COP-11 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2000

Delegates met in a morning Plenary to complete their work on strategic and administrative matters. Committees I and II reconvened in the afternoon. Extensive time was spent in both Committees revising draft minutes.

PLENARY

Credentials Committee Chair Owen (New Zealand) reported that Malawi, Uruguay and Swaziland have submitted credentials, bringing to 118 the total number of voting countries.

Committee I Chair Clemente (Spain) announced that budgetary aspects of the Nomenclature Committee’s recommendations (Doc. 11.11.4.2) had been forwarded to the Budget Committee and that working groups had been established on, *inter alia*, tigers, rhinoceroses, mahogany, hard coral and turtles and tortoises. Chair Asadi noted the Bureau’s decision to transfer consideration of the African Elephant to Committee I.

Committee II Chair Koester (Denmark) said the group completed the work assigned to it except on TORs of Permanent Committees. He noted that discussion on the IWC is temporarily closed and encouraged informal consultations.

EVOLUTION OF THE CONVENTION: The Secretariat said the submission (Doc. 11.12.1) was based on COP-10 decision 10.111 that assigned 34 decisions for action by the Secretariat, Parties, CITES Committees and UNEP. The recommendation to delete these decisions from the current COP decisions was adopted.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Standing Committee working group Chair Kenneth Stensall (US) introduced, and many delegates endorsed, the Convention’s Strategic Plan (Doc. 11.12.2), which focuses on a number of priority implementation goals and objectives. He proposed that COP-11 maintain the working group to monitor the action plan and recommend updates. SWITZERLAND and the WORLD CONSERVATION TRUST expressed concern over the increased workload and its financial implications.

NORWAY, along with SOUTH AFRICA, underlined the importance of financing CITES, and called for CITES' cooperation in the development of protocols to protect tigers in transboundary areas, and the disposal of tiger stockpiles by January 2001.

Responding to delegates’ concerns, the Secretariat noted ongoing work with the Small Island Developing States’ Secretariat on representation and endeavors to effect synergies between national bodies, and elaborated on coordination initiatives with the WTO’s Committee on Trade and the Environment and other MEAs.

The UK, on behalf of the EU, and supported by the US, called to withdraw minutes of Committees I and II proceedings, citing serious factual errors including misreporting of the EU position on relations with IWC.

FINANCING CONSERVATION OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA: FRANCE introduced a proposal for improving the effectiveness of financing CITES implementation (Doc. 11.12.4). She suggested creating a Standing Committee working group on a funding mechanism for specific fauna and flora conservation and added that the Secretariat should cooperate with GEF when considering requests for financing.

The CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW called for clarification of a State’s jurisdiction over the marine environment as it affects the types of permits issued and the ability of CITES to enforce species listed under Appendix II. The GLOBAL TIGER FORUM noted its need for synergy with CITES and called for CITES’ cooperation in the development of protocols to protect tigers in transboundary areas, and the disposal of tiger stockpiles by January 2001.

Committee I

The Committee heard reports from the chairs of the working groups on the progress of their work.
RHINOCEROS: The US highlighted substantial changes in
the draft document, including inserting a requirement for Parties to
report on rhinoceros conservation efforts and to implement national
legislation, and requesting the Secretariat to compile and evaluate
the reports.

FRESHWATER TURTLES AND TORTOISES:
GERMANY announced the group succeeded in finalizing a draft
resolution urging, inter alia, Parties to increase enforcement
efforts; develop programmes to monitor trade impact; and increase
public awareness of threats to wild populations. An annex to the
resolution requests the Secretariat to convene a technical workshop
establishing conservation priorities and encouraging Parties and
NGOs to assist range States in capacity building.

SEAHORSES: AUSTRALIA reported that the group is
opposed to CITES engaging in the conservation of species not yet
listed in the Appendices, but noted agreement on a resolution to
hold a technical workshop to identify priority actions. He said the
Animals Committee would review those actions and report to
COP-12 and requested the Secretariat to coordinate funding by
interested Parties. CHINA, supported by JAPAN, opposed a resolution
on seahorses and suggested instead a workshop on Syng-
nathidae data collection.

HARD CORAL: The UK introduced a draft resolution
allowing a lower threshold for including gravel which excludes
sand. The resolution establishes an ecosystem impact criteria for
import and export of rocks and identifies coral at species level for
trade purposes and at genus level for taxonomy purposes.

SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN APPENDIX II SPECIES:
The RUSSIAN FEDERATION circulated a proposal stating that
starting January 1, 2001, States should keep records of trade in
species covered by resolution 8.9. The Secretariat should prepare
a report based on these records for submission to the 18th meeting of
the Animals Committee.

BIGLEAF MAHOGANY: The US introduced TORs for a
mahogany working group, providing for, inter alia: reviewing of
Appendix III species effectiveness; assessing information manage-
ment; and studying measures to widen the scope of Appendix III
listings. COLOMBIA and ECUADOR called for R&D on forest
resources. The NETHERLANDS suggested the working group
consider Appendix II.

WORKING GROUP ON TIGERS: The group, chaired by
Rosemarie Gnann (US), debated ways to redraft the recommenda-
tion on trade and financial sanctions against India (Doc. 11.30).
Some delegates agreed that although sanctions might be inappro-
riate, some form of pressure should be exercised to compel India
to improve its tiger conservation. One delegate feared sanctions
might establish a dangerous precedent and called for financial
support to reinforce national enforcement-capacity. Most delegates
agreed to reinstate financial incentives, but agreed that spending
should be monitored. It was agreed to redraft the recommendation.

COMMITTEE II
PERMANENT COMMITTEES TORs: Chair Koester noted
one outstanding issue regarding TORs. NEW ZEALAND
requested that the Budget Committee approve the proposed
regional representation of the Standing Committee. The TORs
(Doc. 11.13) were accepted in principle pending Budget
Committee approval.

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA: Reporting on the
results of the working group, AUSTRALIA said they were unable
to reach consensus. He noted the divergence in philosophical views
and requested Chair Koester to provide guidance. Chair Koester
said the working group’s mandate is to revise the draft resolution,
accommodating the opposing views. JAPAN, supported by
NORWAY and ICELAND, said the issue should be addressed by
the FAO and regional organizations. The US and the EU requested
the working group reconvene. AUSTRALIA, supported by
CANADA, said it would revise the draft resolution prior to recon-
vening the working group.

ANNOTATIONS IN THE APPENDICES: SWITZER-
LAND outlined textual amendments to the document previously
approved by the Standing Committee (Doc. 11.24). He noted that
the resolution resulted from COP-10 decision 10.70 requesting
clarification of legal implementation issues related to Appendix
annotations. CAMEROUN and PAKISTAN expressed concern that
a provision recommending Parties avoid making annotations
including wild animals and trophies that could negatively impact
their sporting or local community interests. The draft resolution
was adopted.

APPROPRIATE AND ACCEPTABLE DESTINATIONS:
KENYA introduced a draft resolution on the definition of “ap-
propriate and acceptable destinations” for transport of live animals
(Doc. 11.26). The resolution aims to eliminate incidents such as
that of the “Tuli elephants,” where 30 elephant calves exported to
South Africa were mistreated. JAPAN, SWITZERLAND, the US,
SOUTH AFRICA and others preferred regulation through a
binding amendment of relevant annotations in the Appendices, as
in the Swiss proposal on annotations. The FUND FOR ANIMALS
INCORPORATED said the absence of a definition creates a loop-
hole for mistreating animals, and, with the BORN FREE FOUN-
DATION, the INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE COALITION and
the ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE, supported the resolution.
Chair Koester invited Kenya to withdraw the resolution. This will
be revisited.

RISKS AND BENEFITS OF TRADE IN WILDLIFE:
KENYA introduced a draft resolution on the impact of unsustain-
able trade on wildlife conservation (Doc. 11.27). SOUTH AFRICA
opposed, citing national sovereignty over resources. ISRAEL,
JAMAICA and BRAZIL supported the resolution and the INTER-
ATIONAL WILDLIFE COALITION stressed that it aims to
address unsustainable trade, but not all trade. The EU, JAPAN,
CANADA, CUBA, COLOMBIA and MADAGASCAR opposed
the need for such a resolution. Chair Koester invited Kenya to
consider withdrawing the resolution. This will be revisited.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS
Central to the debate on ivory trade is whether the 1997 deci-
sion allowing Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe a one-off sale to
Japan has caused resurgence in elephant poaching. Many delegates
are stunned by the low number of poaching incidents reported to
the Secretariat since 1997. The figure of 235 contrasts sharply with
independent studies conducted that reveal figures closer to 30,000.
Some delegates intimate foul play and underestimation by coun-
tries who wish to color statistics in support of continuing the ivory
trade. Others speculate that reports to the Secretariat were limited
due to countries withholding information out of fear of making
waves. Several African countries assert that the 1997 decision has
resulted in increased poaching and are concerned that the Secre-
tariat’s skewed figure will be used to advocate continued ivory
trade which could increase international demand for ivory, lead to
more poaching and future pressure for ivory trade in range States.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY
COMMITTEES: Committee I will reconvene throughout the
day and in an evening session in Conference Room 2 and will
consider proposals by the Plants and Animals Committees to
Appendices I and II. Delegates will continue discussion of working
group reports. Committee II will reconvene throughout the day in
Conference Room 1 to consider trade in bear specimens. The
Budget Committee is expected to meet in the morning in the ICAO
room.