

CITES COP17 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2016

CITES CoP17 Committee I met all day, addressing timber, saiga, snake trade, helmeted hornbill and hunting trophies, among other issues. Committee II looked at some agenda items referred to it by the Plenary, as well as a proposal to establish a CoP committee of rural communities.

COMMITTEE I

EVALUATION OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT

TRADE: The AC and PC Chairs introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.33) containing revisions to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on Review of Significant Trade (RST) in specimens of Appendix II species, as well as four draft decisions, aimed at improving and streamlining the RST process for the benefit of CITES Parties and for the conservation and sustainable use of species.

The EU, ISRAEL, NEW ZEALAND and CAMEROON supported the document with minor amendments. The EU noted that CoP17 Doc.31, under consideration in Committee II, includes a proposal to add preambular text to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13).

The Committee agreed to the document with amendments from Parties and the Secretariat, with the caveat that relevant deliberations of Committee II would be considered at a later date.

HUNTING TROPHIES: The EU introduced a document prepared with South Africa on hunting trophies (CoP17 Inf.68), which consolidates their two similar but separate proposals (CoP17 Doc.39.1 and CoP17 Doc.39.2). South Africa introduced a proposed draft decision on the conservation of the African lion and the role of international trade (CoP17 Inf.73). The Chair suggested moving discussion of this document to discussions of CoP17 Prop. 4 – Transfer all African populations of *Panthera leo* from Appendix II to Appendix I.

CANADA and the US supported the proposal but requested amendments to CoP17 Inf.68 including, *inter alia*, the retention of reference to rhino horn and elephant ivory with regards to the personal and household effects exemption, so that such trophies do not qualify for the exemption, which several Parties opposed. PAKISTAN stated that markhor populations in Pakistan have increased as a result of trophy hunting from which communities benefit. TAJIKISTAN supported CoP17 Inf.68 and said he planned to submit a resolution at CoP18 on the establishment of quotas for markhor hunting trophies, including by working through Resolution Conf.10.15 (Rev.CoP14).

The Committee proposed a drafting group to consolidate proposed amendments to CoP17 Inf.68, co-chaired by the EU and South Africa.

GREAT APES (*HOMINIDAE SPP.*): Norway introduced document (CoP17 Doc.61), highlighting that habitat loss and illegal domestic trade in bushmeat continue to be the most significant factors impacting great ape populations. UNEP specified that more great apes are seized than traded.

The Committee adopted the document.

GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF TRADE IN LYCAONS (*LYCAON PICTUS*):

Burkina Faso presented CoP17 Doc.63, predicating precautionary actions to evaluate the impact of trade by saying such assessments are “practically nonexistent.” The US, with SWITZERLAND, SOUTH AFRICA and GUYANA, suggested listing it in Appendix III as a mechanism to monitor trade. The EU recommended cooperation with CMS.

The Committee established a drafting group to amend the text.

EAST AFRICAN SANDALWOOD (*OSYRIS*

LANCEOLATA): Kenya presented the document (CoP17 Doc.65), highlighting that due to funding constraints, some decisions could not be implemented.

The Committee requested Kenya to provide amendments to consider for adoption.

AFRICAN CHERRY (*PRUNUS AFRICANA*): Canada introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.67), highlighting that an international workshop is planned to be held before 2019 on the sustainable trade in *Prunus Africana*. SWITZERLAND emphasized that the workshop will help RST compliance.

The Committee adopted the document.

ILLEGAL TRADE IN THE HELMETED HORNBILL

(*RHINOPLAX VIGIL*): Indonesia introduced a draft resolution (CoP17 Doc.69), highlighting the impacts of illegal trade on the species. The Secretariat, noting that a resolution as proposed by Indonesia is necessary, suggested a set of draft decisions based on the operational part of the draft resolution.

JAPAN, SWITZERLAND, the EU and the US supported the Secretariat’s proposal. THAILAND supported Indonesia’s draft resolution.

The Committee established a working group.

SAIGA ANTELOPE (*SAIGA SPP.*): SC Chair Størkersen presented CoP17 Doc.70, outlining nine decisions from CoP16 on saiga antelope, underscoring recommendations to simplify reporting requirements. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, the US and others expressed support, along with CMS, and WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY (WCS).

The Committee adopted the document.

SNAKE TRADE AND CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

(*SERPENTES SPP.*): SC Chair Størkersen presented CoP17 Doc.71, outlining a proposed resolution in Annex I, noting support on comments by the Secretariat. INDONESIA, CHINA, IRAN, MALAYSIA, the EU and others expressed support. The US, COSTA RICA and BRAZIL offered minor textual amendments.

The Committee established a drafting group to revise text.

BUSHMEAT: Canada presented on Resolution Conf.13.11 on bushmeat (CoP17 Doc.75.1).

The Secretariat presented on a report of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group (CoP17 Doc.75.2) and noted it has been unable to identify its *modus operandi*. Noting that this working group was not established by CITES, the Secretariat, opposed by DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, CAMEROON, SENEGAL and BENIN, proposed to dissolve the working group.

The Secretariat proposed to adapt decisions to accommodate the Parties' willingness to keep the working group and report back to the Committee.

NEOTROPICAL TREES: Canada presented CoP17 Doc.76, highlighting that the Working Group on neotropical trees species had taken place and mainly through electronic means.

The Committee adopted the document.

AFRICAN TREE SPECIES: Kenya introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.77), drawing attention to difficulties in the implementation of management of nationally established export quotas. SENEGAL and DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO stressed the importance of collaborating with subregional forest organizations to better control the circulation of these trees.

The Committee adopted the document with amendments, acknowledging that funds need to be raised externally.

SHARING EXISTING WRITTEN SCIENCE-BASED RATIONALES AND SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION FOR NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS MADE FOR TRADE IN CITES-LISTED SPECIES: Australia introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.78), stressing the importance of the exchange of scientific information and management practices to strengthen the capacity of Parties to make NDFs.

COLOMBIA, the US, PERU, COSTA RICA, the EU and EGYPT supported the proposal, with many developing countries stressing the need for financial, scientific and technical assistance in making NDFs.

The Committee accepted the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.7 as presented in the document.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITES STRATEGIC VISION: 2008-2020: Brazil introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.79), with draft decisions aimed at addressing the conservation status of, and conservation measures adopted for, the species listed in Appendix I.

The Committee adopted the document with minor amendments.

CITES APPENDIX III - AN ADDED-VALUE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THREATENED WILDLIFE WITH RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION: The EU introduced CoP17 Doc.80, highlighting the benefits of using Appendix III listings with funding from Germany to implement the proposed draft decisions.

The US with CANADA supported Parties' use of Appendix III, but not the proposed draft decisions. PAKISTAN suggested the need for a simplified procedure for listing under Appendix III.

The EU agreed to withdraw the first two decisions and reorganize the third. The US supported the draft decision as amended.

The Committee deferred this item to a drafting group chaired by the EU.

EXTINCT OR POSSIBLY EXTINCT SPECIES: The SC introduced CoP17 Doc.85, highlighting new guidelines on what constitutes "extinct" or "possibly extinct."

The Committee adopted the document with minor amendments.

COMMITTEE II

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS COMMITTEES: The SC Chair introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.12).

The US called for completing the work on potential conflicts and proposed small amendments. The EU expressed support for the proposed amendments.

The Committee adopted the document with amendments.

COOPERATION WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS: Cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions:

The SC Chair introduced CoP17 Doc.14. The EU and BRAZIL introduced references to new processes, to which the US objected.

The Committee adopted the document with amendments.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RURAL COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES: Zambia introduced the document (CoP17 Doc.13), co-sponsored by Namibia, noting that the participation of rural communities has been neglected, despite their role in natural resource management.

Several African countries spoke in favor of this proposal.

CHINA expressed support, highlighting the need to pay attention to the voices of local people. CANADA expressed concern over

the mandate of the proposed Committee and could not support the proposal, despite being in support of the principle behind it and being open to exploring the concept further. JAPAN expressed support for engagement of local communities in CITES but suggested instead setting up a working group at CoP17 or a SC intersessional working group to discuss this concept further.

In response to the interventions, ZAMBIA, as co-proponent, favored establishing an in-session working group.

The Committee agreed to establishing a working group, chaired by Brazil, to explore the way forward.

CITES AND LIVELIHOODS: South Africa introduced CoP17 Doc.16, summarizing the Livelihoods Working Group progress, highlighting decisions to sustain momentum. Several Parties expressed support and offered amendments.

The Committee Chair called for recommendations in writing for the Secretariat to prepare a new draft for consideration.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS:

The Secretariat presented CoP17 Doc.21 (Rev.1), identifying corrections of errors and an annex of decisions to be retained or deleted. MEXICO, AUSTRALIA, ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, CHILE and others opposed deleting Decision 14.81 on the great whale, considering the standing moratorium by the International Whaling Commission; JAPAN, with ICELAND, NORWAY and others, supported deleting the decision considering the independent nature of CITES.

The Committee agreed on several draft decisions, retained Decision 14.81 and requested the US and the EU amendments in writing for further consideration.

ELEPHANTS: Review of Resolution Conf. 10.9 on Consideration of proposals for the transfer of African elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II: Botswana provided an update on the intersessional Working Group, asking for its mandate to be extended (CoP17 Doc.86). The SC proposed the continuation of Decision 16.160, allowing the intersessional Working Group to report back at CoP18.

The Committee adopted the document as amended.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN LIVE ANIMALS: The US introduced CoP17 Doc.40 on international trade in live Appendix II animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations. Mali presented CoP17 Doc.57.4, which seeks to limit trade in live elephant, highlighting that the trade of ivory and live elephants impact elephant populations. MALI, supported by KENYA, TOGO, UGANDA and ETHIOPIA, but opposed by SOUTH AFRICA, JAPAN, NAMIBIA, SWAZILAND, BOTSWANA and ZIMBABWE, supported the document that limits the international trade of wild elephants. The EU cautioned that revising a decision on an appropriate destination for wild specimens could fall outside the scope of CITES. SOUTH AFRICA proposed an intersessional working group to develop further guidance for an appropriate destination and equipped to house live elephants.

The Committee established a drafting group composed of the US and Kenya to report if agreement can be reached on documents.

NATIONAL LAWS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: The Secretariat presented CoP17 Doc.22, providing updates on the National Legislation Project (NLP), noting challenges and responses to those challenges contained in draft decisions. Many Parties reported national progress to ensure full implementation of CITES. NORWAY offered support and continued assistance for legislative analysis. The EU and the US proposed amendments and expressed support for suspending trade with Parties that are not compliant.

The Committee asked the Secretariat to consolidate amendments in a revised draft.

IN THE CORRIDORS

In discussions on trees species, some representatives from the private sector were keenly following the discussions on tropical timber species given the extensive ramifications that the restricting of the entire *Dalbergia* genus could have on some industries, such as the musical instrument industry. Indeed, some of these same participants were only too pleased to be invited to side events held by the musical instrument lobbyists. Meanwhile on marine species, one delegate reported that the attempt by some delegates to remove references to Conventions to which they are not members seems to have backfired, given the increasing and closing overlap of membership between different MEA processes, particularly between CITES, CBD and CMS.