

## SUMMARY OF THE 57TH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE: 14-18 JULY 2008

The 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened in Geneva, Switzerland, from 14-18 July 2008. Approximately 300 participants attended the meeting, including SC members, observer parties, and inter- and non-governmental organizations. SC57 addressed a complex agenda, including: the CITES Strategic Vision for 2008-2013; financial matters; review of the scientific committees; trade and conservation issues in species including great apes, elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses, sturgeons, ramin and bigleaf mahogany; and other issues on interpretation and implementation of the Convention.

SC57 adopted a number of recommendations, including on: development of indicators; costed programme of work for 2009-2011; review of the status of the elephant, trade in its specimens and the impact of the legal trade; and designation of China as a ivory trading party.

Many intersessional working groups were established to carry out work on, *inter alia*: CITES and livelihoods; introduction from the sea; the Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme; decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade; intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale; review of the scientific committees; cooperation between parties and promotion of multilateral measures; trade in crocodylian specimens; and purpose codes on CITES permits and certificates. These working groups are expected to report back to the next meeting of the Standing Committee in July 2009.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was established as a response to growing concerns that over-exploitation of wildlife through international trade was contributing to the rapid decline of many species of plants and animals around the world. The Convention was signed by representatives from 80 countries in Washington, DC, United States, on 3 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975. There are currently 173 parties to the Convention.

The aim of CITES is to ensure that international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival. CITES parties regulate wildlife trade through controls and regulations on species listed in three appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade, permitting such trade only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II species are those that may become endangered if their trade is not regulated, thus requiring controls aimed at preventing unsustainable use, maintaining ecosystems and preventing species from entering Appendix I. Appendix III species are those subject to domestic regulation by a party requesting the cooperation of other parties to control international trade in that species.

In order to list a species in Appendix I or II, a party needs to submit a proposal for approval by the Conference of the Parties (CoP), supported by scientific and technical data on population and trade trends. The proposal must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of parties present and voting. As the trade impact on a species increases or decreases, the CoP decides whether or not the species should be transferred or removed from the appendices. There are approximately 5,000 fauna species and 28,000 flora species protected under the three CITES appendices. Parties regulate the international trade of CITES species through a system of permits and certificates that are

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required before specimens listed in its appendices are imported, exported or introduced from the sea. Each party is required to adopt national legislation and to designate two national authorities, namely, a Management Authority responsible for issuing permits and certificates based on the advice of the second national body, the Scientific Authority. These two national authorities also assist with CITES enforcement through cooperation with customs, police and other appropriate agencies.

Parties maintain trade records that are forwarded annually to the CITES Secretariat, thus enabling the compilation of statistical information on the global volume of international trade in appendix-listed species. The operational bodies of CITES include the Standing Committee (SC) and two scientific committees: the Plants Committee (PC) and the Animals Committee (AC).

**CONFERENCES OF THE PARTIES:** The first Conference of the Parties was held in Bern, Switzerland, in November 1976, and subsequent CoPs have been held every two to three years. The CoP meets to, *inter alia*: review progress in the conservation of species included in the appendices; discuss and adopt proposals to amend the lists of species in Appendices I and II; consider recommendations and proposals from parties, the Secretariat, the SC and the scientific committees; and recommend measures to improve the effectiveness of the Convention and related to the functioning of the Secretariat. The CoP also periodically reviews the list of resolutions and decisions, as well as the species listed in the appendices.

**SC53:** Held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 27 June-1 July 2005, SC53 discussed a number of issues, including: the Rules of Procedure; the Strategic Vision, including the establishment of a Strategic Plan Working Group; agreement in principle on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the SC; the review of significant trade (RST); financial matters; and budget. The Secretariat reported on progress on the country-based review of Madagascar and the SC heard reports from country representatives. Other decisions focused on: synergies between CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity; cooperation with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS); cooperation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); conservation of and trade in great apes, tigers, African and Asian rhinoceroses; and control of trade in African elephant ivory.

**SC54:** The 54th meeting of the Standing Committee convened in Geneva from 2-6 October 2006. Over 20 decisions and recommendations were adopted, and the Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and the FAO was signed. The SC approved the Secretariat's estimated expenditures for 2006, and set a deadline for the submission of comments on the CITES Strategic Plan 2008-2013. The SC also agreed, *inter alia*, to: defer consideration of trade in tigers to CoP14; review timber trade in Peru and Malaysia at future SC meetings; designate Japan as a trading partner for the one-off sale of ivory stockpiles from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, but not to proceed with the sale at this point; and not to revise the 2006 caviar export quotas.

**SC55:** The 55th meeting of the Standing Committee took place just prior to CoP14 in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 2 June 2007. The SC examined China's request to be considered a

trading partner for African ivory, but deferred its decision until SC57. The Committee also accepted MIKE baseline data and adopted recommendations on bigleaf mahogany.

**CITES CoP14:** The fourteenth Conference of the Parties convened from 3-15 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands. The meeting considered 70 agenda items and 37 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. CoP14 adopted resolutions and decisions directed to parties, the Secretariat and Convention's committees, on a wide range of topics including: the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013; a guide to compliance with the Convention; management of annual export quotas; and species trade and conservation issues, including Asian big cats, sharks and sturgeons. Regarding species listings, CoP14 decided to list: slenderhorned and Cuvier's gazelles and slow loris on Appendix I; Brazil wood, sawfish and eel on Appendix II; and to amend the annotation on African elephants to allow a oneoff sale of ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe with a nine-year resting period for further ivory trade.

**SC56:** The 56th meeting of the Standing Committee took place immediately following CoP14 in The Hague on 15 June 2007. The Committee re-elected Cristian Maquieira (Chile) as Chair.

**PLANTS AND ANIMALS COMMITTEES:** The 17th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee (PC17) and the 23rd meeting of CITES Animals Committee (AC23) convened from 15-19 and 19-23 April 2007, respectively, in Geneva, Switzerland. PC17 discussed and presented recommendations on a wide range of topics, including: the RST in Appendix II species; the periodic review of plant species included in the CITES appendices; timber issues; strategic planning; non-detriment findings (NDFs); transport of live plants; and the definitions of hybrids and cultivars under the Convention.

AC23 addressed items, including: the RST in Appendix II species; production systems for specimens of CITES-listed species; conservation and management of sharks; the periodic review of animal species included in the Convention's appendices; and a proposal to transfer the Mexican population of *Crocodylus moreletii* from Appendix I to Appendix II.

A joint session of the two committees addressed issues of common interest to both committees, including: the revision of the terms of reference of the PC and AC; cooperation with advisory bodies of other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements; RST in specimens of Appendix II species; an international expert workshop on NDFs; and transport of live animals and plants.

## SC57 REPORT

On Monday afternoon, 14 July 2008, Amb. Cristian Maquieira (Chile), Chair of the Standing Committee welcomed participants to the 57th meeting. CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers noted the importance of this meeting for implementing the decisions and recommendations of the 14th Conference of the Parties.

## STRATEGIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

**AGENDA AND WORKING PROGRAMME:** SC Chair Maquieira submitted the meeting's agenda (SC57 Doc.2 (Rev.1)) and working programme (SC57 Doc.3) for adoption. Mexico requested adding working groups' presentations to the agenda.

Israel, supported by the United Kingdom (UK), speaking on behalf of the European Community (EC), requested a progress report on the CITES project on e-commerce.

North America asked for the results of the morning's closed session of the Subcommittee on Finance and Budget, and suggested adding its terms of reference (ToRs) to the agenda. Secretary-General Wijnstekers noted that ToRs were informally elaborated during the closed session of the Subcommittee and would be distributed for participants' approval. The EC, supported by North America, suggested establishing a working group on strategic vision indicators (SC57 Doc.9).

The agenda and working programme were adopted as amended, adding the status reports on the workshop on non-detriment findings (NDFs) under "Any other business."

**RULES OF PROCEDURE: Recommendations of the Secretariat:** On Monday, the Secretariat introduced its recommendations on the rules of procedure (SC57 Doc. 4.1). He noted several options for action if the SC thought that the presentation and consideration of credentials was a problem. He recommended amendment of the rules (Rule 6, paragraph 2) to no longer require host state approval for international organizations to receive credentials. He further recommended that the Secretariat alert parties of relevant documents for meetings (Rule 20), and make them available either electronically or, upon request, in hard copy, rather than automatically distribute hard copies.

On credentials, China, supported by Japan and Botswana, suggested representatives without appropriate credentials be allowed to attend the meeting but not make interventions. The EC, supported by the Species Survival Network (SSN), agreed, noting that the SC should improve the timeliness of approving credentials and suggesting interventions be restricted or excluded from the summary record until the credentials are presented. Oceania acknowledged the problem and supported continuation of the current submission requirements. Kenya, noting problems of internet access, said all parties should be allowed to participate fully while they await verification of their credentials. The US asked for an amendment that would allow an invitation letter from the SC chairman to serve as the credential for non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

On participation of observers from international organizations, China noted the need for a clear definition of international organizations, and said the current system works well so that there was no need to amend it. The EC disagreed and supported the Secretariat's recommendations, along with Japan, Kenya, Oceania and SSN, and noted that international organizations should be exempt from the requirement and that this approach would be consistent with rules for other meetings, such as the Conference of Parties, Plants Committee and Animals Committee.

On distribution of documents for meetings, China, supported by the EC, Japan and the US, agreed with the Secretariat's recommendation, with the EC emphasizing the need to provide hard copies upon request. Oceania acknowledged the benefits of the recommended changes but said parties without reliable internet access should be given special consideration. Mali, supported by SSN, agreed and requested African countries receive documents by other means, with SSN noting the importance of consistency and the need to notify parties not just electronically but in writing.

SC Chair Maquieira suggested, and delegates agreed, to establish a working group on rules of procedure to discuss these matters further. The working group, facilitated by Jonathan Barzdo, CITES Secretariat, met on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On Friday in plenary, Barzdo presented the document (SC57 Com.2) prepared by the group, including measures on credentials, representation and attendance. The EC said he was not convinced that it was necessary to review the rules of procedure.

**Outcome:** The SC did not agree with the group's recommendation, and decided that the group would continue to meet interessionally.

**Submission of documents:** On Monday, Israel introduced the issue on submission of documents (SC57 Doc.4.2), which calls on the SC to address procedural issues caused by the late arrival and late revision of meeting documents. The Secretariat said its staff is aware of the issue and stressed that it will undertake a review to explore ways to improve matters.

The EC noted that sometimes for practical reasons there is a need to make exceptions to the deadlines. Africa and Oceania noted difficulties in accessing documents posted on the CITES website, which may prevent parties from providing input on new documents. North America suggested the item be discussed in the working group on rules of procedure.

**Outcome:** The SC noted the serious concerns that had been raised and the Secretariat's commitment to ensure that the deadline for publishing documents was met as often as possible.

**CREDENTIALS:** On Monday, the Secretariat said that credentials had not yet been received from five parties and 20 observers. On Friday, the Secretariat reported on the final numbers saying that they had not received credentials from four parties, nine IGOs and three NGOs.

**ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS:** On Monday, the Secretariat presented SC57 Doc.6 on admission of observers, which was agreed by the SC.

**ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN AND ALTERNATE VICE-CHAIRMAN:** SC Chair Maquieira noted that Ghana and China would continue to serve as SC Vice-Chair and alternate Vice-Chair, respectively.

**CLEARING HOUSE:** On Monday, Chair Maquieira invited delegations to consult and nominate a new member of the Clearing House. He also thanked Colman Criodain (Ireland) for his good work. On Friday, the SC agreed to the EC's nomination of Mercedes Lasso (Spain).

**STRATEGIC VISION 2008-2013: Development of indicators:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat reminded parties of the work completed to date on the Strategic Vision 2008-2013, underscoring the broad support for indicators that are measurable, realistic, meaningful, not open to interpretation, and that do not unduly increase reporting obligations for the parties. He suggested indicators be limited to three or four per objective, and proposed the SC establish a small working group on the topic whose membership would be limited to those parties who had submitted written comments on the issue. Canada, Oceania, Chile and the EC supported the proposal to establish the working group on indicators, and underscored that the indicators should be measurable and not overly burdensome on parties. Many parties, including Canada,

Brazil, Chile, the EC and Ghana, opposed the proposal to limit the group's membership and requested broader participation. Ghana emphasized the group's membership should be based on the principles of equity and regional representation, and Brazil highlighted that the current proposal excludes representatives from the African and Asian regions. SSN and Species Management Specialists (SMS) requested that NGOs also be allowed to participate in the group. The SC established the working group but did not limit participation. The working group, facilitated by Jonathan Barzdo, CITES Secretariat, met throughout the week.

On Friday, the Secretariat reported that the working group successfully narrowed down the indicators contained in document SC57 Doc.9 to approximately three indicators per objective (SC57 Com.6). He noted that the Secretariat would work in cooperation with IUCN to redraft one indicator related to the Millennium Development Goals where parties could not agree on the language. The US noted that because some of the indicators will require enormous amount of work, they may not prove as useful as hoped.

**Recommendation:** The SC agreed on indicators for each one of the strategic vision goals (SC57 Com.6), including the number of: parties that have designated management authorities and scientific authorities; parties subjected to CITES recommendations on trade; unlisted species subjected to significant levels of international trade; parties that have adopted standard procedures for making NDFs; and capacity building and training programmes conducted or assisted by the Secretariat.

**RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME:** On Monday, Margaret Oduk, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), delivered a message on behalf of UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, stressing UNEP's support for implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and urging CITES parties to continue to identify opportunities to cooperate with other MEAs, particularly at the national level. Oduk further: briefed SC57 on UNEP's recent activities aimed at strengthening administrative ties with CITES, including his establishment of an MEA management team composed of the heads of various MEA secretariats; and requested additional time to review the proposed Memorandum of Agreement between UNEP and CITES. Canada, Mexico, the US, and the EC expressed concern about the progress of finalizing the Agreement.

**Outcome:** The SC requested that Oduk transmitted its concerns to the UNEP Executive Director, in particular regarding the lack of progress with the Memorandum of Agreement. The SC looks forward to continued cooperation with UNEP.

**COOPERATION WITH THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS:** On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on Cooperation with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), noting that the first annex summarizes the state of joint activities as of April 2008, and the second annex proposes a new list of activities for the 2008-2010 period (SC57 Doc.11). He highlighted three major themes in the proposed list: harmonization of taxonomy and nomenclature; joint actions for the conservation and sustainable use of shared species; and

cooperation on administrative and fundraising activities. The EC, India, Peru and Oceania supported the proposed list, with India qualifying that cooperation should not lead to the loss in focus of the individual conventions, and Peru and Oceania suggesting the inclusion of additional species for cooperative work.

The US expressed concern that harmonization of nomenclature with CMS may create difficulties for parties in implementing any resulting changes, and suggested that no additional changes be made to taxa for which CITES has recently adopted changes. The Secretariat clarified that the CoP has instructed movement towards a harmonized approach and that any such movement would be done slowly so as to avoid implementation difficulties. He added that the SC does not have the mandate to add additional species to the list of joint activities. The CMS Secretariat noted that there are currently approximately 160 species common to both conventions, and that joint work on such species would lead to a reduction in duplication of work and associated costs. Humane Society International suggested the SC consider international databases on nomenclature that are currently being developed when addressing harmonization issues. The SC endorsed the proposed list of joint activities for 2008-2010.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.11), *inter alia*, that the Secretariat submit regular progress reports to the SC on the implementation of the joint actions as contained in the endorsed new list.

**COOPERATION WITH THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION:** On Monday, SC Chair Maquieira reported on a recent meeting with World Trade Organization (WTO) Deputy Director-General Harsha Vardhana Singh regarding obtaining permanent observer status for CITES at the WTO. Highlighting that increasing formal cooperation with the WTO will be very difficult due to political circumstances with the WTO General Council and restraints on the WTO Secretariat, he suggested that CITES explore additional avenues of informal cooperation such as *ad hoc* observer status on additional WTO committees (SC57 Doc.12). The US, India, and Canada supported the Chair's suggestion, with Canada, supported by Oceania, adding that *ad hoc* participation should be targeted and agenda driven. The US underscored the importance of national communication in assuring that WTO decisions do not conflict with CITES.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.12), *inter alia*, that the SC identify other WTO bodies besides the General Council and Committee on Trade and Environment in which to pursue *ad hoc* participation.

**CITES AND LIVELIHOODS:** On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on CITES and livelihoods (SC57 Doc.14), which was prepared in consultation with Argentina, China, Nicaragua and the UK. He noted the document recommends that the SC establish a working group on livelihoods to work intersessionally and electronically, and suggested one or two workshops on the issue, if funds are available. He said that the working group's members could include government experts and also representatives from indigenous and local communities, the private sector, research institutions and academia, relevant inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and NGOs. He noted that the suggested

ToRs could include the elaboration of two background papers: one on addressing possible tools for rapidly assessing “the positive and negative impacts of implementing CITES listing decisions on the livelihoods of the poor”; and another on how to address any assessed impacts.

The US, supported by the Netherlands, suggested and delegates agreed that the SC, rather than the working group, submit the papers to CoP15. Oceania suggested and delegates agreed that: the ToRs should not include reference to NDFs; and that the toolkit guidelines be consistent with CITES’ vision statement, by not allowing parties to delay or dilute the implementation of the Convention.

India suggested partnership and cooperation with other conventions rather than exploring the issue just under CITES. Peru said his country was ready to share its experience on the issue. Afghanistan supported establishing the working group, and asked for financial support for providing livelihoods possibilities for communities involved with poppies. The Global Tiger Forum (GTF) suggested: considering regional variation and the level of local populations’ dependency on natural resources; and launching projects to remove negative effects of the Convention’s implementation on people.

IUCN explained its ongoing data system that includes information on, *inter alia*: production, scale and primary use regarding natural resource harvesting and use of species; cost and benefit of the use of species; and information on biological and conservation risk that may be associated with species use.

TRAFFIC and WWF noted TRAFFIC’s research addressing the livelihood benefits of natural resource trade. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) highlighted the need for participation of more NGOs from developing countries.

The working group, chaired by Rafael Ramírez Arroyo (Peru), met on Friday morning to discuss its composition and ToRs. On Friday, Arroyo presented the group’s recommendations (SC57 Com.7) to which the SC agreed.

**Recommendation:** The SC agreed (SC57 Com.7) to, *inter alia*: establish balanced participation in the working group; elaborate its ToRs; elaborate ToRs for a consultant to prepare the toolkit and guidelines; and use an electronic forum and e-mail where appropriate, but that efforts will be made to ensure external funds for one or two meetings of the group’s participants during AC24.

#### **FINANCIAL MATTERS: Proposed Terms of Reference for the Finance and Budget Subcommittee of the CITES Standing Committee:**

On Tuesday, Secretary-General Wijnstekers reported on Monday’s closed session of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (SC57 Com.1). He detailed the proposed ToRs developed by the Subcommittee, highlighting that its composition would include one regional representative from each of the CITES regions, except Africa which he proposed should have two representatives. He further noted that the Subcommittee’s responsibilities would include, *inter alia* consideration of the: financing and budgeting aspects of the Convention; identifying those Secretariat activities that represent core functions to be funded through the Trust Fund; prioritizing other Secretariat activities based on its evaluation of the Secretariat’s costed work programme; and developing recommendations to the SC on all financial and budgetary documents and proposals developed through its work.

**Outcome:** The SC adopted the proposed ToRs, including the Secretary-General’s proposal to include two Africa representatives.

**Report for 2007:** On Friday, the SC took note of the report (SC57 Doc.13.1).

**Estimated expenditures for 2008:** Throughout the week, the Subcommittee on Finance and Budget (SCFB), chaired by Osvaldo Alvarez-Pérez (Chile), met to discuss estimated expenditures for 2008. On Friday, the SC took note of the document (SC57 Doc.13.2).

**Costed programme of work for 2009-2011:** Throughout the week, the SCFB discussed the costed programme of work for 2009-2011. SCFB Chair Alvarez-Pérez presented the recommendations (SC57 Com.8) and noted that Annex 2 of the document identifies core activities to be financed through the Trust Fund, and that all other activities would be financed by external funds and categorized as either priority A or B activities. He explained that once the prioritization of externally funded activities was complete, the Secretariat could proceed with mobilizing funds to support these activities in accordance with their prioritization by the SCFB. In addition to some minor amendments, the Secretariat proposed deleting the paragraph instructing the Secretariat to prepare a revised costed programme of work adjusted to the anticipated 92.2% collection rate. SCFB Chair Alvarez-Pérez also noted a number of typographical errors that would be corrected in the document.

The UK expressed concern that MIKE and livelihoods were not included in the list of core activities. Noting that the UK was not happy with the document, he said he would not block consensus but would consult with his regional representative on the matter during the intersessional period. The US noted that some core activities in the document may have already been identified by the CoP as being subject to available funds. He noted that the US would review this issue during the intersessional period.

While SC members did not object to the list of core activities contained in Annex 2, substantial discussion ensued regarding the Secretariat’s proposed amendment to delete the paragraph related to the revised costed programme of work based on the anticipated 92.2% collection rate. The North America representative and the US objected to its deletion on the basis that developing a costed programme of work on the basis of an overestimate of anticipated collections will result in a drawdown of the strategic reserve, which is not in line with Res. Conf.14.1 (Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2009-2011) that requires parties to ensure that the Trust Fund is kept on a sustainable footing. The Secretariat explained that the estimate should be based on the number decided by CoP14, contained in Res. Conf.14.1, and that it would be time consuming to create a costed programme of work based on another number. The EC acknowledged North America’s concern regarding the drawdown of the reserve, but added that requiring the Secretariat to produce a revised costed programme of work based on a 92.2% collection rate sends the wrong signal to parties that are slow in making their contributions. As members were unable to agree on the matter, SC Chair Maquieira suspended discussions and asked interested parties to consult informally. When discussions on the matter resumed after informal consultations, SCFB Chair

Alvarez-Pérez announced that an agreement had been reached to replace the paragraph under discussion with one that reads: “the Subcommittee on Finance and Budget will work with the Secretariat to prepare revised financial plans as necessary to be presented to the Standing Committee.” The SC agreed on the text as amended.

**Recommendation:** The SC (SC57 Com.8), *inter alia*:

- approves the costed programme of work and core activities to be financed from the Trust Fund as presented in Annex 2 of SC57 Com.8;
- requests the Secretariat to undertake resource mobilization efforts according to the ranking assigned by the SCFB; and
- agrees that the Subcommittee on Finance and Budget will work with the Secretariat to prepare revised financial plans as necessary to be presented to the Standing Committee.

**REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES:** On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented its review of the scientific committees (SC57 Doc.15). On the appointment of committee chairs, the EC emphasized the importance of expertise and continuity for committee chairs and suggested the committees continue to select them, rather than the CoP. He proposed that, once a chair is selected, his or her regional representation responsibilities be fulfilled by the alternate. AC Chair Thomas Althaus (Switzerland), supported by PC Chair Margarita Clemente (Spain), added that, in practice, alternates fulfill the chair’s regional duties. Mexico opposed the chair being relieved of his or her regional role.

Mexico, along with the US and China, supported a regional rotational system, and said the financial implications for developing countries need to be addressed. AC Chair Althaus, supported by PC Chair Clemente, added that salaries, not just expenses, need to be considered. Chile noted that the CoP needs to resolve administrative and financial issues to ensure effective regional participation, and China stressed that, because of the CoP’s budgetary authority, it should have the power to select chairs. Secretary-General Wijnstekers reminded participants of the CoP’s inclusion of US\$45,000 per year for each chair during 2009-2011 in the budget working group.

**Outcome:** The SC requested the Secretariat to prepare for SC58 estimated costs for arrangements for the AC and PC chairs.

## **INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS:** On Monday, reminding SC57 of the non-substantive errors in existing resolutions highlighted at CoP14, the Secretariat proposed, and delegates agreed to establish an electronic intersessional working group to review the Secretariat’s proposed corrections to the existing resolutions (SC57 Doc.16). The SC established an intersessional working group to be chaired by the US and report to SC58.

**COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT: National wildlife trade policy reviews:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on progress made in reviewing national wildlife trade policies in the four pilot countries: Madagascar, Nicaragua, Uganda and Viet Nam (SC57 Doc.17). He said the reviews promote capacity within countries and allow for the development of suggestions to improve CITES implementation.

He identified some problems including lack of political will, and stressed the importance of science-based policies and partnerships in conducting reviews. He then recommended that the SC commend the efforts of the four pilot countries and note the report, and that regional representatives advise the Secretariat of any parties in their regions that are interested in: sharing information on any conducted reviews; carrying out a review; or providing financial or technical support for conducting wildlife trade policy reviews.

France, on behalf of the European Union (EU), supported the continuation of the review process, and Kuwait noted its progress towards organizing a regional workshop among Arab speaking parties on national wildlife trade policy. India emphasized that reviews are voluntary, and should be done within the national environmental agencies. Humane Society International highlighted barriers to implementation, including internal communication at the national level. TRAFFIC and WWF pledged continued collaboration on wildlife trade policy reviews.

Answering SSN, the Secretariat noted that the reports would be finalized and available on the CITES website. Iran said the reports could be used for developing policies on other countries, and supported subregional workshops. He further noted that reviews are not linked to the compliance mechanism. The SC noted the report and commended the four parties involved in the pilot project for their efforts.

**National laws for implementation of the Convention:** On Friday, the Secretariat introduced its document on national laws for the implementation of the Convention (SC57 Doc.18). She noted 19 priority countries and the CoP14 agreement to require parties with inadequate legislation (in categories 2 and 3) to submit reports to SC58. She added that newer parties who have been in the Convention five years or less would be given more time.

The US described its outreach regarding new validation requirements for CITES certificates and noted that enforcement began in May 2008. The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation and SSN asked that Ecuador be identified as a priority country and for a timeline of communications and actions taken with respect to priority countries so that the SC can gauge responsiveness. Peru reported on progress, including on, *inter alia*: improving wildlife and wild plants laws in line with CITES principles; plans to establish a strategic plan for mahogany; and establishment of a stronger penal code. The SC adopted the recommendations.

**Recommendation:** The SC’s recommendations (SC57 Doc.81), *inter alia*:

- identify Bolivia, El Salvador and Tanzania as priority countries under the National Legislation Project;
- issue a written caution to Mozambique, South Africa and Venezuela advising them of the need to accelerate efforts to enact adequate legislation by SC58; and
- remind parties and dependent territories that SC58 will review their submissions.

**Cooperation between parties and promotion of multilateral measures:** On Friday, the Secretariat introduced the document on cooperation between parties and promotion of multilateral measures (SC57 Doc.19). She noted the

recommendation to establish a working group on multilateral measures that would work electronically to achieve greater consistency in implementation of the Convention and asked for interested members.

**Outcome:** The SC agreed to establish an intersessional working group, accepted Australia's offer to participate on behalf of Oceania, and said the rest of its composition would be determined by postal procedure.

**Enforcement matters:** On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the report on enforcement matters (SC57 Doc.20), and explained that electronic distribution of alerts was more efficient and allowed broader access by enforcement agencies. He informed that few parties had designated enforcement authorities, and recommended the SC consider asking regional representatives to report on the matter at SC58. He noted the World Customs Organization's enforcement committee had recently focused on environmental crime, including illegal wildlife trade, and was undertaking a survey of customs authorities worldwide regarding their responses to environmental crime.

The Secretariat recommended that suspension of trade with Nigeria should remain in place because of enforcement issues. Noting the lack of a technical mission to Saudi Arabia, he said the country was cooperating and assured the SC that the mission would take place this year.

He noted concerns regarding crocodilian skin exports from Paraguay, and the Secretariat's hope that the country could move to withdraw its voluntary moratorium on trade. He also provided an update on a workshop on trade via the internet, noted the EC's interest in funding it, and asked for parties to volunteer to host the workshop.

The Secretariat noted concerns regarding Egypt's implementation of the Convention especially regarding illegal trade in primates and ivory, noted its 2007 mission, and described progress including: marking of live animals; awareness raising; improving rescue center facilities; and engagement with Interpol's Wildlife Crime Working Group (SC57 Doc.20 Annex).

Pro Wildlife asked the SC to urge Egypt to fully comply with the Secretariat's recommendations by CoP15. The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation supported TRAFFIC's proposal for a mission to Nigeria and additional compliance recommendations for Egypt, saying that transport of great ape specimens through Nigeria is a "loophole" in the system. SSN requested, *inter alia*, that Egypt make arrangements with the CITES Secretariat to receive training for compliance, and supply DNA samples of currently confiscated specimens for testing. He further said that proper mechanisms should be in place for disposal of confiscated live specimens. Noting the consultative process on which they were developed, Egypt aligned itself fully with the Secretariat's 17 recommendations. He opposed any additional recommendations, suggesting instead that additional recommendations could be considered at a future date in light of progress made.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) noted that in Egypt dealers should be prosecuted with special attention to cases on chimpanzees and gorillas. The SC noted the Secretariat's report and endorsed its recommendations regarding the Secretariat's mission to Egypt.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Com.8), *inter alia*:

- widespread capacity building and awareness raising to be undertaken throughout all agencies that have a role to play in implementing CITES in Egypt;
- guidelines be prepared on the action to be taken by staff at ports or land border crossings when illicit movements of specimens of CITES-listed species are detected;
- enforcement agencies in Egypt consider the use of controlled deliveries as an investigative tool, both internationally and in-country;
- CITES or enforcement authorities communicate with the judiciary of Egypt to raise their awareness of the instances of significant illicit trade that have affected the country and which deserve an appropriate response from prosecutors and courts; and
- Egypt maintains its participation in the Interpol Wildlife Crime Working Group but its representative should preferably be a police officer.

**National reports:** On Friday, the Secretariat introduced the document on national reports (SC57 Doc.21). She recommended that the SC determine whether Djibouti, Dominica, Lesotho and Nepal failed to provide annual reports for three consecutive years without adequate justification. She said that if they had, the Secretariat would issue a notification recommending that parties not authorize any trade in CITES-listed species until the reports are received. She also noted the Secretariat's recommendation to establish a working group on special reporting requirements.

**Outcome:** The SC agreed to issue notifications regarding the four countries and to establish a working group on special reporting requirements

**Ranching operations:** The Secretariat introduced the document on ranching operations (SC57 Doc.22), and asked the SC to evaluate progress in Madagascar in implementing the resolution on ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II (Res. Conf.11.16 (Rev. CoP14)). He noted that it was a work in progress and that reporting would continue at SC58. Expressing concern with progress on export quotas and tagging of skins, he noted that export quotas for wild specimens remained at 750 despite an SC recommendation to reduce it to 200.

Madagascar provided an oral status report on implementation of its management plan of action on crocodiles and noted a number of measures, including, *inter alia*: the establishment of a steering committee; meetings with stakeholders; improvement of ranching operations; and cooperation with a group of experts currently in the country to begin activities on registration of crocodiles. She also noted awareness and training workshops for artisans being held in July 2008 with support from WWF. The Secretariat encouraged Madagascar to focus on tagging and identification of skins.

In response to a request by the EC for an update on consultations with Ecuador, Malawi and Uganda, the Secretariat said it would look into it.

The SC noted the progress made by Madagascar.

**TRADE CONTROL AND MARKING: Introduction from the sea:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on introduction from the sea (SC57 Doc.23), which recommends

that the SC establish an intersessional working group on the issue to be chaired by SC Chair Maquieira. She noted that SC57 should decide on the group's composition, bearing in mind the five UN regions and fishery management organizations. She highlighted that the FAO and United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) showed interest in participating. The EC suggested informal discussions on the issue. Oceania noted that if discussions start during SC57 they should not address technical issues because many experts on the issue were not present. Ghana requested that the working group not duplicate efforts of other UN institutions. Turkey objected to any reference made to UNCLOS in the document. WWF and TRAFFIC stressed the importance of the definition for "transportation into a state" and the interpretation of "introduction from the sea."

**Outcome:** The SC established the intersessional working group to further discuss the issue.

**Purpose codes on CITES permits and certificates:** On Monday, the Secretariat presented the issue (SC57 Doc.24) directing the SC to establish an intersessional joint working group to review the use of purpose-of-transaction codes by parties. The SC agreed and Chair Maquieira asked interested parties to register with the Secretariat.

**Electronic permitting:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat noted the document on electronic permitting (SC57 Doc.25) that addresses Decision 14.56 (electronic permitting), which directed the Secretariat to prepare a CD-ROM and web-based toolkit on electronic permitting systems for consideration by SC57. He said that Switzerland, UK and the Netherlands' Management Authorities offered support for this work. Italy, as the chair of the electronic permitting working group, requested that the group's participants evaluate and contribute to the toolkit. The DRC asked for clarification on how granting electronic permits would work in practice. The Secretariat stressed that in the interest of those countries with poor internet access and technological issues, the paper permit would continue to exist in parallel with the electronic system. The DRC suggested a training programme on the issue.

The SC noted the report and thanked the working group for its work.

**Trade in crocodilian specimens:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its document on trade in crocodilian specimens (SC57 Doc.26), and recommended establishing a working group that would include, *inter alia*, a representative selected by AC23, government officials from exporting and importing countries, and private sector companies or associations involved with tag production and crocodilian trade. Numerous parties and observers expressed interest in joining the working group. India, supported by SMS, requested the working group take note of the enforcement implications of permit exemptions for small crocodilian leather goods.

**Outcome:** The SC established an intersessional working group, chaired by the US, to further discuss the issue.

**Identification manual:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on the identification manual (SC57 Doc. 27), noted the manual's value, and said the difficulties in updating, distributing, searching and funding a paper-based manual prompted conversion to an electronic database. He explained the intent to employ a hybrid system that would allow

some data to be changed using an internet-based wiki system, which would enhance collaboration among parties. Responding to Humane Society International, the Secretariat noted measures to ensure only expert opinion is added to the database. The EC, along with IFAW, supported the conversion to an electronic system. The SC noted the report.

#### EXEMPTIONS AND SPECIAL TRADE PROVISIONS:

**Personal and household effects:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on personal and household effects (SC57 Doc.28), noting that the working group would continue to work electronically and report to SC58. The SC noted the progress of the working group on the issue.

**SPECIES AND TRADE CONSERVATION: Review of significant trade: Implementation of recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on the review of significant trade (RST) (SC57 Doc 29.1 (Rev. 2)). He noted that the annex provides: details of AC and PC recommendations for specific species; a summary of responses from range states; and the actions recommended by the Secretariat. He noted several changes to the document due to the Secretariat's receipt of new information from parties. The Secretariat also noted the country-based RST in Madagascar, saying that Madagascar was no longer required to submit regular reports, and that the Secretariat would reflect on the experience of undertaking a country-based review to determine if it can be improved. He noted the 68 cases detailed in the annex and the need to send a firm message to those who have shown little compliance.

Oceania supported the suggestion to dismiss the cases of Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and Palau regarding *Tridacna derasa* and *Tridacna gigas* (giant clams). The US supported giving parties extensions to provide reports, but suggested that parties be held to those extensions. The SC agreed.

Malaysia said it will continue with its voluntary zero export quota of *Gracula religiosa* (Hill Myna).

Japan, supported by Singapore, noted communications difficulties in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam and proposed the review of *Dendrobium nobile* (orchids) be extended by one year, during which time the Secretariat would request help in contacting the countries via the regional representative. The EC opposed, while the US agreed and proposed a time limit in case the Secretariat remained unable to get a response. SC Chair Maquieira suggested an extension of the deadline until 31 December 2008 for *Dendrobium nobile* from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and for *Tridacnidae* species from Micronesia, Madagascar, the Marshall Islands, Tonga and Viet Nam. He noted that there will be an automatic suspension of imports of these species if parties do not comply with the deadline. The SC agreed with SC Chair Maquieira's suggestion.

Regarding *Prunus africana* (red stinkwood), Ghana and Tanzania agreed to a workshop to be held in September 2008. Ghana noted the range states wanted the countries involved in the workshop to be expanded. Tanzania noted it is currently undertaking an inventory and will report on the issue to the Secretariat. Cameroon noted the important economic, social and ecological role of *Prunus africana* management. He requested assistance for enhancing the capacity of its scientific authority

and for a further extension of the deadline to 30 June 2009. The DRC noted its establishment of nurseries to farm the species, and that it had authorized permits for 200 of the allowed 1,000 tons. He also said his country would welcome donor assistance to help carry out a future study. Kenya noted that the findings of the ongoing NDF would be used to develop a strategy for species management and establish sustainable harvesting levels. SSN asked that illegal exports and shifts in trade in response to the reviews be considered. The EC expressed concern about the species situation in Cameroon, DRC and Tanzania. Stressing the financial situation of range states and the cost of carrying out studies, the DRC said that the Secretariat must mobilize resources to assist these countries. The SC agreed to the Secretariat's recommendation for no extension.

**Recommendation:** The SC's recommendations (SC57 Doc.29.1 (Rev.2)) include:

- dismissing the cases of Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and Palau regarding *Tridacna derasa* and *Tridacna gigas*;
- an extension of the deadline until 31 December 2008 for *Dendrobium nobile* from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and to *Tridacnidae* species from Micronesia, Madagascar, the Marshall Islands, Tonga and Viet Nam. The SC also recommended that all parties suspend imports of specimens from these countries if the recommendations have not been implemented by 31 December 2008; and
- no extension of the 30 June 2009 deadline for Cameroon, DRC and Tanzania regarding *Prunus africana*; management.

**Review of recommendations to suspend trade made more than two years ago:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on review of recommendations to suspend trade, which were made more than two years ago (SC57 Doc.29.2). Explaining that some trade suspensions have been in place for over 15 years, despite improved national conditions, the Secretariat commissioned a study by TRAFFIC to review existing suspensions (SC57 Doc.29.2 Annex 2), before making recommendations for withdrawing or maintaining those suspensions (SC57 Doc.29.2 Annex 1).

Oceania requested that the Secretariat develop a costed proposal for how to assist the Solomon Islands to comply with the AC recommendations. Responding to the EC request for wide consultation for this process in the future, AC Chair Althaus explained that the process is ruled by Res. Conf.12.8 (Rev. CoP13) (Review of significant trade in specimens of Appendix-II species), and this change would require an amendment.

On Thursday, the SC addressed each of the Secretariat's recommendations contained in Annex 1 of the document. The SC agreed with 27 of the Secretariat's 29 recommendations regarding withdrawing or maintaining existing trade suspensions. On the Secretariat's recommendation to withdraw trade suspensions on *Agapornis fischeri* (Fischer's Lovebird) and *Malacochersus tornieri* (pancake tortoise) in Tanzania, the SC objected to the Secretariat's recommendations, agreeing instead with Canada and Kenya that the trade suspensions on these species should be maintained. The SC adopted the recommendation with the exception of those for *Agapornis fischeri* and *Malacochersus tornieri* in Tanzania, maintaining the trade suspensions.

On Friday, Tanzania requested that the SC review its decision on *Agapornis fischeri* (SC57 Doc.29.2). The SC decided to maintain its decision by vote (two in favor, four against and two abstentions). In response to Tanzania's request for guidance on how to comply with the requirement, SC Chair Maquieira said the SC would address its query through postal procedure.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.29.2), *inter alia*:

- maintaining trade suspensions on *Agapornis fischeri* and *Malacochersus tornieri* in Tanzania;
- maintaining trade suspensions on, *inter alia*, *Hippopotamus amphibius* from Malawi, *Poicephalus robustus* (Cape Parrot) from Mali, *Cordylus tropidosternum* (Tropical Girdled Lizard) from Mozambique; and
- withdrawing trade suspensions on *inter alia*, *Lama guanicoe* (guanaco) from Argentina, *Lynx lynx* (Eurasian lynx) from Lithuania and Moldova, and *Coracopsis Vasa* (Vasa Parrot) from Madagascar.

**Great apes:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document on great apes (SC57 Doc.30), and noted that the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) had been working closely with CMS. He noted that no mention was made of prosecutions and observed that the Convention required countries to penalize violations to the Convention when animals enter cross-border trade. He praised the orangutan rehabilitation work in Sabah and Sarawak, Malaysia, and noted its linkages with tourism, saying it could provide an excellent example for other species.

Noting that parties often fail to fulfill their CoP reporting requirements and wish to reduce them, the Secretariat suggested the SC delete the CoP requirement for a regular review on the conservation of and trade in great apes (Res. Conf.13.4).

The EC, IUCN, WWF, SSN, Pro Wildlife and David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation opposed the suggestion. The IUCN also noted that the Species Survival Commission's primate specialist group and others were stepping up monitoring through development of the Ape, Populations, Environment and Surveys (A.P.E.S) database to provide a global picture of the distribution and status of the taxa.

The EC welcomed Indonesia's report and asked for details on the country's conservation strategy and enforcement to be provided to SC58. The US noted its 2007 assistance through the great ape conservation fund of US\$3.8 million and its programmes supporting orangutan conservation in Sumatra and Kalimantan.

**Outcome:** The SC took note of the report but rejected the Secretariat's suggestion to delete reporting requirements.

**Asian big cats: Report of the Secretariat:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced its report on Asian big cats (SC57 Doc.31.1). He highlighted that, while CoP14 Decision 14.65 directed range states to report on progress in implementing the resolution on the conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix I Asian big cat species (Res. Conf.12.5), he received reports from only six of the 14 tiger range states. He noted that the Secretariat was unable to raise external funds to convene a tiger trade enforcement meeting within 12 months, as directed by CoP14 Decision 14.70. He suggested the meeting be in the format of an intelligence-based enforcement workshop. He also revived the Secretariat's suggestion from SC54 for a high-level

enforcement summit with the participation of senior-level police and customs officials from tiger range states. He informed the SC that two tiger range states supported the idea.

He further noted the June 2008 launch of a World Bank initiative on tiger conservation, and said the Secretariat would, in conjunction with GTF and IUCN, engage with the World Bank on these issues to ensure efforts are not duplicated. Noting the World Bank's potential to raise the profile of these issues, especially tiger habitat loss, IUCN suggested working with the Bank to establish a global tiger strategy with a clear and agreed set of priorities. The EU, supported by the US, GTF, WWF and TRAFFIC, expressed concern that few range states had submitted the reports, and supported by GTF, added that the information submitted in the reports was not comprehensive. GTF asked for a standardized reporting format that would ensure all elements of Res. Conf.12.5 are addressed, and suggested using benchmark years to help analyze trends.

India and Malaysia noted their recent initiatives on the issue. The US stressed the need for action in Asian big cat consumer countries to reverse the downward population trend. Afghanistan noted the acute condition of its tigers and requested technical assistance.

The EC expressed readiness to provide funding for the enforcement workshop. The US suggested it would be more effective for the tiger trade enforcement task force to attend the enforcement expert group rather than to hold a separate meeting. GTF asked for the meeting to be held in 2009. WWF and TRAFFIC asked that the workshop address legislative and other gaps hindering enforcement and Environmental Investigation Agency requested a progress report at SC58. SMS said the workshop should have explicit ToRs to explore all conservation approaches, and GTF noted that many illegal trade cases resulted in small fines, asking that parties require imprisonment for a tiger-related conviction. The SC took note of the report.

**Intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale:** On Thursday, India introduced the document submitted by his country and Nepal on intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale (SC57 Doc.31.2). He said it would be useful to evaluate progress on the implementation of CoP14 decision 14.69, which directed parties with intensive commercial tiger breeding operations to: restrict the captive population to a level that supports conservation of wild tigers; and not breed tigers for trade in their parts and derivatives. India also asked for oral progress reports and for consideration at SC58.

He also recommended the following benchmarks to evaluate progress: a registration process and collection of other data, such as age and sex profiles of breeding operations; a time-bound strategic plan, to be reported to SC58, to phase out commercial breeding operations by CoP15; gathering of information regarding disposal and destruction of stockpiles of tiger parts; clearer permits for tiger breeding; data on the use, manufacturing and sale of captive-bred tiger parts, including confirmation of a moratorium on new permits; verification of reported progress through a technical mission of relevant external experts and officials from the Secretariat; and information regarding plans for captive tigers.

The EU and the US both noted that CoP14 did not require reports on its implementation but welcomed progress reports. The US also noted that unconfirmed reports of illegal exports of tiger bone wine associated with tiger breeding facilities indicated that Decision 14.69 was not being implemented and asked the SC to consider mechanisms to report progress by SC58.

WWF, on behalf of all NGOs present, requested stopping the trade of tiger parts and derivatives throughout the world. She supported India's suggested benchmarks and asked the Secretariat to request parties with intense trade on tigers to report on their status at SC58. The UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), China and SMS opposed the document presented by India and Nepal. China supported asking relevant parties to report to SC58. Oceania supported India and Nepal's proposal and the US suggestion of reporting on the issue at SC58.

**Outcome:** The Secretariat suggested, and the SC agreed, to establish a small electronic working group to clarify how the implementation of CoP Decision 14.69 on the topic may best be reported to SC, including India's suggested benchmarks.

**Tibetan antelope:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document on Tibetan antelope (SC57 Doc.32), and noted that he has received very little information from parties on their enforcement measures for eliminating the illicit trade in Tibetan antelope products. Israel, on behalf of the Interpol initiative underway, highlighted India's activities on providing its law enforcement programme to assist other range states. Japan outlined national activities to combat illegal trade. China informed that poaching was under control and populations were increasing. The SC noted the report.

**Elephants: Reviews of the status of the elephant, trade in its specimens and the impact of the legal trade:** On Tuesday, the Secretariat summarized CoP decisions on elephant conservation, directing the SC to conduct ongoing comprehensive reviews of the status of elephant trade (Decision 14.78), and African range states to continue their elephant dialogue aimed at developing joint conservation policies and exchanging management experience (Decision 14.75) (SC57 Doc.33.1). He suggested that the SC resolve the sources of information to be used in conducting reviews, and stressed that duplication of work should be avoided. The Secretariat, supported by the EU, recommended that the SC agree that implementation of Decision 14.78 should not lead to duplicative reporting and reviews, and request that the Secretariat in consultation with IUCN, TRAFFIC and UNEP-WCMC research and compile relevant information on the conservation status of and trade in elephants. IUCN noted its limited capacity to take on additional substantive activities without additional resources. The SC adopted the Secretariat's recommendations with an amendment by Kenya to open consultations beyond IUCN, TRAFFIC and UNEP-WCMC.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.33.1), *inter alia*, that the SC consult with relevant organizations to research and compile relevant information on the conservation status of elephants, and that the implementation of Decision 14.78 should not lead to duplicate reports and reviews.

**Control of trade in elephant ivory:** On Tuesday, SC Chair Maquieira introduced the issue of control in trade in elephant ivory (SC57 Doc.33.2). On designating ivory trading partners,

the Secretariat detailed the history of its efforts in assessing China's national measures to control ivory imports for trade in elephant specimens. He highlighted China's registering system for ivory retailers and products and the improvement in its Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) law enforcement effort scores from 6% in 2002 to 63% in 2008. He underscored that while China may be a significant destination for ivory, it is ready to identify when illegal ivory enters the country and that the control systems in place do not permit illegal ivory to enter the market as legal ivory. He added that domestic demands for ivory in some parts of the world will not disappear but combining those demands with legal stockpiles in other parts of the world may reduce poaching. He concluded that the Secretariat believes that China is ready to "do its utmost" to ensure illegal ivory will not enter the market and recommended that China be designated a trading partner.

Supporting the recommendation, Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community, with Namibia and Botswana, based its support on a mission of two member states that found adequate controls. Tanzania commended China's mechanisms to prevent illegal ivory trade and the DRC said the SC should trust the Secretariat's work. Chile said China should receive the same treatment as other countries designated as trading partners. The EC suggested that the Secretariat continue monitoring and reporting on China's internal market controls. China emphasized its willingness to maintain controls and cooperate with the international community. Japan, SMS, WWF and TRAFFIC also supported China's designation.

Opposing the designation of China as a trading partner, Mali, representing 27 range states that in February 2008 established the African Elephant Coalition, supported by Kenya who spoke on behalf of 19 of the Coalition's members who met in Mombasa in June 2008 on the issue, said the Secretariat's three-day mission provided too little detail to make an adequate determination that China had met the requirements and questioned whether the MIKE programme was sensitive enough to flag poaching quickly. Ghana requested an independent opinion on the state of ivory trade in China. Oceania noted that China remained a destination for illegal ivory and suggested that the illicit re-export of ivory should be considered before a decision was made. Israel said legal trade would increase the motivations and opportunities for poaching and illegal trade. He also noted the need for stronger penalties in consuming countries. India noted its own ban on ivory trade and said its ivory craftsmen now used alternative materials.

SSN stressed that accepting China as an importing partner would likely cause Japan and China to make competitive bids for ivory stockpiles, which would inflate prices, motivate elephant poaching, and increase ivory smuggling in Asian and African countries that are most vulnerable. The ETIS encouraged China to continue promoting a high-level collaboration with other importing partners.

Kenya and Oceania noted the lack of consensus on the issue and Iceland requested a vote on designating China as a trading partner. SC Chair Maquieira announced the vote's result with nine in favor of the designation, three against and two abstentions. China thanked the SC and highlighted the country's readiness to continue activities on enforcement, combating

illegal trade and cooperation. Participants also adopted the EU's suggestion to the SC to request the Secretariat to continue monitoring and reporting on China and Japan's activities. Zimbabwe assured the SC that all proceeds from the sale of ivory have been and will continue to be used for conservation.

The Secretariat then detailed its approach for verifying that all stocks of raw ivory declared for sale by Botswana (43,682.91 kg), Namibia (9,209.68 kg), South Africa (51,121 kg) and Zimbabwe (3,755.55 kg) were of a legal origin. The Secretariat confirmed the findings of the audit were satisfactory, and the SC noted the report.

Following interventions made by various participants, including the US and Pro Wildlife, regarding their concerns surrounding Zimbabwe's participation in the one-off sale given its current political situation, SC Chair Maquieira clarified that the SC was not mandated to take any additional action on this matter but that the comments would be registered in the record of the meeting.

The Secretariat noted progress regarding the action plan for the control of trade in ivory, including: the distribution of a questionnaire seeking information about parties' domestic ivory trade controls; Rwanda's submission of its completed questionnaire and the consequent withdrawal of the recommendation to suspend trade; the intention to share completed questionnaires with the TRAFFIC office responsible for maintenance of the ETIS database; the Secretariat's continued engagement with range states not implementing the action plan, and discussions with the wildlife forensic laboratory of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a collection of elephant specimens that can serve as a reference collection for DNA and other profiling that can help determine the geographical origin of ivory. He also noted the recent success against the abuse of diplomatic immunity through an initiative called Operation Dove, which works in conjunction with the UN's internal affairs department to discourage UN peacekeepers from violating the Convention and recently started legal proceedings against two peacekeepers who were about to engage in commercial ivory smuggling. The Secretariat presented, and the SC took note of, the report on the Secretariat's verification of the ivory stocks held by Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The SC also took note that the sales to China and Japan may now proceed.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.33.1) that China be designated an ivory trading partner.

**African elephant action plan and African Elephant Fund:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its document on the African elephant action plan and African elephant fund (SC57 Doc.33.3). He noted the Secretariat's information report on the African elephant meeting convened on 23-25 June 2008, in Mombasa, Kenya (SC57 Inf.13) at which 34 out of 37 African range states attended and established a framework for the main elements of an action plan. He also noted the preparation of an information document on innovative financing mechanisms for an African elephant action plan, which provides an initial analysis and recommendations for next steps, including options for building a fund, such as: starting as a small grants programme that can grow; approaching donors to match funds already available from the Netherlands; teaming up with existing

initiatives; and linking elephant conservation and climate change to tap the money available for climate change (SC57 Inf.12). He emphasized that agreement on an action plan is needed before a fund can be established.

Kenya, supported by Mali, said African range states would continue the dialogue on an African elephant action plan and noted the need to prioritize items and develop budget lines. He also emphasized the importance of African range states owning the action plan. Zambia, speaking on behalf of Southern African range states, pledged support for the action plan and requested that donors support the range states' efforts. The EC urged states to contribute to the fund, and France offered €15,000 for the fund, with a view toward an additional contribution once the fund was established. Ghana suggested the Secretariat cooperate with CMS to develop the fund and said that the two ivory trading partners, Japan and China, should use their influence at the Global Environment Facility Council to request special funds for elephants.

The SC noted the progress reports provided by the Secretariat on the implementation of the CoP decisions on elephant conservation (14.75 and 14.78).

**Decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade:**

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its document on a decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade and recommended undertaking a study on developing a decision-making mechanism and process for future trade in elephant ivory for review by the SC (SC57 Doc.33.4). He proposed that the study cover: examination of processes and decision-making mechanisms related to ivory trade operating under the Convention; evaluation of multilateral trade regimes and associated controls, safeguards and monitoring methods for other high-value commodities like diamonds; basic principles that should govern future ivory trade; and exploration of conditions under which international elephant ivory trade could take place. He suggested the study results be presented at SC58.

The EC, Israel, India and Kenya supported the initiation of a study. India noted its opposition to trade in ivory and suggested the study include evaluation of the economic and ecological sustainability of ivory trade and its impact on illegal killing of elephants. Kenya suggested establishing a working group to set up the terms of reference for the study. The SC established the working group. The group, chaired by Paul Delduc (France), met on Tuesday and Wednesday to examine the scope of the study proposed in SC57 Doc.33.4. On Friday, the Secretariat presented the results of the working group's discussions (SC57 Com.4). The SC agreed to the recommendations.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Com.4) a study to be coordinated by the Secretariat in consultation with stakeholders including African and Asian elephant range states, subject to external funding.

**Constitution of a MIKE-ETIS subgroup:** On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced its document on the constitution of a MIKE-ETIS subgroup (SC57 Doc.33.5) to oversee their further development, refinement and implementation. He noted the subgroup currently is comprised of parties implementing or funding MIKE, and that since 2003 the subgroup has consisted of six SC members: three from Africa, two from Asia and one from North America or Europe. Noting that the terms of three

subgroup members (Germany, Malaysia, and Cameroon) expired after CoP14, and recognizing the importance of consistency, he requested that China, Kenya and Zambia continue in the subgroup.

The SC agreed to reestablish the MIKE-ETIS subgroup, to maintain its geographical composition, and to have the subgroup meet and report back later in SC57 on progress on the development and implementation of MIKE and ETIS. The subgroup, chaired by Francesca Chisangano (Zambia), met on Wednesday and Thursday to further discuss the issue. On Friday, Chair Chisangano presented the results of the group's discussions, which were agreed by SC.

**Recommendation:** The SC agreed to (SC57 Com.5), *inter alia*: re-establish the subgroup; clarify the subgroup's ToRs; request the subgroup to communicate intersessionally via electronic mail; and request that MIKE and ETIS report regularly on their activities to the subgroup.

**Rhinoceroses:** On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced its document on rhinoceroses (SC57 Doc.34), and reported that, despite notable antipoaching efforts, poaching was increasing. He emphasized the highly-organized nature of poaching and illicit trade and recommended that the SC establish a Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force, and endorse engagement with Yemen's management authority. He also detailed the opportunity offered by the Wildlife Forensic Laboratory of the US Fish and Wildlife Service to analyze ballistic evidence collected from poached animals at no charge to help connect cross-border incidents and improve prosecutions.

India opposed the establishment of a task force because evidence did not show increased poaching. Noting its recent efforts to stop poaching, including increased guards at national parks and successful rhino relocations, he suggested waiting for the results from these measures.

The EC, South Africa, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, WWF, TRAFFIC and IUCN supported the recommendation, with Kenya offering its technical expertise in enforcement and monitoring, and Zambia proposing a workshop on the matter. WWF urged that TRAFFIC be included and noted the need to also consider poaching in Viet Nam. Zimbabwe acknowledged that rhino poaching is a major challenge and welcomed assistance. IUCN suggested the task force look at drivers of horn demand and, along with the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, recommended the task force work with existing regional wildlife law enforcement groups. South Africa described its efforts to improve regulations, including a moratorium on domestic rhinoceros product sales, further trophy hunting and export regulations, and strengthened intelligence sharing.

Kenya and South Africa supported the proposal on engagement with Yemen. Kenya noted Yemen's lack of response to its attempt at collaboration, and IFAW offered assistance given its existing capacity-building cooperation with Yemen. Zambia noted the importance of the forensic laboratory's offer and said it would provide ammunition for the ballistic repository for analysis.

**Recommendation:** The SC agreed that the Secretariat should convene a CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force and seek an invitation from the government of Yemen to visit the country for discussing illicit trade in rhinoceros (SC57 Doc.34).

**Sturgeons: Caviar trade database:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document on the caviar trade database (SC57 Doc.35.1), noting the report aims to update the SC on its progress. He said that the database was originally openly accessible from the CITES website but, due to confidentiality concerns expressed by certain governments, access is now restricted to authorized users. In response to a request from the International Caviar Importers Association to re-open access, the Secretariat noted that only governments could make that decision. The Secretariat further requested that the SC members encourage caviar-trading states to regularly submit copies of their permits and certificates, highlighting the lack of copies submitted by the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation explained that in 2008 the country had administrative reforms. Responding to IUCN, the Secretariat clarified that it was not making any non-compliance recommendations because importing countries should not be authorizing imports if permit information is missing from the database. The SC noted the report.

**Recommendations of the Animals Committee:** On Thursday, AC Chair Althaus introduced the document on recommendations of the AC (SC57 Doc.35.2). He explained that the AC was not ready to make recommendations referred to in Res. Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) (conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish) at this time as they were in the middle of the three-year monitoring process. He reported that AC24 reviewed the relevant provisions of the resolution and established a process for carrying out the evaluation method contained therein, recommending, *inter alia*, that workshops be established to review stocks, and to elaborate an internationally acceptable methodology for the Caspian Sea, Amur/Heilongjiang River, and Black Sea, Danube River and Azov Sea stocks. The Secretariat reported that FAO and the World Bank agreed to host a workshop on the Caspian Sea stocks. Iran suggested that the Caspian Environment Program be included in any such workshops and that habitat destruction be discussed. China stressed the importance of shared methodologies. TRAFFIC, on behalf of his organization and WWF, supported the AC's recommendations and emphasized that any decisions on sturgeons should be based on scientific information.

**Outcome:** The SC accepted the AC's recommendations and noted SC57 Doc.35.2.

**Bigleaf mahogany:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document on Bigleaf mahogany (SC57 Doc.36), and congratulated Peru on its efforts to speedily comply with SC recommendations. He said the President of Peru adopted the strategic plan for mahogany nationally, and noted significant progress on strengthening the verification system for origin of timber. On measures adopted by third parties, Peru said his country had benefited from CITES-ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization) cooperation, and the assistance of other IGOs and countries, especially the US.

A working group was established to further discuss the issue. The group, facilitated by Juan Carlos Vásquez, CITES Secretariat, met on Thursday afternoon, and the Secretariat presented the working group's outcome in plenary.

Peru informed the SC that his country did not have any left over for exports for years prior to 2007, and said that the country would continue with its transparency policy for forest operation units for mahogany management. The EU and the US supported

the recommendations. WWF and TRAFFIC congratulated Peru on its achievements, and suggested other countries do the same for other species.

The SC agreed to the suggested recommendations (SC57 Com.3), which included instructing the Secretariat to continue supervising the progress made by Peru in implementing SC recommendations.

On Friday, the Secretariat highlighted, *inter alia*, that Peru is the third largest exporter of mahogany after Bolivia and Guatemala, the conservation concerns surrounding cedar in the region, and the need to continue close cooperation with the PC on these issues. The Secretariat then proposed an additional recommendation, not contained in SC57 Doc.36, which would direct the Secretariat to monitor implementation of the requirements of the Convention for mahogany and cedar in all exporting, re-exporting, and importing parties and report on this matter to SC58. Brazil noted the SC had already agreed to the recommendations contained in the document, and opposed re-opening the agenda item and the Secretariat's additional recommendation, emphasizing that the SC should exercise caution before addressing an issue for which there is no background information or document. She further expressed concern about paragraph 22 of the document, noting that the information pertaining to Brazil was based on outdated information. WWF supported the Secretariat's recommendation, and the US noted its sympathy with Brazil's intervention regarding the lack of preparation and background information, and said that additional information on the cedar was needed.

SC Chair Maquieira suggested and the SC agreed that given the concerns expressed by Brazil and the US, a better approach may be to put the issue on the agenda for SC58, but instruct the Secretariat to consult with range states about the appropriate way to do so. After informal consultation, the Secretariat withdrew its recommendation. The SC commended Peru's efforts and adopted the text on document SC57 Com.3.

**Recommendation:** The SC (SC57 Com.3), *inter alia*: recommends, regarding 2007 leftovers, that Peru should provide a baseline report on the remaining volume that can be authorized for export; and suggests that all exporting parties consider including information on the authorized and verified concessions or other forest management areas where the timber was harvested.

**Ramin:** On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced its document on ramin (SC57 Doc.37 (Rev. 1)), and noted that the Secretariat received the written reports requested by SC54 from China, Italy, Malaysia, Japan, the UK and the US on achievements and problems in controlling ramin. He also noted a number of proposed ITTO projects described in an information document (SC57 Inf.7), and invited the SC to decide whether or not further action was needed and if the item should be included at future meetings.

Malaysia presented additional information on the conservation and management of ramin (SC57 Inf.4), including a cautious approach to quotas and the requirement that ramin exports be allowed only when its source of harvest could be traced.

Oceania noted that Australia would analyze the new information to determine whether to lift its ban on ramin imports from Malaysia that was imposed after SC54. She also expressed interest in Malaysia's ITTO projects and requested

the topic remain on the SC agenda. The EC recommended no further action for importing countries, but supported continued reporting on exporting country programmes. The US suggested ongoing discussions in the PC could allow continued monitoring and exchange of experiences. Pro Wildlife, on behalf of SSN, supported retention of the agenda item, asked Malaysia to provide information on how it calculated its recovery rate, and suggested other range states also provide reports. TRAFFIC and WWF commended Malaysia's efforts and suggested sharing its approach with other countries. The SC agreed to keep the item on the agenda.

On Friday, the Secretariat, based on informal consultations regarding the manner in which ramin remains on the SC agenda, proposed that: exporting range states provide written reports to SC58; importing parties voluntarily report achievements or problems; and the Secretariat report on information it receives on illegal trade in ramin. After informal consultation, the SC agreed to the recommendations as amended.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommendations (SC57 Doc.37 (Rev.1)), *inter alia*: request exporting range states to provide written reports on trade in ramin for SC58, including progress and results of ITTO-CITES projects; invite importing parties to report on trade in ramin when there are achievements or problems they wish to draw attention to the SC; and request the Secretariat to consult with concerned parties on received information regarding illegal trade in ramin and report to SC58.

**AMENDMENT OF THE APPENDICES: Periodic Review of the Appendices:** On Thursday, AC Chair Althaus explained that the periodic review assesses whether or not listing of species is still correct. He noted the difficulty in finding parties to volunteer to carry out the review of species selected before CoP13 and species selected between CoP13 and CoP15. On evaluating the effectiveness of the periodic review, Japan suggested defining parameters should be examined when carrying out the periodic review.

PC Chair Clemente also stressed problems for finding volunteers to carry out periodic reviews. Noting that periodic reviews keep the appendices alive and support the Convention's implementation, she said the PC recommended that the Secretariat issue a notification with a list of taxa and request parties to search for funds to carry out the reviews.

Japan suggested that the periodic review be limited to species that interested parties volunteer to review. PC Chair Clemente supported the suggestion, while Humane Society International opposed.

The SC took note of document SC57 Doc.38 on this issue.

**Revision and publication of the CITES Appendices:** On Thursday, Japan introduced the document on revision and publication of the CITES appendices (SC57 Doc.39). She recommended, supported by China, that the SC explore ways to accelerate revision of the appendices after CoP meetings. The SC agreed to Japan's recommendations.

**Recommendation:** The SC recommends (SC57 Doc.39) that the Secretariat report to SC58, in consultation with the AC and PC, on identifying: information to be included in proposals to amend standard nomenclatures for listed species; and obstacles to accelerate the publication of revised appendices and options for solutions.

## REPORTS OF REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

On Friday, in plenary, the regional reports were presented. Patrick Omondi (Kenya) presented the Africa regional report (SC57 Doc.40.1 Rev.1), and underlined the workshop on African elephants that took place in Mombasa, Kenya, to start the process of the Elephant African Action Plan.

Eugenia Saavedra (Chile) presented the Central and South America and the Caribbean regional report (SC57 Doc.40.3), and summarized activities carried out in the region to implement the Convention.

The following reports were also presented: Yukihiro Takeya (Japan) introduced the Asia regional report (SC57 Doc.40.2); Bjarni Sigtryggsson (Iceland) introduced the Europe regional report (SC57 Doc.40.4); Basile van Havre (Canada) introduced the North America regional report (SC57 Doc.40.5); and Kerry Smith (Australia) introduced the Oceania regional report (SC57 Doc.40.6). Due to time constraints, participants were asked to refer to the documents.

## CONCLUDING ITEMS

**STATUS REPORTS ON THE WORKSHOP ON NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS:** Mexico reported on progress on an international workshop of experts on NDF and noted a coordinating committee had been established and over 40 case studies were being prepared. He said a number of governments and organizations, including Mexico, the US, ITTO, FAO, SSN, TRAFFIC and others, had provided funding and asked others to contribute funds, experts or case studies.

**CLOSING REMARKS:** On Friday, the SC adopted the Executive Summaries of the meeting (SC57 Sum.1 to SC57 Sum.7) with minor amendments. The Secretariat informed participants that SC58 would be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in July 2009. SC Chair Maquieira thanked participants for attending the meeting, and gavelled the meeting to a close at 6:06 pm.

## A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

The 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57) of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) met in Geneva with the primary objective of making progress towards fulfilling the relevant mandates of the fourteenth meeting of CITES' Conference of the Parties (CoP). Many expected issues surrounding charismatic megafauna such as elephants and tigers to dominate discussions. However, discussions on these issues were more tempered than expected, particularly on tigers, with other issues critical to the operation of the Convention making significant headway behind the scenes in working groups that met throughout the week. This analysis will therefore discuss progress made on three interlinked and critical issues to the Convention, namely, elephants, the Strategic Vision and the budget.

### IN THE ELEPHANT'S SHADOW?

While elephants have been in the CITES political spotlight for many years, a number of delegates at SC57 expressed hope that CITES' attention would soon shift to other species of concern since CoP14 approved a nine-year ivory trade moratorium. Nevertheless, discussions surrounding the one-off

sale of ivory stockpiles from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, approved at CoP14, still garnered quite a bit of attention at SC57.

As stated in CITES Annotation 5, trade in raw ivory from these countries must take place only with trading partners verified by the Secretariat, in consultation with the SC, "to have sufficient national legislation and domestic trade controls to ensure that the imported ivory will not be re-exported and will be managed in accordance with all requirements of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP14) concerning domestic manufacturing and trade." SC54 designated Japan as a trading partner but took no decision on China. At SC55, China again requested to be considered a 'trading partner' but because the issue was not on the agenda it was deferred to SC57. At SC57, some parties noted that, in accordance with the Secretariat's detailed report regarding China's domestic trade controls for ivory, China's hard work on strengthening its domestic infrastructure finally paid off, with SC57 approving it as a designated partner alongside Japan.

Despite the Secretariat's positive assessment of China's domestic controls for ivory trade, and relevant CoP decisions approving the one-off sale from southern African countries, some parties remained uneasy with SC57's approval of China as a designated trading partner. Some African range states said that they remained unconvinced that China's enforcement capacity was "up to snuff," highlighting Kenya's intervention in plenary just shortly after China's designation, which informed of an airport seizure in Nairobi of 36 pieces of worked ivory from two Chinese tourists bound for Beijing. Many other African range states remained wary of allowing the one-off sale at all, arguing that it would send a signal to poachers that trade is occurring and would lead to an increase in both illegal killing and law enforcement costs. Others, however, were quick to point out that evidence on a causal relationship between legal and illegal trade flows is as yet inconclusive.

In an effort to fill this expertise gap, Kenya expressed enthusiasm to closely monitor the effects of the upcoming sale through a nine-year scientific study. Kenya's proposed study, in coordination with African range states, will obtain detailed data on illegal killing, and hopes to track whether the traded ivory leaves China or Japan's domestic markets by using DNA samples. The challenge, of course, is in obtaining a complete DNA data set from the trading partners. However, as Kenya boasted, China and South Africa have already agreed to provide samples. Others noted that China's participation in the study highlights China's confidence that the Secretariat's assessment of its domestic control system is accurate despite some countries' concerns about its enforcement capacity. If the study meets CITES' standard for scientific robustness, its results will prove timely for informing any future CoP decisions on elephants, as its completion is due to coincide with the end of the nine-year moratorium on future ivory trade proposals, approved at CoP14.

Finally, on the Secretariat's report regarding its verification of raw ivory stockpiles, many participants were concerned that some trading partners would not be able to comply with the CoP's instructions on the matter. Whereas the CoP requires that sale revenues be used to support conservation projects and livelihoods, many were worried that unstable political situations,

particularly in Zimbabwe, make this unlikely. While respectful of parties' right to express their concerns on the matter, SC Chair Maquieira skillfully ushered discussions through these choppy political waters to a close, reminding participants that SC57 had no mandate from the CoP to address the terms of the one-off sale aside from designating China as a trading partner and noting the Secretariat's report regarding verification of the raw ivory stockpiles.

### **STRATEGIC VISION INDICATORS: A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME TO A LONG DELIBERATION PROCESS?**

Building upon the work elaborated by the CoP14 Strategic Vision Working Group, SC57 successfully finished its task of finalizing the development of indicators for each of the objectives contained in the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013. While there is a consensus among parties that indicators are needed, the debate over choice of indicators has been long and at times heated.

Many parties were enthusiastic to participate in the working group on indicators established at SC57 noting that broad, geographically-balanced participation improves the legitimacy of the process. Others, however, were cautious about making the group too large, noting that "too many cooks may have spoiled the broth at CoP14," stressing the urgency of concluding discussions on the matter at SC57. SC57 ultimately rejected the Secretariat's proposal to limit participation, and opened the group to any interested parties.

While ivory discussions generated more debate in plenary, many participants emphasized the importance of discussions on the Strategic Vision indicators. Some, including CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers followed this working group's debates very closely, in lieu of attending other critical groups such as Subcommittee on Finance and Budget. When reporting on the group's progress he noted that the group was able to bring these long awaited discussions to a close, successfully narrowing the sometimes 10 indicators per objective identified at CoP14 down to an average of three per objective. While one party voiced his concern that some indicators may be more complicated than necessary and, therefore, may not provide the intended guidance, the working group's recommendations were accepted by SC57 with much less controversy than surrounded the topic at CoP14.

### **PRIORITIZING THE BUDGET: MUCH NEEDED DIRECTION OR CONSTRAINING OPTIONS?**

Many participants highlighted that the budget underlies all of SC57's discussions. CoP14 instructed SC57 to establish the terms of reference for a Subcommittee on Finance and Budget to consider all financial and budgetary matters of the Convention. Accordingly, SC57 established the Subcommittee and instructed it to review the Secretariat's costed programme of work in order to select core activities to be funded through the CITES Trust Fund, and prioritize all other activities to be financed by external funding.

The Subcommittee began this process at SC57 with an aim of providing guidance to the Secretariat on how to prioritize its work following CoP14's 6% budget increase for 2009-2011. The 6% increase did not cover all activities outlined in the

Secretariat's costed programme of work proposed at that meeting and, as such, the CITES Secretariat has had to tighten its belt by eliminating four staff positions, prioritizing its activities, and seeking partnerships with other organizations to help finance activities of common concern.

Many participants expressed hope that this new budgeting process based on prioritization of activities using the Secretariat's costed programme of work, would help to smooth relations between certain parties and the Secretariat on budgetary issues, and provide some solid guidance for directing expenditures. Others, however, noted that the Secretariat needs some flexibility in addressing certain budgetary matters, calling overly burdensome party control over all of the Secretariat's budgetary decisions "micromanagement." Some were also wary of the sealed fate of low priority items, fearing that they would never be fulfilled.

In light of Res. Conf.14.1 requiring the Subcommittee to put the CITES Trust Fund on "sustainable footing," SC members hotly debated whether the Secretariat should produce a revised costed work programme based on anticipated contributions of 92.2%, rather than use a 100% collection rate. While many parties hoped the costed programme of work and prioritization process would help to balance party guidance with financial flexibility for the Secretariat, one party central to these discussions said that the heated debate surrounding whether or not the Secretariat should prepare a revised costed programme of work, and SC members "agreeing to disagree" on the topic, indicated that there was still work to be done in this regard. Nevertheless, most were optimistic, noting the costed programme of work and prioritization process will help harmonize the Secretariat's and the parties' thinking during intersessional periods regarding appropriating funding. Some participants further highlighted that the fate of low priority items is far from sealed as the process is about providing guidance to the Secretariat regarding expenditure of effort in seeking funding, and if donors want to support a specific lower priority activity the resources would not be turned away or diverted.

### ON THE ROAD TO COP15

Parties and observers went home with heavy briefcases full of homework to be completed before SC58 in July 2009. Delegates will fulfill the tasks assigned by SC57 on a number of issues in intersessional working groups that will largely interact electronically. Some participants were especially curious about the forthcoming results of the working groups on CITES and livelihoods, the Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme subgroup, and intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale.

With one more meeting of each of the CITES Committees scheduled before CoP15 in Qatar, in early 2010, parties have much to accomplish in the intersessional period. Many eyes will be on the upcoming one-off sale of raw ivory from Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia to China and Japan. Some participants expressed intrigue with the potential consequences of the expected bidding war between China and Japan, and others with the results of the announced Kenyan study exploring the relationship between legal and illegal trade. Most, however, were hopeful that with the start of the nine-year trade moratorium

on the horizon, the elephant shadow is fading, allowing other species of conservation concern to be illuminated within CITES' discussions.

Parties will also begin to implement the Strategic Vision indicators in the intersessional period, and members of the Subcommittee on Finance and Budget will undertake critical work that many participants stressed will have important impacts on the implementation and success of the Convention. A few participants said that keeping a close eye on how well the budget co-evolves with the Strategic Vision indicators agreed at SC57 will be key, lamenting that they really should have been negotiated together. Others highlighted that Subcommittee's core activities are organized so as to correspond to specific Strategic Vision Goals and Objectives, and was hopeful that the prioritized activities will also adhere to this useful format.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### WORKSHOP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RST FOR PRUNUS AFRICANA:

The workshop on implementation of review of significant trade for *Prunus africana* will be held from 8-11 September 2008, in Naivasha, Kenya. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**AEWA MEETING OF THE PARTIES:** The fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement will take place from 15-19 September 2008, in Antananarivo, Madagascar. For more information, contact the Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2414; fax: +49-228-815-2450; e-mail: [aewa@unep.de](mailto:aewa@unep.de); internet: [http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop4\\_docs/mop4.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop4_docs/mop4.htm)

**IUCN 4TH WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS:** IUCN's 4th World Conservation Congress will be held from 5-14 October 2008, in Barcelona, Spain. The first half of the Congress will be the World Conservation Forum, from 6-9 October. For more information, contact IUCN; tel: +41-22-999-0000; fax: +41-22-999-0002; e-mail: [congress@iucn.org](mailto:congress@iucn.org); internet: <http://www.iucn.org/congress>

**EUROPEAN REGIONAL CITES MEETING FOR PLANTS:** The European Regional CITES Meeting for Plants will take place from 7-8 October 2008, in Lampedusa, Italy. For more information, contact: Maurizio Sajeve, Dipartimento di Scienze Botaniche; tel: +39-91-623-82-47; fax: +39-91-623-82-03; e-mail: [sajeve@unipa.it](mailto:sajeve@unipa.it); or CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**MEETING TO CONCLUDE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS OF PREY IN AFRICA AND EURASIA:** This meeting, held under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species, will take place in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, from 20-22 October 2008. For more information, contact: CMS Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2401; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: [secretariat@cms.int](mailto:secretariat@cms.int); internet: [http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/birds\\_preym.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/birds_preym.htm)

**RAMSAR COP10:** The tenth Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance will take place from 28 October - 4 November 2008, in Changwon,

Republic of Korea. For more information, contact: Ramsar Secretariat; tel: +41-22-999-0170; fax: +41-22-999-0169; e-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org; internet: <http://www.ramsar.org>

**FAO WORKSHOP ON STATUS, LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVING THE MONITORING OF SHARKS FISHERIES:**

This workshop will be held in Rome from 3-6 November 2008. Funded by the CITES Trust Fund Project, the workshop will bring together experts from a number of main shark fishing and trading countries to discuss and agree upon the main limitations and to identify opportunities to improve the monitoring of shark fisheries and the trade in shark products. For more information, contact: CITES Project, FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department; tel: +39-6-570-56469; fax: +39-6-570-53020; internet: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/16380/en>; or contact the CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**INTERNATIONAL EXPERT WORKSHOP ON NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS:**

This workshop, the second in a series, is tentatively scheduled to take place from 17-22 November 2008, in Huatulco, Mexico. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**28TH MEETING OF THE BERN CONVENTION**

**STANDING COMMITTEE:** Organized by the Secretariat of Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention), the meeting of the Bern Convention Standing Committee will be held from 24-28 November 2008, in Strasbourg, France. For more information, contact: Carolina Lasén Diaz, Secretary of the Bern Convention; tel: +33-3-9021-5679; fax: +33-3-8841-3751; e-mail: [carolina.lasen-diaz@coe.int](mailto:carolina.lasen-diaz@coe.int); internet: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/conventions/Bern/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/conventions/Bern/default_en.asp)

**CMS COP9:** The ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species will take place from 1-5 December 2008, in Rome, Italy. For more information, contact: CMS Secretariat; tel. +49-228-815-2401; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: [secretariat@cms.int](mailto:secretariat@cms.int); internet: <http://www.cms.int>

**CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICAN WORKSHOP ON TIMBER TREES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE - STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE USE:**

This workshop, the third in the series, will be held provisionally in Ghana, in late 2008. For more information, contact: Harriet Gillett, UNEP-WCMC; tel. +44 1223 277314; fax +44 1223 277136; e-mail: [Harriet.Gillett@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:Harriet.Gillett@unep-wcmc.org); internet: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/timber>

**CITES PC18:** The 18th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee will take place in February 2009 in Argentina (exact dates to be determined). For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**CITES AC24:** The 24th meeting of the CITES Animals Committee will take place in April 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland (exact dates to be determined). For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**SC58:** The 58th meeting of the Standing Committee is scheduled to take place in July 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**XIII WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS:** This conference will be held from 18-25 October 2009, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to address a wide range of issues related to forests, biodiversity and development. For more information, contact: e-mail: [FAO Secretariat; info@wfc2009.org](mailto:FAO Secretariat; info@wfc2009.org); internet: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/37075/en/page.jsp> or <http://www.wfc2009.org>

**CITES COP15:** CITES CoP15 will be held in early 2010, in Doha, Qatar (exact dates to be determined). For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org); internet: <http://www.cites.org>

**GLOSSARY**

AC	CITES Animals Committee
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
ETIS	Elephant Trade Information System
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
GTF	Global Tiger Forum
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
MIKE	Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants programme
NDFs	Non-detriment findings
PC	CITES Plants Committee
RST	Review of significant trade
SC	CITES Standing Committee
SCFB	Standing Committee on Finance and Budget
SMS	Species Management Specialists
SSN	Species Survival Network
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WCMC	UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WTO	World Trade Organization