

SUMMARY OF THE 58TH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE: 6-10 JULY 2009

The 58th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC58) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened in Geneva, Switzerland from 6-10 July 2009. Approximately 300 participants attended the meeting, including SC members, observer parties, and inter- and non-governmental organizations. SC58 proceeded swiftly through a complex agenda that included: criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II; review of the scientific committees; compliance and enforcement matters; 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.

SC58 adopted a number of recommendations on, *inter alia*: national wildlife trade policy reviews; national reports; reviews of significant trade; revision and publication of CITES Appendices; introduction from the sea; trade in crocodylian specimens; stock assessment and a total allowable catch methodology for sturgeons; and bigleaf mahogany. SC58 also established an intersessional working group on the participation of the African region in CITES, initiated by African representatives with EU funding. These and other recommendations will be forwarded to the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Doha, Qatar, from 13-25 March 2010.

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 175 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 threatened with extinction, 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 for which a party requests the cooperation of other parties to control international trade in specimens of 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 among 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 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

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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 the functioning of the Secretariat. The CoP also periodically reviews the list of resolutions and decisions, as well as the existing species listed in the Appendices.

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 (MoU) 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 government-owned 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 the Monitoring of Illegal Killing of Elephants (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 the 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, slow loris, and six species of sawfish on Appendix I; Brazil wood, freshwater sawfish and the European eel on Appendix II; and to amend the annotation on African elephants to allow a one-off 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.

SC57: The 57th meeting of the Standing Committee took place from 14-18 July 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland. 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 an ivory trading party. Many intersessional working groups were established to carry out work on, *inter alia*: CITES and livelihoods; introduction from the sea; the MIKE programme; a decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade; operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale; review of the scientific committees; cooperation between parties and promotion of multilateral measures; trade in crocodilian specimens; and purpose codes on CITES permits and certificates.

PC18: The 18th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee convened from 17-21 March 2009, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. PC18 discussed 22 agenda items on a range of topics, including: the review of significant trade (RST) in Appendix II species; the periodic review of plant species included in the CITES Appendices; timber issues; strategic planning; the report of the International Expert Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs); annotations; and proposals for possible consideration at CoP15. PC18 issued recommendations on issues including: bigleaf mahogany; cedar and rosewood; orchid annotations; periodic review of the Appendices; and the RST.

AC24: The 24th meeting of the CITES Animals Committee convened from 20-24 April 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. AC24 discussed a variety of topics, including: RST in Appendix II species; the periodic review of animal species, such as *Lynx* spp., included in the CITES Appendices; sharks and stingrays; sturgeons and paddlefish; the report of the International Expert Workshop on NDFs; and proposals to amend the Appendices for possible consideration at CoP15. AC24 issued recommendations on issues including: sharks and stingrays, NDFs, sea cucumber fisheries, the RST, and periodic review of the Appendices.

SC58 REPORT

On Monday afternoon, 6 July 2009, CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers opened the meeting and welcomed delegates. He explained that SC Vice-Chair Nana Kofi Adu-Nsiah (Ghana) would chair the meeting, as SC Chair Cristian Maquieira (Chile) could not be present. Chair Adu-Nsiah thanked delegates for this opportunity and asked for their cooperation towards a successful meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

AGENDA AND WORKING PROGRAMME: On Monday, delegates adopted the meeting's agenda (SC58 Doc. 2) without amendments, as well as the working programme (SC58 Doc.3) with minor amendments.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the item on Rules of Procedure relating to credentials, participation of observers from international organizations, and documents for meetings. He recalled that agreement on this matter was not reached at SC57 and thus discussions had

continued intersessionally, resulting in document SC58 Doc.4. He recommended that the SC adopt the revisions except for those concerning presentation of credentials (Rules 9 and 12), which remain bracketed. Argentina noted that the proposed amendment to Rule 9, namely that accredited persons present their credentials to the Secretariat before entering the meeting, is more restrictive than the rules of the CITES CoP or those of other multilateral environmental agreements. He, together with Chile, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, Brazil and Oceania, supported the Secretariat's suggestion to establish a working group to consider this item further during this meeting.

On Friday, the Secretariat presented revisions to the Rules of Procedure proposed by the working group (SC58 Com.1), which met on Thursday. He additionally proposed, for Rule 8, to delete the specification "intergovernmental" organizations, stating that these were already covered under the terms "body and agency" in Rule 6. The UK and Japan opposed the deletion. The SC endorsed the recommendations of the working group.

Recommendation: The SC endorsed the following revisions to the Rules of Procedure (SC58 Com.1), *inter alia*:

- under Rule 6.2 b), any request from a body or agency to be represented at the committee shall be accompanied by, *inter alia*, the name(s) of the observer(s) authorized to represent it at the meeting and proof of the approval of the state in which the national non-governmental body or agency is located or in which the international non-governmental body or agency is headquartered;
- under Rule 8, any observer representing a state or an intergovernmental organization in a meeting shall have been granted credentials by or on behalf of a proper authority enabling him to represent the state or organization;
- under Rule 12, the right of observers to participate in the meeting shall not extend to persons whose credentials the SC decides are unacceptable; and
- under Rule 20, the Secretariat shall place on its website at least 45 days before each meeting of the SC all documents submitted by any party or observer at the request of the Chair.

ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the list of organizations that requested and received an invitation to attend the meeting (SC58 Doc.6). The SC agreed to the admission on all organizations listed.

CREDENTIALS: On Monday, the Secretariat reported that they had not received credentials from one party and several observers. On Friday, the Secretariat presented its final report on credentials, stating that 15 of 16 SC member delegations had presented credentials, 44 of 45 observer parties, all 6 intergovernmental organizations, and 31 of 32 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The SC took note of the report.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR COP15: Preparation for COP15: On Monday, the Secretariat reported on the successful outcome of recent discussions with Qatar, the host country of CoP15, on practical arrangements and the possibility for all parties to be represented at the meeting. Qatar announced that CoP15 would be held from 13-25 March 2010 in Doha, and welcomed all parties, without restrictions, to attend.

Agenda and working programme: The Secretariat presented on issues addressed by the Plants, Animals and the Standing Committees that will be forwarded to CoP15 (SC58 Doc.7.2 and SC58 Doc.7.3), and invited parties to submit any other issues to be dealt with during CoP15.

Rules of Procedure: The Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.7.4, stating that while no amendment proposals had been received from parties, he proposed changes to make sure that the rules regarding the electronic voting system adequately reflected the reality of this voting process. The UK stated he would like a mechanism that facilitated the process for those parties voting in a similar way.

Selection of nominees for chairmanship of the committees: Secretary-General Wijnstekers presented document SC58 Doc.7.5, noting that a small number of proposals for chairmanship of the committees had been received from the parties, which would be shared with the *ad hoc* selection panel. He also stressed that Qatar, as CoP15 host country, should appoint a chairperson and alternate chairs for the plenary sessions.

Sponsored Delegates Project: The Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.7.6. He highlighted financial contributions from Finland, Germany and Norway, but noted that the CoP15 locale was an expensive one, and called for a total of US\$750,000. He further noted that the process to follow to apply for sponsorship will soon be published on the CITES webpage, calling for interested countries to apply on time. Israel encouraged the Secretariat to also use more traditional means of communication, as many countries still have difficulty accessing the internet. The SC took note of the CoP15 arrangements and approved the draft agenda (SC58 Doc.7.2) and working programme (SC58 Doc.7.3).

FINANCIAL MATTERS: Report for 2008: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented its financial report for 2008 (SC58 Doc.9.1). She highlighted that: actual expenditures for 2008 totaled US\$4.96 million; the balance of the CITES Trust Fund was US\$2.1 million; and contributions to the Trust Fund for the year ending 31 December 2008 stood at US\$4.5 million, representing 95.09% of expected receipts. Robert Gabel (US), Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, highlighted the improved status in level of contributions to the Trust Fund, up from 92% in 2007.

Israel stressed CITES' inadequate funding situation and urged consideration of alternative sources to reduce reliance on government contributions. He suggested establishing a user fee on trade in CITES-listed species. The SC took note of the financial report and of the Subcommittee's oral report.

Costed programme of work for 2009: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented the costed programme of work (CPW) (SC58 Doc.9.2). She proposed not to include a staff costs column in the CPW with percentages of staff time for individual activities. Subcommittee Chair Gabel reported on the outcome of the budget meeting, which took place immediately prior to SC58, pointing to the parties' diverging views about staff time calculations. Japan, Canada, the UK, Kenya, Mexico and Humane Society International (HSI) argued against the Secretariat's proposal, stating that most UN Environment Programme (UNEP) bodies perform this calculation, which

adds to transparency and helps internal organization. HSI further noted the existence of software solutions. However, the Secretariat stressed again that this exercise was impractical, difficult, and not useful.

Outcome: The SC took note of the costed programme of work and of the subcommittee's oral report. The Secretariat will present the budget for 2012-2014, including staff costs without a breakdown per activity. The SC agreed that the CoP should have the possibility to incorporate decisions into existing costed programmes of work.

RELATIONSHIP WITH UNEP: On Wednesday, UNEP presented document SC58 Doc.8. He: extended an invitation to parties to participate in the gap analysis underway under the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); noted the delay in finalizing the MoU between CITES and UNEP; and highlighted UNEP's internal reforms including formalizing administrative and financial relations with all the multilateral environmental agreements through a delegation of authority and accountability framework. He further described the process of appointing the next CITES Secretary-General, highlighting the SC's involvement, and noted that a selection would be made by early 2010.

Canada, China, Japan, Oceania, Kenya and the UK emphasized the importance of signing the MoU, and stressed that the SC be fully consulted on the appointment of the Secretary-General.

On Friday, when the SC reviewed the executive summary for this item, which contained the SC's recommendation to thank UNEP for the oral report, China proposed adding that the SC noted the upcoming process for the appointment of the next Secretary-General and requested to be fully consulted by UNEP in this process. Canada asked for the SC to note UNEP's recognition of the need for an MoU with CITES. The SC agreed to these amendments.

STRATEGIC MATTERS

REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES: On Monday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc. 11. In selecting the chairs of the scientific committees, he invited the SC, in cooperation with the committees, to adopt one of the following three options: electing a chair from amongst the members of the committee, who would then be replaced by his or her alternate in representing the region; having the CoP select a chair in addition to the regular members of the committee; or maintaining the current arrangement of a member of the committee acting as chair and member concurrently, but providing him or her with financial support to cover time spent working on committee business and costs related to participation in meetings. He noted that possible extra costs were presented in the document for the first two options, and highlighted the possibility of rotating the position among regions in the future.

The Russian Federation supported providing additional financial support to the chair. Australia, for Oceania, Zambia, the US, Canada, Chile and HSI preferred the option to elect the chair from the committee members, and called for appointments based on their scientific expertise. China and Kenya also supported this option, but noted their preference for appointments made on a regional rotation basis, whereas India defended the principle of equitable opportunities for all. AC

Chair Thomas Althaus (Switzerland) supported the first option, highlighting crucial requirements such as availability of funding, time, and reliable internet access. PC Chair Margarita Clemente (Spain) further highlighted past problems in obtaining adequate financial resources as the main reason why developing country representatives avoid chairing the committees. HSI, supported by Kenya, suggested that the current chairs of the scientific committees prepare a more realistic budget reflecting all their duties.

Outcome: The SC agreed to elect the chair from the committee members, selected primarily for their technical expertise, with possible extra costs outlined in SC58 Doc.11. Draft amendments to the relevant resolutions will be forwarded to CoP15.

COOPERATION BETWEEN PARTIES AND PROMOTION OF MULTILATERAL MEASURES: On Monday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.13, and reported that a working group on this topic had recently been activated electronically and asked to consider the selection of a chair. He noted that UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC) had expressed interest in undertaking the consultancy envisaged under Decision 14.30. He called for further nominations for regional representatives from Asia and Africa for the working group. The SC took note of the document.

CITES AND LIVELIHOODS: On Monday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.14, and reported that a working group, chaired by Peru, had been set up on this topic immediately after SC57. He said the group had an initial exchange of views in August 2008, but that the work only resumed in 2009. He also said that UNEP-WCMC had been contracted to prepare a toolkit and guidelines on how to deal with the issue of livelihoods in the context of CITES, and noted that an electronic forum had been set up for discussions.

UNEP called for contributions and case studies for the toolkit. He said that the first draft toolkit would be distributed for comments by the end of this month, and that the document could be finalized by October 2009. The UK noted its wish to participate in the working group, and called for sufficient time for non-members of the working group to provide input prior to the document's formal submission.

The US and HSI expressed concern that the document would be submitted to CoP15 on behalf of the SC prior to its adequate consideration by the SC, and instead called for a decision to be taken at CoP15 to continue this work intersessionally.

Outcome: The SC decided that the working group would finalize the draft toolkit and guidelines and present it at the next SC prior to CoP15, at which point the SC will decide whether to submit these documents to CoP15.

COOPERATION WITH THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO): On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.12. He highlighted WTO's upcoming meetings, and noted that CITES was taking the lead in preparing capacity-building modules on trade and the environment within the Liaison Group of the biodiversity-related conventions.

Botswana thanked the Secretariat for its support at a WTO Regional Workshop on Trade and Environment for English-speaking African Countries. Argentina supported collaboration

with WTO, and stressed that CITES should be recognized as an *ad hoc* observer in certain WTO bodies whose work has relevance to CITES.

Recommendation: The SC recommended (SC58 Doc.12) exploring the possibility of organizing an informal discussion with WTO in the margins of SC61.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE POLICY REVIEWS:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC58 Doc.15) on the Regional Workshop for Arabic-speaking Countries on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews, hosted by Kuwait in March 2009. Kuwait said it valued the contribution of the Secretariat and all participants. Bulgaria, Japan and Iran expressed support for continuation of this process. The SC endorsed the recommendations resulting from the workshop.

Outcome: The SC took note of the recommendations of the Regional Workshop for Arabic-Speaking Countries on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews, including, *inter alia*, to: invite Arabic-speaking parties of the region to initiate the process of reviewing, updating and/or developing policies on wildlife trade; and encourage the replication of the Regional Workshop for Arabic-speaking Countries on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews in other Asian and African regions or subregions.

STRATEGIC VISION 2008-2013: DEVELOPMENT OF INDICATORS:

On Wednesday, Secretary-General Wijnstekers provided an oral report on the status of indicator development for the Strategic Vision 2008-2013. He noted that, in consultation with IUCN, the list of indicators had been completed and would be posted shortly on the CITES website. Noting that increasing the reporting burden on parties would be problematic, the UK, supported by Oceania, suggested that the working group on special reporting requirements consider how best to use the indicators in reporting on achievement of the Vision's goals.

Outcome: The SC took note of the oral report and instructed the special reporting requirements working group to consider how best to use the indicators in reporting on achievement of the goals of the Strategic Vision 2008-2013.

INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

NATIONAL LAWS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION:

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document SC57 Doc.18. She announced that five parties had moved into Category 1 (meeting all requirements for implementing CITES) and provided updated information on legislative progress made by others. She noted Decision 14.25 requiring those parties that have been party to CITES for five or more years and with legislation in Categories 2 or 3 (meeting some or none of the requirements, respectively) to submit to the Secretariat by this meeting either newly-enacted legislation or adequate justification for their delay.

Several parties provided updates on progress made in developing national CITES legislation. The US emphasized that the Secretariat should, at a minimum, issue a written caution to those parties that had not met the deadline, but warned that stronger action may be necessary. Australia supported issuing written cautions and further suggested that regional representatives assist countries in their region.

On the Secretariat's analysis of parties' legislative provisions and draft legislative guidance on the transport of live CITES specimens, Australia supported incorporating the transport-related legislative guidance (as contained in paragraphs 77-89 of AC24 Doc.15.2) into the guidance materials provided under the CITES National Legislation Project. The Secretariat agreed to the recommendations in the document.

Recommendation: The SC agreed to (SC58 Doc.18):

- issue a written caution to those parties and dependent territories that it determines have not complied with Decision 14.25; and
- take note of paragraphs 77-89 of document AC24 Doc.15.2, which will be added to the legislative guidance materials available under the National Legislation Project.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS FOLLOWING DECISION

14.19: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the proposals made by the intersessional working group for correcting non-substantive errors or minor editorial faults in current resolutions (SC58 Doc.16). The US, the UK, Norway and China proposed minor amendments to corrections made to the English texts, and Mexico to the Spanish. IWMC and HSI noted that further work was needed before adopting the French text. The Species Survival Network (SSN), supported by HSI, brought attention to the weakening of language used in the Spanish translations, namely the use of the equivalents of "shall" instead of "should" throughout. The Spanish and French amendments were deferred to informal consultations.

On Friday, the Secretariat presented the revised recommended amendments of resolutions (SC 58 Doc.16 Rev.1). In the English version, the Secretariat, among other things, withdrew its proposals for potentially substantive changes to Res. Conf.5.10 (Definition of "primarily commercial purposes"), reworded Res. Conf.4.27 (Interpretation of Article XVII, paragraph 3 of the Convention) for clarity, and replaced the term "importation" by "import" throughout. The Secretariat noted stylistic changes to the French version, and highlighted verb tense changes that brought the Spanish version in line with the original English verb tenses. The SC accepted the revised document.

SUBSTANTIVE REVISION OF RESOLUTIONS:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced those resolutions for which it intends to prepare proposals for substantive revision for consideration by CoP15 (SC58 Doc.17). He also added proposals for changes to Res. Conf.9.7 (Rev. CoP13) (Transit and transshipment), Res. Conf.9.10 (Rev. CoP14) (Disposal of illegally traded, confiscated and accumulated specimens) and Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Permits and certificates).

The UK, with the US, noted its wish to be consulted on amendments, and further proposed for substantive revision to Res. Conf.5.10. Canada, supported by China, requested time for bilateral consultations. South Africa noted the need for a definition of a hunting trophy under Res. Conf.2.11 (Rev.) (Trade in hunting trophies of Appendix I species). The US expressed concerns with the identification of coral species under Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Permits and certificates). Kenya requested clarity on data ownership, particularly under Res. Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP14) (Trade in elephant specimens). Israel suggested that the impetus for substantive changes should

come from parties. Secretary-General Wijnstekers clarified the Secretariat's mandate, and emphasized its willingness to consult with any interested party or organization on the revisions.

After informal consultations, the SC took note of the document and agreed that the Secretariat would continue to consult all interested parties and organizations during its preparation of documentation on this subject for consideration by CoP15.

NATIONAL REPORTS: On Tuesday, the Secretariat gave an update of information contained in SC58 Doc.19. She noted that Botswana, Cambodia, Jordan, Myanmar, Paraguay and the Republic of Moldova had now provided annual reports, and that Djibouti and Dominica had provided adequate justification for delays.

A meeting of the working group on special reporting requirements was proposed. The UK asked that the working group consider means to reduce reporting burdens. He also raised concerns at the inconsistent use of units of measurement in some parties' reports. Australia reported on efforts to reduce reporting burdens among Pacific island countries through a single reporting format for all biodiversity-related conventions. The working group did not convene during this meeting.

PC Chair Clemente raised the need for a working group to consider the issue of reporting on trade in artificially propagated plants, as suggested at PC18. Informal discussions, chaired by Switzerland were held on Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday, Switzerland reported on the discussions and presented the agreed amendments to the relevant decisions. The SC agreed to endorse the informal group's recommendations, as well as the other recommendations in the document.

Recommendation: The SC's recommendations (SC58 Doc.19) include:

- to issue a notification recommending that parties not authorize any trade in CITES-listed species with those parties determined by the SC to have failed to provide national reports for three consecutive years without adequate justification, until they have provided the requisite number of reports, namely: Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Chad, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Grenada, Iceland, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, and Trinidad and Tobago; and
- to encourage nominations from Asia for membership in the working group on special reporting requirements.
- on reporting on the trade in artificially-propagated plants, to amend: Decision 14.39, to read that the Secretariat should conduct a survey of reporting practices of parties "subject to available funding"; Decision 14.40, *inter alia*, to state that the PC shall, after considering the report of the Secretariat, determine whether there are taxa of artificially-propagated plants included in Appendix II for which detailed reporting is less valuable, and to report its findings by SC62; and Decision 14.41 to state that the SC shall determine whether it is possible to streamline reporting for such plants, report on its findings to CoP16, and submit draft wording to amend relevant resolutions.

RANCHING OPERATIONS: On Tuesday, following presentation of document SC58 Doc.20, the SC agreed to establish an informal working group to discuss the extent to which Madagascar had implemented the SC55's recommendations on its ranching operations (SC55 Doc.13).

On Friday, France reported that the working group had agreed on priority activities to be carried out by Madagascar by the end of 2009, in order to avoid a trade suspension in *Crocodylus niloticus*, including: adoption and implementation of a crocodile management strategy; taking immediate measures to monitor the situation; and inspections and audits of breeding operations. She noted that the group agreed that Madagascar should report to SC61 on the 2007-2010 work plan.

Madagascar agreed to these priority actions, but brought attention to the current political crisis in his country, which has caused many countries to suspend their support and has made implementation difficult. IUCN said its crocodile specialist group will continue to assist Madagascar with implementation.

Outcome: The SC agreed to the list of priority actions produced by the working group on ranching operations. The list will be reflected in the record of the meeting.

REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE: Implementation of PC and AC recommendations: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC58 Doc.21.1) highlighting: details of PC and AC recommendations for specific species; a summary of actions taken by range states; and further actions recommended by the Secretariat.

On the PC recommendations, Bulgaria and PC Chair Clemente called on the Secretariat to help *Prunus africana* (African cherry) range states to respond to the recommendations adopted at PC16. Clemente added that importing countries should support range states' efforts with funding.

Cameroon and Tanzania highlighted their zero export quota for *P. africana* in 2009. Cameroon added that a draft national management plan will be sent to the Secretariat for feedback, and Tanzania that preparations were underway for a standing stock inventory.

South Africa requested a deadline extension for reporting on *Pachypodium bispinosum* and *P. succulentum* to finalize fieldwork and NDF. India highlighted work currently underway on *Taxus wallichiana* (Himalayan yew), noting a report will be submitted to the PC.

Noting repeated non-compliance and a recently increased export quota, the US recommended that *Cyathea contaminans* (tree fern) trade with Indonesia be suspended until the PC's recommendations are implemented. Indonesia supported the Secretariat's recommendation to extend the deadline for implementation of recommendations to 31 October 2009.

On the AC recommendations, Mongolia highlighted actions undertaken on the conservation and sustainable use of *Falco cherrug* (Saker falcon), as well as on law enforcement. Supported by Qatar, Kuwait, Iran and Saudi Arabia, she asked the SC to withdraw its recommendation to parties to suspend trade in Mongolian exports of this species.

Several countries expressed different views regarding the AC recommendations on *Cuora amboinensis* (Malaysian box turtle), *C. galbinifrons* (Indochinese box turtle), *Lissemys punctata*

(Indian flapshell turtle), and for species of *Tridacnidae* (giant clams). The Chair established a working group on this matter, which reported back to the SC on Tuesday afternoon.

On Friday when the SC reviewed the executive summary for this item, Bulgaria asked that a request to the Secretariat to support the African project on *Prunus africanus* be reflected in the text.

The SC endorsed the recommendations as amended.

Recommendation: The SC's recommendations (SC58 Doc.21.1) include:

- that *Cibotium barometz* (golden chicken fern) and *Dendrobium nobile* (an orchid) from Viet Nam be removed from the RST;
- that the deadline for full implementation of the PC's recommendations for *Cyathea contaminans* in Indonesia be extended to 31 October 2009, and that the Secretariat should report on this at SC59;
- that all trade on *Cuora amboinensis* from Viet Nam and for *C. galbinifrons* from Viet Nam and Lao People's Democratic Republic be suspended until the recommendations of the AC have been implemented;
- that the Secretariat engage further with Mali to carry out the study on the status of *Poicephalus senegalus* (Senegal parrot) and report back to SC59, and that Mali should not establish a quota exceeding 5000 specimens per year; and
- that the recommendation to suspend trade in specimens of *Falco cherrug* from Mongolia is withdrawn on the condition that an export quota of 300 specimens is maintained for 2009 and 2010.

Distribution and status of beluga populations in

the Russian Federation: The Russian Federation introduced its report on management efforts for beluga sturgeon (*Huso huso*) populations in the Caspian Sea region (SC58 Doc.21.2). He proposed creating a special working group to review the AC24 recommendation to enter *Huso huso* into the RST. He further suggested an amendment to Res. Conf.12.8 (Rev. CoP13) (RST in specimens of Appendix II species) to improve the scientific basis of selection of species for the RST.

Iran provided information on regional efforts to preserve Caspian Sea stocks, emphasized the species' importance to livelihoods, and supported Russia in calling for a working group. Bulgaria, together with North America, Kenya, WWF, TRAFFIC and the Institute for Ocean Conservation Science stated that *Huso huso* must remain in the RST as recommended by the AC. He emphasized that establishing a working group to review this recommendation would go against due process. AC Chair Althaus emphasized that the RST is not a punitive measure. The Secretariat said that the suggestion to review Res. Conf.12.8 (Rev.CoP13) could be raised during the RST process.

The SC rejected the recommendations to review the entry of *Huso huso* into the RST contained in SC58 Doc.21.2.

Review of recommendations to suspend trade made more than two years ago: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.21.3 (Rev. 1), clarifying that it had already communicated to Tanzania the measures to be taken regarding *Agapornis fischeri* (Fischer's lovebird). The SC noted: that the information provided by Tanzania was insufficient; that the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Madagascar had not

submitted the requested information; and the withdrawal of the recommendation to parties not to accept imports of *Dendrobates tinctorius* (dyeing poison frog) from Suriname. The SC adopted the document's recommendations. AC Chair Althaus stressed that when a taxon is included in the RST process the establishment of zero quotas should not be seen as the only way to proceed, but that making the relevant NDFs and continuing trade in a sustainable manner are also possible solutions.

Recommendation: The SC decided (SC58 Doc.21.3 (Rev.1)): to maintain its recommendation to parties not to accept imports of *Calumma* spp. (chameleons), *Furcifer* spp. (chameleons) (except *F. lateralis*, *F. oustaleti*, *F. pardalis* and *F. verrucosus*), and *Phelsuma* spp. (geckos) (except *P. laticauda*, *P. lineata*, *P. madagascarensis* and *P. quadriocellata*) from Madagascar, pending compliance with the AC's recommendations; and to withdraw its recommendation to parties not to accept imports of *Hippopotamus amphibius* (hippopotamus) from Malawi.

E-COMMERCE OF SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented on a workshop held in Vancouver, Canada, in February 2009 to examine issues related to e-commerce in specimens of CITES-listed species (SC58 Doc.22). He highlighted recommendations resulting from the workshop, including developing a toolkit for regulating legal trade and establishing a working group, and noted that three recommendations on evaluating or developing CITES-implementing legislation and regulations remained bracketed.

The UK supported the continuation of this work, focusing on increasing knowledge of the scale and characteristics of illegal trade via the internet, and increasing awareness. India called for a ban on advertisements on trading of Appendix I species on the internet. TRAFFIC, the UK and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) expressed concern with the bracketed text and called for further discussions in the working group. VC International urged caution not to pursue a separate regulatory system for e-commerce, since the mechanisms of the Convention already apply to all forms of trade.

The Secretariat suggested that the SC endorse the recommendations contained in SC58 Doc.22, but the UK, supported by Cameroon, IFAW, Kenya and Oceania, called for incorporating the workshop's recommendations in an annex to Res. Conf.11.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Compliance and enforcement), and present it to CoP15, in order to have a stronger impact than would an SC endorsement.

The Chair established a working group to continue to work with the Secretariat on developing the toolkit and drafting the resolution annex. The group, chaired by the UK, met on Thursday.

On Friday, the Secretariat provided an oral report on the discussions of the working group. He said the group decided to, in collaboration with the Secretariat: establish an electronic forum; develop a toolkit to assist with the regulation of legal trade in CITES-listed species via the internet; and prepare draft text proposing revision of Res. Conf.11.3 (Rev.CoP14) for consideration by CoP15.

The SC endorsed the oral report of the working group.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT WORKSHOP ON NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS (NDFs): On Tuesday, Mexico introduced a document summarizing the International Expert Workshop on CITES NDFs held in Cancun, Mexico in

November 2008 (SC58 Doc.41), and explained that both PC18 and AC24 had considered the workshop's final report. She emphasized the importance of NDFs to CITES implementation.

Bulgaria suggested CoP15 develop a resolution or decision to ensure follow-up to the workshop's recommendations. AC Chair Althaus and PC Chair Clemente assured members that, although the committees had come to different conclusions on the final report, they would work together to prepare a draft decision for consideration at CoP15 to move the process forward. AC Chair Althaus, supported by Peru, urged parties to provide prompt responses to a questionnaire seeking to facilitate this work. Oceania underscored that there was no single clear-cut method for NDFs and, with China, supported further discussion at CoP15. The SC took note of the document.

REVISION AND PUBLICATION OF CITES

APPENDICES: On Tuesday, the Secretariat explained that it had been asked to consult with the PC and AC on the reasons behind the lengthy delay in publishing revised Appendices after a CoP, and presented the resulting recommendations (SC58 Doc.42). He said that if the SC were to agree to the recommendations, the Secretariat would then prepare amendments to Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev. CoP14) (Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II) and Res. Conf.12.11 (Rev. CoP14) (Standard nomenclature), as well as a draft decision for consideration at CoP15. Japan and China urged adoption of the recommendations and their consideration at CoP15. HSI, supported by AC Chair Althaus, warned against reopening Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev. CoP14) with regard to this issue and instead suggested including the recommendation language in an alternative resolution. The US expressed concern with identifying monospecific taxa at the genus level or above. HSI explained that this could avoid the need for new proposals every time a new species in a taxon was discovered.

The SC adopted the recommendations.

Recommendation: The SC recommends (SC58 Doc.42) that:

- parties considering the submission of a proposal to amend the Appendices, in cases where there is any doubt in the nomenclature to follow, consult the nomenclature specialist of the AC or PC as early as possible;
- when submitting to the CoP any proposal to change a standard nomenclature reference, the AC and PC include a list of the amendments that would have to be made to the Appendices if the proposal were adopted; and
- the AC and PC conduct an analysis to identify monospecific taxa listed in the Appendices at the level of genus or above, and, where appropriate, prepare proposals to simplify the listing of these taxa to cover the highest taxon possible, without altering the scope of the listing, for submission to the CoP.

CRITERIA FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I

AND II: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC58 Doc.43. He highlighted the Secretariat's and the FAO's differences in interpretation of paragraph B of Annex 2a of Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev.CoP14) (Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II), which states that regulation of trade is required to ensure that harvest is not reducing the wild population of a commercially exploited aquatic species to a level at which its survival might be threatened. He said that the

FAO's interpretation of this criterion considered "reduction" and "decline" as synonymous, thus taking Annex 5's definition of "decline," while the Secretariat's interpretation does not. He requested clarification from parties as to how to proceed.

Several parties expressed hope that this issue would not compromise the relationship or the MoU between the Secretariat and FAO. Chile, Argentina, Canada, Japan, Iceland, Norway, Namibia, Peru, the Russian Federation and China supported FAO's interpretation in agreeing that the two terms should be interpreted as synonymous. Namibia cautioned that the CITES interpretation would result in a lack of objective criteria thus rendering the criteria ineffective.

WWF, IUCN and HSI agreed with the Secretariat's interpretation. IUCN said that this interpretation was more consistent with the fundamental principles of the Convention. The EU said that the Secretariat's interpretation may have merit, and called for further discussion during this meeting. He added that there was no reason why aquatic species' listing criteria should be more restrictive than terrestrial species'. The US noted that if "reduction" and "decline" were meant to be used synonymously, "reduction" would also have been defined in Annex 5.

IWMC said the SC did not have the competence to define any terms, but noted that at CoP14, a two-thirds majority followed the FAO's interpretation and not the Secretariat's.

The FAO said that the Secretariat's interpretation was simplistic. He said that the listing criteria needed to have flexibility in their application and be able to deal with insufficient data when trying to apply quantitative guidelines on aquatic species, adding that the FAO's interpretation does both. He added that FAO's criteria interpretation was based on a wealth of scientific experience and encompassed the precautionary approach.

Oceania noted that there was no agreement within their region on this issue, and recommended it be referred to CoP15. HSI agreed, and suggested that in the meantime both FAO and the Secretariat clearly explain their interpretations when providing assessments and advice to parties regarding amendments proposed to CoP15. Delegates agreed to this suggestion, and the discussion was deferred to CoP15.

On Thursday, Canada reported that informal discussions on this issue had continued, and resulted in an agreed statement noting, *inter alia*: that the SC should ask CoP15 to give guidance as to a common interpretation to paragraph B of Annex 2a of Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev.CoP14), paying particular attention to the flexibility contained in that resolution and situations where little data is available; and that, in the meantime, parties preparing for CoP15 be asked to clearly define in their listing proposals how they define paragraph B.

The SC agreed to add the full statement to the summary record of the meeting.

Outcome: The SC agreed that the interpretation of the criteria for listing species in Appendices I and II should be referred to CoP15 and, in the meantime, when providing advice to parties, the Secretariat and FAO should clearly indicate which interpretation they used.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES: On Wednesday, the Chairs of the Scientific Committees presented their reports on recent reviews of selected species listings in the Appendices. Referring to a summary document (PC18 Doc.16.1.1), PC Chair Clemente highlighted that the PC decided to request Namibia to prepare a proposal for excluding *Welwitschia mirabilis* (a caudiciform plant) from Appendix I. She announced that Patricia Davila (Mexico) will replace Jonas Lüthy (Switzerland) as Chair of the intersessional working group on the periodic review of the Appendices.

PC Chair Clemente said she would work with the AC Chair to prepare a joint paper for consideration by the CoP on the need to revise the review process itself. AC Chair Althaus emphasized the lengthy delays between selection of taxa and the start of the review process by range states. Citing an AC working group report (AC24 WG3 Doc.1), he noted the recommendations to maintain *Callithrix jacchus* (common marmoset) and *Ambystoma dumerilii* (axolote salamander) in Appendix II and *Andrias japonicus* (Japanese giant salamander) in Appendix I, and to urge completion of reviews of *Crocodilus lacertinus* (dragon lizard) and four other species. He also lamented slow progress on the review of Felidae (cats), and requested the Secretariat to issue a notification to accelerate progress on all outstanding reviews. The SC took note of the Chairs' reports.

ENFORCEMENT MATTERS: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC58 Doc.23 and its addendum, namely a report of the meeting of the CITES enforcement expert group held in Oregon, US, in June 2009. He said the group: noted the need for an overview of illegal wildlife trade; recommended that the EU-TWIX database serve as a model for such a global data system; and recommended a Secretariat staff increase to coordinate international enforcement efforts. He said the group was against establishing a separate monitoring system for tigers, favoring a single global, rather than species-specific, database. On progress made by Egypt in implementing recommendations on its illegal trade in great apes, he said the Secretariat continues to monitor the situation and will report at CoP15. On Nigeria, he said that the suspension of trade should remain in place given the country's continued non-responsiveness to Secretariat communications.

Canada, the UK and TRAFFIC supported a global expansion of the EU-TWIX system, with TRAFFIC cautioning against abandoning species-specific databases, which can have an important role beyond law enforcement. South Africa agreed on the need for increased capacity within the Secretariat for enforcement matters. Kenya, for Africa, volunteered to liaise with Nigeria.

On progress made by Egypt in implementation, Kenya expressed concern at ongoing smuggling in great apes, noting the high number of confiscated animals ending up in Kenya. Cameroon, supported by SSN and Pro-Wildlife, questioned information provided by Egypt in the Secretariat's report and called for a trade suspension in CITES-listed species until all recommendations had been fulfilled. The US agreed on the need for special attention to this matter. Canada, Kuwait, Côte d'Ivoire and China asked the Secretariat to continue assisting Egypt, with the UK, supported by Species Management Specialists (SMS), suggesting that if Egypt failed to provide

adequate information by CoP15 stronger measures should be considered. IWMC noted that action should target export as well as import countries.

Later in the day, Cameroon withdrew its earlier statement, and reported on progress made on enforcement issues through bilateral talks with Egypt, noting this was more productive than addressing the matter multilaterally. Egypt also reported on bilateral discussions with Kenya in this regard, and noted his country's full commitment to implementing the recommendations to end the illegal trade.

IUCN and WWF, supported by Indonesia, urged increased vigilance in enforcing Appendix II measures for *Cheilinus undulatus* (humphead wrasse).

Outcome: The SC noted the document (SC58 Doc.23), and endorsed the enforcement expert group's recommendations, including that the EU-TWIX database serve as a model for a global data system, and the Secretariat staff be increased to coordinate enforcement efforts. The SC requested Egypt to report to CoP15 on its implementation of the recommendations and directed the Secretariat to monitor the country's progress and provide support.

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.24, including an update of the intersessional working group's progress on the preparation of a draft discussion paper (referred to as a "revised rolling text"), noting that working group Chair Cristian Maquieira (Chile) could not continue this work. The UK, Argentina, Iran, China, the US and SMS urged further progress, in order to present results to CoP15. In response to petitions by the US and China, the Secretariat informed members that the revised rolling text, a summary of previous negotiations on this matter and information provided by the UN Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea will be made available. FAO announced that a legal review is being undertaken to inform the rolling text. Regarding illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, he communicated two initiatives underway: the development of a legally binding instrument on port state measures, a process open to all UN members for which the next meeting will take place in early August 2009; and the establishment of a global database of fishing records.

Outcome: The SC agreed to the recommendation in SC58 Doc.24, *inter alia*, to review the draft discussion text and draft revised resolution, when they become available, and to provide input in order to submit both documents for consideration by CoP15.

PURPOSE CODES ON CITES PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES: On Wednesday, Robert Gable (US), Chair of the working group reviewing the implementation and interpretation of Purpose-of-Transaction codes, presented on the group's progress (SC58 Doc.25). He said the group did not reach consensus on all matters, and brought attention to draft proposed revisions to Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Permits and certificates).

North America said that a purpose code should have a precise definition reached by consensus. The UK supported the general idea of reducing the number of purpose codes and improving definitions, but disagreed with reducing all non-commercial trade purpose codes to "N." AC Chair Althaus and Mexico

noted that the simplification procedure had resulted in more complications, and pointed to overlaps and inconsistencies in the purpose codes, noting that basic definitions vary among countries. Conservation Force called for coordination between importing and exporting countries. SMS said the codes should be clearly defined and only apply to Appendix I species.

Canada, Oceania, the UK and Mexico called for continuation of the group's work after CoP15.

Outcome: There was consensus that the working group on purpose codes should report on progress at CoP15 and continue its work after that, but that an amendment to Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP14) should not be proposed at this point.

ELECTRONIC PERMITTING: On Wednesday, Alessandra Rossi (Italy) presented on activities completed by the working group she chaired on electronic permitting, and noted it was time for a new vision. The SC accepted the nomination of Mathias Loertscher (Switzerland) as the group's new Chair. He then gave an oral report on the implementation of the joint Switzerland-UK pilot project for exchange of electronic permitting data. He said that they were defining modes for data exchange, and hoped to apply these by early 2010 and report back to CoP15. The Secretariat reported that a draft toolkit on electronic permitting would be ready shortly for comment by the working group. He emphasized that the toolkit complies with major international norms and standards for electronic trade documentation. The SC noted the oral reports.

TRADE IN CROCODILIAN SPECIMENS: On Wednesday, Craig Hoover (US), Chair of the working group on trade in crocodilian specimens, presented document SC58 Doc.27. He recalled the group's mandate to examine the implementation and effectiveness of the universal tagging system for identification of crocodilian skins and the trade in small crocodilian leather products (SCLPs). He noted that the group could not recommend a definition of SCLPs, and that the group agreed on draft revisions to Res. Conf.11.12 (Universal tagging system) to bring it in line with current taxonomic, conservation and practical knowledge, and to Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Permits and certificates) to introduce consideration of simplified administrative procedures for the SCLP trade.

India, supported by Israel, reiterated its concern that measures to alleviate the administrative burden with regard to the SCLP trade could undermine the universal tagging system. Bulgaria invited the working group to further consider measures to reduce administrative burdens for SCLPs.

The SC agreed to the document's recommendations.

Recommendation: The SC recommends (SC58 Doc.27), *inter alia*: that parties consider measures to alleviate the administrative burden associated with the SCLP trade through simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates; and that parties that require import permits for SCLP review these requirements.

ELEPHANTS: Reviews of the status of the elephant, trade in its specimens and impact of legal trade: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.36.1 on progress towards fulfillment of Decision 14.78, which instructs the SC to conduct ongoing comprehensive reviews of the status of the elephant, trade in its specimens and impact of legal trade. UNEP-WCMC, hired to this end, presented its review (SC58 Doc.36.1 Annex 2). Kenya, supported by Zambia, the EU,

Israel, TRAFFIC, IUCN, Botswana and Tanzania, regarded the information presented as out of date, inaccurate and incomplete. While warning against duplication of work on this issue, they asked that the SC not endorse the report, and make sure the task is adequately fulfilled. Zambia called parties' attention to the gravity of wasting resources given the critical situation of habitat loss and human-elephant conflicts. China announced funds for supporting national efforts for conserving elephant populations.

Outcome: The SC concluded that the mandate contained in Decision 14.78 had not been fulfilled, and therefore ongoing comprehensive reviews of the status of the elephant, trade in its specimens and the impact of the legal trade must be conducted.

Control of trade in elephant ivory: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.36.2, stressing the reported ready availability of ivory in domestic markets in a number of Asian countries, besides those designated as CITES "trading partners," and the lack of response from Zimbabwe and Ethiopia regarding control of trade. Zimbabwe recognized the seriousness of elephant poaching and illegal ivory trade in his country, but stressed commitment to facing these challenges. He reported on domestic measures such as an ongoing project to centralize issuance of permits, and a temporary suspension of ivory sales. Kenya called on parties to support Ethiopia in its fight against smuggling, stating that Ethiopia was taking measures to improve trade controls. He further stated that one of the priority activities of elephant range states would be supporting countries with enforcement problems. The US and the EU expressed concern about the lack of response from Zimbabwe and Ethiopia, and hoped their donations would help both countries to comply with measures in the near future. The EU further stated that if this did not occur, relevant measures should be taken. TRAFFIC and WWF drew attention to recent large-scale seizures of illegally traded ivory, noting that the issue of ivory markets in Africa should be fully tackled. The SC took note of the document.

Report on the one-off ivory sale in southern African countries: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC58 Doc.36.3 Rev.1, summarizing how conditions were met and verified for the one-off ivory sale conducted in 2008, and how the proceeds were spent by the four African countries involved.

The EU congratulated the Secretariat on the thoroughness of its inspections. He encouraged the African countries to provide more clarity on the use of proceeds from the sale, and suggested that Japan and China, as major ivory markets, contribute to MIKE. The SC noted the report.

African elephant action plan and African elephant fund: On Wednesday, the Secretariat provided an update on progress in developing an African elephant plan by range states and the establishment of an African Elephant Fund for the plan's implementation (SC58 Doc.36.4). He explained that a working group for the fund had been established to meet virtually, once Secretariat resources became available, to discuss the nature of the fund and the composition of its steering committee. He also noted that other elephant-related activities not mentioned in Decision 14.76, which calls on donors to contribute to the

fund and to MIKE, require funding, such as the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) programme and elephant trade reviews. He suggested amending the decision accordingly.

Kenya, on behalf of range states, announced that a working group, which met in June 2009 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, had produced a draft of the African elephant action plan, which could be made available to SC members for comment. He emphasized the comprehensive nature of the plan, asked that range states be consulted on the establishment of the fund and its steering committee, and, supported by Botswana, called on support from donors to the fund. The EU welcomed the actions taken towards finalizing the action plan and emphasized that cooperation among all range states was critical to addressing elephant issues. He looked forward to establishment of the fund as soon as the action plan was adopted.

On Friday, Kenya read a statement on behalf of 21 of 37 African elephant range states. He expressed disappointment at proposals from some African range states for further ivory sales and downlistings, saying that these went against the spirit of the agreement made on an ivory trade moratorium. He called for African unity on this issue, and reiterated that the region is experiencing an upsurge in ivory smuggling and poaching.

Outcome: The SC took note of the document and Kenya's statement, and urged the African elephant range states and the Secretariat to complete the implementation of Decisions 14.75 and 14.79 (Elephant conservation) as soon as possible.

Decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.36.5, highlighting that US\$60,000 was needed to conduct the study on the development of a decision-making mechanism for possible future authorizations of ivory trade.

Kenya called for transparency in the process and in the development of the terms of reference of the consultant hired for the study. Israel and IFAW prioritized determining the impact of the legal trade before discussing a decision-making process for authorizing further trade. IWMC noted that the timeline for the study had been determined by Decision 14.77. Supporting Kenya and Israel, SSN added that the development of such a mechanism should not presuppose further ivory sales, particularly not before the moratorium expires in 2017. The EU questioned the cost of the study, but noted that the sooner the study was done, the sooner the mechanism would be completed.

Outcome: The SC took note of the Secretariat's efforts to launch a study on the development of a decision-making mechanism for authorizing future ivory trade, and invited parties and organizations to financially support this activity.

MIKE-ETIS subgroup: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.36.6, proposing that the subgroup convene during this meeting to consider, *inter alia*, the subgroup's tasks, progress in the development and implementation of MIKE and ETIS, and the subgroup's work beyond CoP15. Kenya requested that the subgroup discuss the MIKE budget. The EU expressed concern with problems facing MIKE-Asia. The subgroup convened on Thursday.

On Friday, Zambia, Chair of the group, reported that the group had agreed that members of the MIKE/ETIS Technical Advisory Group could attend its meetings. She noted progress made

by both the MIKE and ETIS programmes, and said the group expressed the need for a more robust MIKE programme, focused on technical capacity in the region.

The SC accepted the report of the subgroup (SC58 Com.3).

GREAT APES: The Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.32 on Thursday, noting the development of alerts describing the nature of species-specific illegal trade, the countries involved, the motivations for such trade, the characteristics of cross border trade, and the smuggling techniques used. He also reported on awareness-raising and capacity-building activities. The UK and Cameroon welcomed the report, with the UK further encouraging parties to provide technical assistance to both source and consumer countries of the illegal live primate trade. WWF pointed to the poaching and illegal ape bushmeat trade conducted by large organizations for commercial ends and not only by individuals for subsistence uses. The SC took note of the document.

ASIAN BIG CATS: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.33. He noted that only five out of 13 tiger range states had submitted the reports referred to in Decision 14.65. He also reported that only China had responded to a notification issued after Decision 14.69, which instructed parties "with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale" to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers. Regarding the convening of a tiger trade enforcement meeting and the development of a conservation strategy workshop (Decision 14.70), he informed that these aims could be addressed at the General Assembly of the Global Tiger Forum (GTF), scheduled to take place in February 2010.

India noted a number of domestic milestones, and appealed to all parties to refrain from importing farmed specimens, stating that tiger farming is a serious threat to wild populations. He also offered to host the General Assembly of the GTF. The EU, supported by the US, Oceania, WWF in the name of 40 NGOs, and SMS, urged parties to provide reports. He also proposed that the SC recommend that Res. Conf.12.5 (Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species) be revised at CoP15. TRAFFIC noted its review on the implementation of the decisions under discussion and its resulting recommendations. The Environmental Investigation Agency requested information from China regarding trade in legally acquired big cats' skins. The World Bank noted progress made under the GTF. The GTF reaffirmed its willingness to collaborate with CITES on tiger conservation. Malaysia highlighted actions taken in his country to protect tiger populations, including the adoption of a Tiger Action Plan in 2008. China stressed its compliance with CITES provisions regarding tiger trade.

When the SC reviewed the executive summary for this item on Friday, the UK, with India, noted that range states should be directed to submit reports "within 90 days" of receipt of the notification, for their consideration by SC59. China warned that a focus on domestic rather than international challenges to tiger conservation could be detrimental to wild populations.

Outcome: The SC considered that Decision 14.65, instructing tiger range states to report on progress at SC meetings, identifying gaps and additional measures needed, had not been

fulfilled, and therefore instructed the Secretariat to issue a notification to the parties requiring them to submit reports within 90 days. The SC also agreed that amendments to Res. Conf.12.5 would be proposed to CoP15 by a party, since according to CITES provision it would be inappropriate for the Secretariat to do so.

BUSHMEAT: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced this item, noting that Decisions 14.73 and 14.74 encourage the Central Africa bushmeat working group to bring to the attention of the SC any matters relating to the implementation of Res. Conf. 13.11 (Bushmeat) and of national action plans or other initiatives relating to trade in bushmeat. He said that the Secretariat had received no reply to its request to the working group for a report.

Outcome: The SC noted that no report was submitted, and instructed the Secretariat to continue efforts to obtain information from the working group for presentation at a future SC meeting.

TIBETAN ANTELOPE: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented a document reporting on enforcement measures for the illegal trade in Tibetan antelope products (SC58 Doc.35). He noted the need for donor support for a projected training workshop on the matter, and the paucity of new information to report.

Outcome: The SC noted the report and agreed, in the future, to review trade in Tibetan antelope only once between successive CoPs, rather than twice.

RHINOCEROSSES: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the relevant document SC58 Doc.37. He emphasized that the poaching and illegal trade of rhinoceroses was the most pressing criminal activity facing CITES. He noted that very few parties had completed declarations on their stocks of rhinoceros horn or its derivatives, as required prior to CoP15 (Decision 14.88).

Botswana, supported by the UK, stated that the resurgence in illegal killing and trade of rhinoceroses was threatening to reverse conservation gains made in the region. She cautioned that the illegal trade involves sophisticated methods and unscrupulous individuals, and requires immediate international cooperation to address investigation and prosecution. South Africa described its recent efforts to curb poaching and illegal trade, including: introducing a moratorium on the trade in individual horns and any derivatives or products; prohibiting export of hunting trophies in personal baggage; and considering ways to limit hunting to *bona fide* hunters. Zimbabwe reported that fines for poaching had been raised significantly but, with Kenya, appealed for collaboration in controlling the situation. Kenya stated that the link between trophy hunting and illegal killing needed further consideration and, with South Africa, called for a better understanding of the factors driving the recent increase in trade. Namibia said it was reviewing its rhinoceros strategy.

The UK encouraged the Secretariat to continue providing assistance to parties on rhinoceros issues, where sought, and reminded range states of the importance of monitoring internal markets. TRAFFIC and IUCN drew attention to their report on the status, conservation and trade in rhinoceroses (SC58 Inf.10), citing South Africa and Zimbabwe as particular concerns. Supported by WWF, he asked for funding to complete a comprehensive review prior to CoP15, pursuant to Res. Conf.9.14 (Rev.CoP14) (Conservation of and trade of African

and Asian rhinoceroses). He noted the recent increase in trade in rhinoceros horn in Asia, particularly in Viet Nam; called for the suppression of this trade in domestic markets; and also called on South Africa to further strengthen controls on hunting trophies. The World Bank offered the support of relevant country offices to implementation efforts and suggested these be mainstreamed into the Global Tiger Initiative where issues overlap.

The SC took note of the document.

STURGEONS: Caviar trade database: The SC noted document SC58 Doc.38.1.

Recommendations of the AC: AC Chair Althaus presented the recommendations suggested by the AC on stock assessment and total allowable catch (TAC) determination methodologies (AC24 WG4 Doc.1).

Iran brought attention to inaccuracies in the FAO report on which the recommendations were based. He recommended that the SC recognize that contrary to the FAO's report, his country has been using the unified methodology for sturgeon stock assessment and TAC estimation. The SC endorsed the AC's recommendations and recognized Iran's statement.

Recommendation: The SC, *inter alia*:

- urges the range states to consider all recommendations in AC24 Doc.12.2 (Assessment and monitoring methodologies used for shared stocks of Acipenseriformes species);
- requests the Caspian range states to implement the above recommendations and report to AC25; and
- requests the range states to report to CoP15 on progress made in improving the existing sturgeon stock assessment and TAC determination methodology.

RAMIN: The Secretariat noted that it had only been made aware of one case of illegal trafficking in ramin and that reports from exporting states were lacking, and asked the SC whether ramin should be kept on the agenda of future meetings.

Malaysia presented information on trade in ramin, highlighting activities undertaken under the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)-CITES joint work programme.

The US preferred that this item not be included on the agenda of future SC meetings unless new concerns arise. Oceania, Canada, Kenya and the UK disagreed, with Oceania calling on exporting states to submit written reports on ramin trade.

On Friday, when the SC considered the executive summary for this item, Indonesia gave a statement on his country's conservation and management of the species, highlighting annual export quotas and initiatives to improve enforcement and develop a regional action plan. Malaysia, supported by China, Japan and Qatar, but opposed by Australia, the UK, Canada and Kenya, requested deleting text requiring range states to submit reports on ramin trade at future meetings of the SC beyond SC59. The requirement was kept, and the SC endorsed the recommendation.

Outcome: The SC agreed to continue the enforcement of SC57's recommendations on ramin, including that exporting range states are to submit written reports on ramin trade. The SC also agreed that ramin should remain on the agenda at future SC meetings.

BIGLEAF MAHOGANY: The Secretariat presented document SC58 Doc.39, and provided an update on the issue following recent discussions with Peru, the US and PC Chair

Clemente. She said that Peru had made progress on most, but not all, of SC57's recommendations on CITES implementation related to bigleaf mahogany, noting that the Secretariat had also received allegations of continued illegal trade. Among recommendations that have yet to be fulfilled, she highlighted, *inter alia*, that: Peru's legislation has been included in Category 1, although still pending analysis of the implications of the derogation of Decree 10.90 on CITES-related matters; further information was needed on the National Action Plan for Mahogany, the implementation of the 2007 and 2008 quotas, implementation of relevant legislative provisions, and chain of custody supervision; and a national commission on timber yield coefficients had not been established. She then presented a revised set of recommendations, including that the Secretariat should undertake a mission to Peru in 2009. She added that information was needed from countries, other than the US, importing mahogany from Peru.

Peru reported on its recent activities in implementing the SC57 recommendations. He highlighted, *inter alia*: changes in legislation and the penal code; newly developed monitoring and inspection mechanisms; national mahogany population assessments; and the application of timber coefficient yields approved during a recent Latin American workshop. He added that information on export quotas would soon be submitted to the Secretariat, and called for studies on the trade in semi-finished and finished products.

The US, with the UK, expressed concern with mahogany from other range states, as well as with evolving problems in trade of cedar, and supported a Secretariat mission to Peru. On the retrospective increase in the 2008 quota, the UK supported the Secretariat's proposal for the Peruvian government to purchase the excess timber for its own use, so as to compensate the local communities involved.

TRAFFIC expressed concern with the recent revoking of a CITES-related legislative decree by Peru's Congress, brought attention to loopholes in the revised penal code, and called in question the political commitment to tackling illegal trade given recent evidence of illegal activities. Chile suggested that it share experiences on good practice and forest resources with Peru and Bolivia.

On Friday, the Secretariat presented amendments to the revised recommendations (SC58 Com.2). Peru pointed out that it had established an inter-institutional commission on timber yields, and called for technical support from the PC and the Secretariat to determine export quotas for upcoming years.

PC Chair Clemente and the US recalled the PC's work on commodities and plans being developed under the ITTO-CITES timber project to fund a market study on semi-finished and finished mahogany products, and noted that PC18 drafted decisions on this for CoP15's consideration. The US called on the PC to use the information produced from this work to review the mahogany annotation and consider appropriate amendments for consideration by CoP16.

The UK noted that the Secretariat's proposal on excess timber from 2008 was not listed in the recommendations, and requested that it be added to the summary of the meeting. Peru expressed the need for a feasibility study on this.

The SC endorsed the revised recommendations.

Recommendation: The SC recommended (SC58 Com.2):

- continuing its review of Peru's implementation of the SC57 recommendations at SC59, while Peru compiles additional information and undertakes relevant recommended actions;
- requesting the Secretariat to undertake a technical assistance and verification mission to Peru in 2009, whose terms of reference would be determined by the Secretariat in consultation with the PC Chair and Peru;
- advising countries, other than the US, which import mahogany from Peru, to send information on their mahogany trade with Peru; and
- noting discussions in the PC on commodities, and plans under the ITTO-CITES timber project to fund a market study on mahogany products, to possibly consider revising the mahogany annotation.

PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS: A working group on this item (SC58 Doc.31) met on Thursday, chaired by Bruce Weissgold (US), in the absence of the working group Chair Alfred Wong (Hong Kong SAR). In plenary on Thursday, Weissgold reported on the group's proposal to continue electronic deliberations and prepare a document for consideration by CoP15. Supported by China, he noted that the working group's terms of reference, as set out in Decision 14.64, involved addressing complex technical issues and warned that consensus may not be reached before CoP15.

Outcome: The SC requested the working group to prepare a report, pursuant to Decision 14.64 (Personal and household effects), for submission to CoP15. This report should indicate that it had not received the prior endorsement of the Standing Committee.

PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF TIMBER SHIPMENTS: On Thursday, Alessandra Rossi (Italy), Chair of the electronic working group on physical inspection of timber shipments, provided an update on her report (SC58 Doc.28). She recalled the mandate of the group to solicit and compile existing procedures by parties for the identification of CITES-listed and look-alike timber species and for physical inspections. She noted limited submissions from parties and urged greater participation, particularly by exporting countries, in the electronic forum. She reported that an informal group convened at this meeting and recommended that: work should continue; species identification should be considered prior to inspection methodologies; a questionnaire should be used to solicit information from parties; and a toolkit comprising existing materials and methods for identification should be compiled and distributed to parties.

The US agreed that this work should continue and, with Bulgaria, encouraged parties to engage in the working group process. He suggested that the SC recommend renewal of the relevant decisions (14.60 and 14.61) to CoP15. Peru noted the importance of harmonizing the control and monitoring of CITES-listed timber species, and pledged to submit the information requested.

Outcome: The SC noted the report, agreed that the working group should continue its activities, and urged parties to contribute information.

INCONSISTENT IMPLEMENTATION OF APPENDIX III TIMBER ANNOTATIONS: On Thursday, the US presented its document and recommendations on inconsistent

implementation of Appendix III timber annotations (SC58 Doc.29). He noted that problems arise when countries annotate Appendix III listings to include only their national populations. He proposed deleting paragraph a) iv) of Res. Conf.9.25 (Rev. CoP14) (Inclusion of species in Appendix III) that suggests the possibility of population-level annotations for timber species, and adding a new recommendation stating that the Secretariat should consult with a party wishing to propose an annotation to ensure that the listing will achieve the level of control and cooperation with other range states intended by the party.

North America, Bulgaria, Oceania and Chile endorsed the US recommendations. PC Chair Clemente recalled that the PC had agreed to the recommendations and had forwarded them to the SC for endorsement since they concern implementation.

China and Brazil supported the principle of a uniform approach for the control and reporting of Appendix III listings. However, China did not support the proposed paragraph deletion, and Brazil expressed concern at Secretariat intervention in domestic decisions on species listings. The Secretariat and the US emphasized that parties could still make population-level annotations after consultation, if they so wished. HSI suggested specifying that the revision to Res. Conf.9.25 (Rev.CoP14) apply only to population-level annotations for species "traded for timber," while Chile and IWMC maintained no distinction should be made. The SC adopted the recommendations in the document.

Recommendations: The SC recommends (SC58 Doc.29) that:

- the Secretariat issue a notification to the parties providing its views on how current annotated Appendix-III timber listings should be implemented, with regard to both CITES documentation and annual reporting; and
- a document be submitted to CoP15 proposing to revise Res. Conf.9.25 (Rev. CoP14) by deleting recommendation a) iv) and adding a new recommendation that, if a party proposes a population-level Appendix-III listing, the Secretariat consult with that party to ensure that the listing will achieve the level of control and cooperation with other range states intended by the listing party.

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL: On Thursday, the Secretariat reported on progress in producing the identification manual (SC58 Doc.30). He highlighted that UNEP-WCMC had been contracted to convert the existing CITES Identification Manual into a partial "wiki" format, given the difficulty of maintaining the present sheet-based version. He also stressed the inclusion of links to additional resources such as image banks, and the possibility of accessing the manual with handheld devices. He informed the SC that the new manual will be online and available to all users as of 1 September 2009. China and Japan welcomed the progress made, whereas Israel drew attention to limited internet access in the developing world. The SC took note of the document.

REGIONAL MATTERS

STRENGTHENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CITES THROUGHOUT AFRICA: On Thursday, Kenya presented document SC58 Doc.46, and proposed that the SC create a working group on the participation of the African region in CITES, noting that the terms of reference suggested in the

annex were based on regional consultations. He stressed this would assist the region in defining its capacity-building needs, as stated in the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013. Bulgaria, the Born Free Foundation and Zambia welcomed the initiative and encouraged the SC to adopt it. The Secretariat announced that funding had been provided by the EU for this purpose. The SC endorsed the proposal.

Outcome: The SC endorsed the creation of a working group on the participation of the African region in CITES, with the terms of reference suggested in the annex to document SC58 Doc.46. The group will be comprised of ten representatives from the five regions of the African continent.

REPORTS OF REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: On Friday in plenary, regional reports were presented. Patrick Omondi (Kenya) presented the African regional report (SC58 Doc 45.1), highlighting several regional meetings on, *inter alia*, *Prunus africana*, law enforcement and wildlife, and rhinoceroses.

Zhou Zhihua (China) presented the Asian regional report (SC58 Doc.45.2), noting the need for assistance from other regions to improve party participation within Asia. Qatar called for more communication between regional representatives and all Asian parties.

Eugenia Saavedra (Chile) and Jose Calvo Domingo (Costa Rica) presented the Central and South America and the Caribbean regional report (SC58 Doc.45.3 (Rev.1)), highlighting efforts in increasing procedures to control CITES-related trade.

Valeri Georgiev (Bulgaria) presented Europe's regional report (SC58 Doc.45.4 (Rev.1)), and questioned the need for further regional reports, given the inconsistencies in reporting. Canada, supported by others, said the reports were useful, and suggested creating a template to improve consistency across the reports.

Basile van Havre (Canada) introduced the North American regional report (SC58 Doc.45.5 Rev.1), highlighting workshops held in Canada and Mexico. Kerry Smith (Australia) introduced Oceania's regional report (SC58 Doc.45.6) and highlighted several country-level implementation activities and workshops. She also announced that she would be stepping down as the Australian representative.

The SC took note of the reports, and will consider producing a template for reporting.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, the SC adopted with minor amendments six of the Executive Summaries of the meeting (SC58 Sum.1-6), consisting of a record of the agreements arrived at by SC58. The seventh will be adopted electronically, pending translation into all official languages.

The Secretariat confirmed that SC59 will take place on 12 March 2010, in Doha, Qatar, immediately preceding CoP15. Qatar repeated his invitation to parties to attend CoP15.

In their closing remarks, Secretary-General Wijnstekers and Chair Adu-Nsiah thanked the Secretariat and the participants. SSN recalled the serious issues of illegal trade, unsustainable use, rampant consumerism and lack of resources facing the Convention, and urged delegates to bring energy and a collaborative spirit to CoP15.

The Chair closed the meeting at 12:57 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF SC58

Delegates to the 58th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC58) arrived in Geneva ready to tackle the many substantive and administrative issues that habitually appear on the SC's agenda. But this year there was a buzz of uncertainty as they picked up their badges and reams of conference documents: the venue and dates of the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15) were still up in the air, leaving many unclear as to the role or direction of SC58. However, this uncertainty vanished quickly in the first plenary session when Qatar invited all delegates to attend CoP15 in Doha in March 2010. With this confirmation, many were given a renewed determination to make efficient and thorough use of this last full meeting before the CoP. The resulting quick pace and smooth movement through documents and recommendations resulted in an early closing of the meeting on Friday and a palpable sense of achievement in the room.

The previous meeting of the SC had centered on laying the groundwork for the appropriate implementation of the mandates received from CoP14. Consequently, SC58 focused on assessing whether actions had been adequately undertaken on the CoP14 recommendations, considering those issues forwarded by the Animals and Plants Committees, and getting ready for the upcoming meeting of the CoP. This analysis will look at some of the issues raised by the SC that will resurface at the CoP.

THE WAY TO QATAR: BY LAND...

As the SC reviewed and endorsed recommendations coming from the Plants and Animals Committees, discussions on elephants, great apes, big cats, and bigleaf mahogany took center stage, in an effort to provide recommendations on these controversial issues for adoption by the CoP.

Some delegates had expected that the issue of elephants would feature less prominently on the CITES agenda given the nine-year ivory trade moratorium now in place and following the completed one-off sale of government-owned raw ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe in 2008. Nevertheless, the ongoing tempestuous nature of the issue was reflected in the numerous and protracted statements made by committee members and observers. Although the thorough supervision of the sale by the Secretariat was commended, many pointed to the remaining challenge of ensuring that the sale's proceeds be used exclusively for elephant conservation and for community conservation and development programmes within or adjacent to the elephants' range. It must be remembered that such an allocation of the proceeds, along with the promise of a nine-year resting period for further ivory trade, was the compromise that paved the rocky road at CoP14 towards amending the annotation to African elephant populations and allowing the one-off sale.

Despite the sale's success, the disquieting figures on rising illegal trade, including the occurrence of large-scale seizures (i.e., more than one ton) of illegal ivory earlier this year, could not be overlooked. A number of observers were also concerned that the future development of a decision-making mechanism for a process of trade in ivory under the auspices of the CoP, provided for in Decision 14.77, could open the door to possibly excessive levels of ivory trade by presuming that another sale

is imminent following the moratorium, further opening the possibility of laundering of illegal ivory within the legal stock, as some argue has occurred with the one-off sale.

Reports of poaching, illegal trade of bushmeat, and the use of parts such as rhino horn and tiger bone in, for instance, traditional medicines demonstrate that these issues are still a major threat to species including great apes, tigers and rhinoceroses. However, milestones such as the SC's endorsement of the establishment of an intersessional working group on the participation of the African region in CITES, initiated by African representatives with EU funding, was a glimmer of hope on the uncertain way forward for African species. Along the same lines, the forthcoming General Assembly of the Global Tiger Forum to be held in February 2010, part of the Global Tiger Initiative supported by the World Bank, may assist in fulfilling the SC's mandate under Decision 14.70 to convene a tiger trade enforcement meeting and a conservation strategy workshop. A commitment to collaboration between the World Bank, the Global Tiger Forum and CITES was seen by many SC delegates as a sign of positive action towards developing effective mechanisms for not only combining comprehensive global and national efforts in tiger and biodiversity conservation but also mainstreaming these in economic development. The outcomes of these meetings and the working group will be presented to CoP15 to assess whether the mandates contained in its previous decisions on these species were adequately fulfilled.

In an effort to enhance protection of these heavily poached and illegally traded species, SC58 delegates were updated on how CITES was keeping up with the latest technologies to regulate the trade of endangered flora and fauna. The establishment of an electronic forum on e-commerce, the development of a toolkit to regulate trade in CITES-listed species via the internet, the current advances on electronic permitting, and the forthcoming launch of a new "wiki" identification manual, are examples of exciting technological initiatives updating the once innovative but now largely outdated paper-based CITES procedures and initiatives, which now look like relics of an earlier age. The technological showcase on display at SC58 will reappear at CoP15 when parties decide on enforcement matters and other issues related to implementation of the Convention.

...AND BY SEA

The Geneva meeting also saw increased stress on the relationship between CITES and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), as the two organizations argued heatedly over interpretations of criteria used for listing Appendix II species.

At CoP14, recommendations made by the FAO Expert Advisory Panel on proposals to list commercially exploited aquatic species diverged from those of the CITES Secretariat. According to the Secretariat, these divergences arose from the different interpretations of the revised criteria for Appendix II species inclusion adopted by CoP13, criteria that included FAO's recommendations on listing aquatic species.

In FAO's view, the terms "decline" and "reduction" in populations are synonymous, and as such it uses the definition of "decline" (Annex 5 of Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev.CoP14)) when considering if trade regulation in a species is required to ensure

that the harvest of specimens from the wild is not *reducing* the wild population to a level at which its survival might be threatened by continued harvesting or other influences (the criterion contained in Annex 2a, paragraph B, of the aforementioned resolution). The Secretariat argues that the definition of “decline” is not relevant in considering whether a species meets the contested criterion, as that term is not mentioned. In response, FAO maintains that the Secretariat’s view contradicts the chapeau of the criteria, which state that they must be read in conjunction with the definition of “decline” for commercially exploited aquatic species.

As “decline” is clearly defined by the resolution, but “reduction” is not, this situation could make it more difficult to list certain commercially exploited aquatic species. This situation is particularly disquieting considering that the issue is crucial to the potential scope of application of CITES to marine species. Parties with important fisheries interests have historically rejected even discussing the listing of commercially exploited aquatic species in the framework of CITES, claiming that the relevant body for dealing with such matters is FAO. Others disagree, and indeed, as has been noted during various CITES discussions, consider that the possible listing of commercially exploited aquatic species under CITES could be beneficial for commercial fisheries, serving to improve the quality of reporting and of available fisheries data.

In Geneva, both organizations stated their cases to the SC, claiming that the other’s recommendations set a precedent that potentially negates all the progress and consensus developed on the criteria to date. Such consensus, both concurred, was crucial to the ongoing functioning of the memorandum of understanding between FAO and CITES, signed just three years ago after nearly ten years of deliberations, the purpose of which was to clarify the scope of either body’s mandate when dealing with aquatic species in order to complement each other’s work. Many in the conference room were astonished by the strong language used both in the written and oral statements from both sides, including adjectives such as “simplistic,” “retrogressive,” “misleading,” “erroneous,” and “lacking of scientific approach.” The matter remains unresolved for the time being, having been forwarded to CoP15 for consideration, where parties will face the challenge of reconciling the diverging interpretations of the listing criteria.

CoP15 will likely be addressing amendment proposals to include aquatic species in the Appendices, which so far could include two species of sharks, red coral and maybe even bluefin tuna – the latter being a very financially valuable fishery facing commercial extinction. It would have been helpful to parties to have this disagreement between FAO and the Secretariat resolved in Geneva, since parties will want to prepare their positions regarding these proposals based on the criterion in question. A delayed agreement means that making well-informed decisions on this will have to wait until CoP16 at the earliest.

However, SC58 did make progress on the undertaking of Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs), a tool showing that issuance of an export permit of an Appendix II species will not be detrimental to its survival in the wild. This has historically been another issue flagged by some parties as potentially hindering the inclusion of commercially exploited aquatic species in the Appendices, because of the general lack of scientific data for

many aquatic species. SC58’s endorsement of the results of the NDF Expert Workshop, held in Cancun, Mexico in 2008, could help facilitate discussions at CoP15 on the inclusion of such species in the Appendices, by contributing to the harmonization of NDF decision-making processes for all countries.

NEXT STOP: DOHA

As delegates pack their bags for the trip to Qatar, they will certainly be keeping an eye on the selection process for the appointment of a new CITES Secretary-General. Willem Wijnstekers will retire in April 2010, and delegates were worried that the SC would play a minimal role in finding his replacement, since UNEP was taking the lead in the process. Consequently, the SC made it very clear in Geneva that they wanted to be more than merely consulted on the matter, with some recalling that CITES is not even a United Nations convention. According to UNEP’s timeline, the Secretary-General-elect could be officially introduced at CoP15.

Thoroughly prepared and reinvigorated after an intense and productive SC meeting, many delegates will now be counting their pennies in preparation for what promises to be an expensive CoP in Doha. In the end, delegates can expect terrestrial species issues, both for plants and animals, to figure prominently at CoP15, with elephants in particular not yet ready to give up the spotlight despite a crowded stage. However, aquatic species, primarily through the sensitive debate on criteria for Appendix II listing, could jostle their way to center stage.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SECOND CMW PACIFIC CETACEANS MOU

MEETING: This meeting, under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species, will take place from 28-29 July 2009 in Auckland, New Zealand. For more information, contact the CMS Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2426; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: secretariat@cms.int; internet: <http://www.cms.int/news/events.htm>

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES FOR GIANT CLAMS (*TRIDACNIDAE*) AND CITES CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP: This meeting will take place from 4-7 August 2009 in Nadi, Fiji. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org>

TECHNICAL CONSULTATION TO DRAFT A LEGALLY-BINDING INSTRUMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING (THIRD RESUMED SESSION): This meeting will take place from 24-28 August 2009 in Rome, Italy. For more information, contact: David Douman, FAO; fax: +39-065-705-6500; e-mail: david.doulman@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/fishery/meetings-news/en>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: THE VALUE OF OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT: Sweden is holding an international conference in Stockholm, from 16-17 September 2009, focusing on ways of integrating the value of marine ecosystem services into decision making, so that policies are designed to achieve sustainable management of these

ecosystems. For more information, contact: Kerstin Blyh, Swedish Environment Protection Agency; tel: +46-8-698-1000; fax: +46-8-20-29-25; e-mail: kerstin.blyh@naturvardsverket.se; internet: <http://www.naturvardsverket.se/en/In-English/Menu/GlobalMenu/Calendar-of-events/The-value-of-our-marine-environment/>

ASCOBANS MOP6: The sixth Meeting of the Parties of the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas will be held in Bonn, Germany from 16-18 September 2009. For more information, contact the ASCOBANS Secretariat: tel: +49-228-815-2416; fax: +49-228-815-2440; e-mail: ascobans@ascobans.org; internet: <http://www.ascobans.org/>

SECOND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES (IPBES): This meeting will be held from 5-9

October 2009 in Nairobi, Kenya. The twenty-fifth session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum adopted decision 25/10 on the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, which requested UNEP to convene a second intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting on IPBES. For more information, contact: Ruth Watulo; tel: +254-20-762-3485; fax: +254-20-762-3926; e-mail: ruth.watulo@unep.org; internet: <http://ipbes.net/en/index.aspx>

FIRST BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON CETACEAN CONSERVATION IN SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES: This meeting, sponsored by ACCOBAMS and UNEP/MAP will be held in Tabarka, Tunisia from 12-14 October 2009. For more information, contact the ACCOBAMS Secretariat; tel: +377-9898-2078; fax: +377-9898-4208; e-mail: mcgrillo@accobams.net; <http://www.accobams.org/file.php/1475/CSMC1%20Announcement.pdf>

13TH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: FORESTS IN DEVELOPMENT – A VITAL BALANCE: The XIII WFC will take place from 18-23 October 2009 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Organized by the FAO and institutions from various sectors of Argentina, this Congress will address themes including: forests and biodiversity; development opportunities; forests and climate change; organizing forest development; and people and forests in harmony. For more information, contact the General Secretariat: tel: +54-11-4349-2104/2204/2195; e-mail: info@cfm2009.org; internet: <http://www.wfc2009.org>

SIXTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON STURGEON: This meeting will take place from 25-30 October 2009 in Wuhan, China. It will bring together sturgeon scientists, experts, biologists, students, enforcement authorities, commercial and industrial interests to review the latest discoveries in sturgeon biology, ecology, aquaculture, hygiene and diseases, processing technology of sturgeon products, management, stock assessment, regulation and other fields related to sturgeon conservation. For more information, contact the ISS6 Secretariat: tel: +86-10-5919-3144; fax: +86-10-5919-3100; e-mail: iss6@yahoo.cn; internet: <http://www.iss6.org/en/>

GLOBAL TIGER WORKSHOP: The workshop will frame strategies for tiger conservation and will be held from 27-30 October 2009, in Kathmandu, Nepal. For more information, contact: Keshav Varma, World Bank Global Tiger Initiative; e-mail: kvarma@worldbank.org; internet: <http://www.globaltigerinitiative.org>

ITTC-45: The forty-fifth meeting of the International Tropical Timber Council and associated sessions of its four committees is scheduled for 9-14 November 2009, in Yokohama, Japan. For more information, contact: ITTO; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

EIGHTH TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING OF MIKE: This meeting of the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants system will take place from 7-9 December, 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org>

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GLOBAL TIGER FORUM: This meeting will take place in February 2010, possibly in India. Dates and venue to be confirmed. For more information, contact: Keshav Varma, World Bank Global Tiger Initiative; e-mail: kvarma@worldbank.org; internet: <http://www.globaltigerinitiative.org>

59TH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE: The CITES Standing Committee will meet on 12 March 2010 in Doha, Qatar, immediately preceding CoP15. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org>

CITES COP15: CITES CoP15 will be held from 13-25 March 2010, in Doha, Qatar. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: 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
ETIS	Elephant Trade Information System
GTF	Global Tiger Forum
GTI	Global Tiger Initiative
HSI	Humane Society International
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants
NDF	Non-detriment Finding
PC	CITES Plants Committee
RST	Review of Significant Trade
SC	CITES Standing Committee
SMS	Species Management Specialists
SSN	Species Survival Network
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Center