated that most activities should be funded from the core trust fund. COLOMBIA noted the need to closely link the work of the strategic vision and budget working groups and, supported by BRAZIL and MALAYSIA, said that developing country priorities must not be left unfunded.

ARGENTINA, supported by the UK, JAPAN and FRANCE, requested a table equivalent to the past triennium's budget presentation and Secretary-General Wijnstekers said such information will be provided on the understanding that ultimately the budget will be assessed in the new format. Delegates discussed, voted, and decided to establish an open-ended budget working group chaired by Colman O'Criodain (Ireland).

**STRATEGIC VISION:** CANADA, Vice-Chair of the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG), presented the document (CoP14 Doc.11), noting, *inter alia*, that the SPWG had not drafted a prescriptive action plan, preferring that the strategic vision be a framework document.

The EU and others noted the difficulty of combining the improvement of CITES' implementation with the broader global biodiversity agenda. NORWAY, ICELAND and FLORA AND FAUNA INTERNATIONAL supported the Secretariat's comment that the present draft does not exceed CITES' mandate.

Secretary-General Wijnstekers emphasized that the strategic vision does not necessarily require increased contributions. AUSTRALIA underscored that CITES should not be subordinate to other processes, and SWITZERLAND stressed it should complement other MEAs.

BRAZIL, on behalf of GRULAC, supported by ZIMBABWE, KENYA and MALAYSIA, called for technical support and capacity building for developing countries, and CHINA stressed that the strategic vision should focus on individual species rather than the broad categories of marine and timber, citing the Convention's limited financial resources.

Noting the importance of domestic measures and capacity building, JAPAN emphasized formalizing a facilitation process for the implementation of the strategic vision. ISRAEL, supported by KENYA, said the right to apply stricter domestic measures is enshrined in the Convention and opposed restricting this right within the strategic vision. MALAYSIA said that requiring a risk assessment within NDF would impose excessive financial burden on parties. The INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE lamented the emphasis on trade at the expense of conservation. Delegates agreed to establish a working group chaired by Lynda Maltby (Canada) and to submit written comments on the issue.

**REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES:** AUSTRALIA introduced the document (CoP14 Doc.12), which includes a suggestion from the Secretariat to merge the CITES scientific committees. The EU, NEW ZEALAND, ARGENTINA, INDONESIA, CHINA, MEXICO and INDIA opposed the Secretariat's suggestion. Many, however, expressed support for the external evaluation working group's proposal to make the Nomenclature Committee a working group of the AC and PC. The EU, supported by the AC and PC Chairs, expressed concern about proposed deletions of portions of the AC and PC mandates. INDONESIA supported, while CHINA and the EU opposed, the need for independent committee chairs, with CHINA citing concerns about the disruption of regional balance. A working group, chaired by Germany, was established on the issue.

**ADDIS ABABA PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES:** AC Chair Althaus introduced the document on the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines on the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (AAPGs) (CoP14 Doc.13). INDIA said he could only support application of those principles that are in line with CITES. The EU, supported by SWITZERLAND and ARGENTINA, proposed using the AAPGs in non-detriment findings "where appropriate" to reflect the AC/PC's recommendation. MALAYSIA, the US and BOTSWANA said that the EU proposal did not go far enough, with the US favoring the AC/PC's exact language stating that the AAPGs be used as a "voluntary" tool in the making of NDFs. AUSTRALIA opposed the AC/PC recommendations and the EU proposal. The matter was referred to informal consultations between the EU, the US and others.

**CITES AND LIVELIHOODS:** ARGENTINA introduced the proposal on CITES and livelihoods (CoP14 Doc.14), which was supported by MEXICO, CHINA and the EU. MEXICO, however, said activities under this item should be funded by external sources, and the EU emphasized that decisions on species listings should be based solely on biological and trade criteria. The UK noted that the current text could be construed to place livelihoods above biodiversity and delegates agreed to establish a drafting group to revise the text to alleviate NGO concerns in this regard.

## IN THE CORRIDORS

As Tuesday unfolded delegates began tackling some of the substantive issues on the agenda, bringing to light those likely to challenge CoP14's consensual mettle.

In the convention center's spacious corridors participants were heard commenting on Monday afternoon's regional meetings. Several welcomed GRULAC's emerging unified position on many key issues, but one cautioned that the region's new found "one voice" may be drowned in the cacophony of national interests in timber and fisheries trade.

Others noted that while the African regional meeting focused on procedural issues, division appears likely to continue in the African Elephant Range States Dialogue, with one delegate lamenting that all three scenarios laid out in a working text presented to the group involve ivory sales. Some observers also commented that Committee I's acrimonious debate on black rhino trophy hunting quotas does not bode well for those laboring to achieve a region-wide consensus on elephant proposals.