



CITES COP-12 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2002

Delegates convened in morning and afternoon Plenary sessions to consider strategic and administrative matters, including the revised Rules of Procedure, elections, adoption of the agenda and working programme, admission of observers, committee reports, and outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

PLENARY

RULES OF PROCEDURE: Acting COP Chair Kenneth Stansell introduced the Rules of Procedure (Doc.1.1 (Rev.1)) and Revision of the Rules of Procedure (Doc.1.2).

CHILE suggested that draft resolutions and other documents (Rule 20) be circulated 24 hours before the session in which they are discussed to allow for preparation, particularly for smaller delegations. The Secretariat cited logistical difficulties. Delegates decided to retain the existing rule, and requested the Secretariat to make every effort to distribute documents as early as possible.

Regarding methods of voting (Rule 25), CHILE, supported by AUSTRALIA and the US, proposed that the vote on the secret ballot motion be decided by one third of the Parties to encourage transparency. SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA, GUINEA, CHINA, CUBA and ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA opposed the revision, stating that secret ballots allow Parties to vote freely. DENMARK, on behalf of the EU, proposed that the Standing Committee examines existing rules of procedures and practices of the use of secret ballots in comparable international processes. Delegates accepted the proposal.

Stating that language on the right to vote (Rule 24) is unclear, GUINEA, supported by SENEGAL and ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, proposed amending the text to indicate that "each Party shall have one vote" and that the "representative of a duly accredited Party shall exercise the voting rights of that Party." Delegates accepted the proposal.

ARGENTINA, supported by KENYA, MEXICO and AUSTRIA, proposed amending text on the submission of informative documents (Rule 28) allowing NGOs to distribute documents in pigeonholes. The Secretariat noted the efforts it undertook at COP-11 to censor documents from non-delegations. TANZANIA stressed that pigeonhole documents should be translated into all working languages, and ZIMBABWE and SENEGAL emphasized that only official docu-

ments be placed in pigeonholes. Delegates agreed to the proposal, adding that the issue be revisited in the future. Delegates adopted the Rules of Procedure.

ELECTIONS: Acting COP Chair Stansell announced the Standing Committee's nominations for COP-12 officers: COP Chair, Sergio Bitar (Chile); Committee I Chair, David Morgan (UK); Committee II Chair, Anne-Marie Delahunt (Australia). Uganda and the US were nominated as COP Vice Chairs. Manop Lauprasert (Thailand) was nominated as Credentials Committee Chair, with Botswana, Canada, Chile and Italy nominated to serve on the Credentials Committee. The Plenary approved the nominations by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORKING

PROGRAMME: The Plenary considered the agenda (Doc.3 (Rev.2)) and working programme (Doc.4 (Rev.1)).

Regarding conservation of elephants and trade in elephant specimens, KENYA proposed discussing the following issues jointly: revision of Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev.) on trade in elephant specimens (Doc.34.3) and on quotas and trade in ivory (Doc.34.4), results of the African elephant dialogue meeting (Doc.20.1), as well as all Appendix I and II proposals related to elephants and to ivory trade. The Secretariat suggested, and delegates agreed, that the COP Bureau should discuss with the Committee Chairs on how to address all elephant decisions in one committee.

The EU suggested discussing trade in cetacean stocks (Doc.38) together with cooperation between CITES and the International Whaling Commission (Doc.16.4). JAPAN, MEXICO and NORWAY preferred discussing the issues separately. Delegates agreed to follow the existing agenda.

The US suggested, and delegates agreed, that the amendment of Appendices with regard to populations (Doc.59) and Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II (Doc.58) should both be discussed in Committee I.

ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS: The Secretariat introduced the list of observers (Doc.7), which includes 13 intergovernmental, 52 international and 89 national organizations. He noted that the Southern African Development Community and the Conservation Treaty Support Fund were inadvertently omitted from the list. The list of admission of observers was adopted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Credentials Committee: Credentials Committee Chair Lauprasert (Thailand) noted that a provisional list on credentials will be distributed to the Committees.

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Standing Committee: Standing Committee Chair Stansell (US) presented the Chair's Report (Doc.8). He highlighted: the success of the Review of Significant Trade, especially with regard to Caspian Sea sturgeon; an alternative approach to monitoring the conservation of specific species; the Committee's reluctance to recommend revisions of Resolution Conf. 11.3 on compliance and enforcement; and its work with the finance subcommittee on the Convention's financial situation.

Animals Committee: Animals Committee Chair Marinus Hoogmoed (the Netherlands) presented the Committee's report (Doc.10.1). He noted the lack of progress in implementing the International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (IPOA-Sharks). He said that trade in alien species is an area of common interest between CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and recommended support to the CBD interim guiding principles on alien species. On captive breeding of Appendix I species for commercial purposes, the Committee concluded that all Appendix I species should be covered by the new resolution, and on trade in hard coral agreed to place greater emphasis on the impacts of harvesting corals from their ecosystem. On the budget, he recommended the approval of annual budgets for the next triennium. The Secretariat recommended referring the discussions on hard coral and budget to Committee I and Committee II, respectively. The EU supported the recommendations and agreed that a number of decisions should be reviewed. FAO stressed its work with various countries in the implementation of IPOA-Sharks.

Plants Committee: Plants Committee Chair Margarita Clemente (Spain) presented the Committee's report (Doc.10.2). She highlighted the US contribution of US\$45,000, which allowed the Committee to conclude some of its tasks. She also outlined the Committee's major issues and recommendations, and the Committee's work programme until COP-13. Regarding funding issues, she suggested that all proposed COP decisions directed to the Committees, be discussed concurrently with an evaluation of the required budget, and called for additional funds. She expressed the Committee's concern over the proposal to merge the Plants and Animals Committees.

The EU supported the recommendations, noting their budgetary implications. SIERRA LEONE suggested collaboration with the CBD's Global Strategy on Plant Conservation. SAUDI ARABIA noted that agarwood products are not always readily identifiable and stressed implementation problems.

Nomenclature Committee: Hoogmoed presented the Nomenclature Committee's report (Doc.10.3), proposing the adoption of the following standard references: Handbooks of the Birds of the World for *Psittaciformes* and *Trochilidae*; a final checklist of nomenclature and taxonomy for the genus *Cordylus*; and a CITES species checklist compiled by UNEP. Noel McGough, Nomenclature Committee, presented the Committee's Report on Flora and recommended that fungi be considered under CITES. With the exception of Japan, delegates agreed to the fungi proposal. The Plenary supported the Secretariat's recommendation to adopt the CITES species checklist as standard reference for animals.

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL: The Secretariat introduced the Identification Manual (Doc.11), encouraging Parties to provide the missing data and prioritizing the Manual's inclusion on the CITES website. ISRAEL underlined their involvement in the preparation of an Identification Manual on corals. GERMANY noted that *Mantella* spp. is assigned to many Parties and called for a revised version to avoid inconsistencies. CHINA noted preparation of the English version of the manual on *Garrulax canorus*. CANADA drew attention

to their identification guides that will be presented next week. ECUADOR requested financial assistance to prepare Manual sheets on *Trochilidae* spp.

WSSD OUTCOMES: On the outcome of the WSSD and the discussion on international environmental governance, Secretary-General Wijnstekers emphasized the need to reduce the number of meetings, create less subsidiary bodies, and enhance synergies both among multilateral environment agreements (MEAs) and at the international and national levels. He noted that limiting the meetings to locations with permanent missions breaches CITES tradition to hold meetings in developing countries.

UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer highlighted the UNEP Governing Council's decision to create a ministerial working group to discuss international environmental governance, and called for coordination among MEAs for the new round of World Trade Organization negotiations. He underlined: CBD Article 8 on *in situ* conservation; WSSD's call for an instrument on benefit-sharing; and the WSSD target to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

The IUCN suggested establishing a working group to enhance synergies with other agreements and facilitate cooperation at the international and national levels. JAPAN highlighted the target of maintaining or restoring depleted fish stocks not later than 2015. NIGERIA drew attention to partnerships on protecting the coastal and marine environment. The EU stressed conservation and sustainable use of endangered species, as well as traditional knowledge and benefit-sharing to address biodiversity loss. He also emphasized access to information and public participation in decision making. Töpfer highlighted the First Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Despite a first day dedicated to administrative and strategic matters, the more substantial issues were never too far from delegates' minds. Budget constraints and an overloaded agenda had many delegates concerned about the implication on the future implementation of CITES. Other delegates wondered how the COP would be able to successfully address more contentious issues, such as proposals regarding elephants, when there was so much time spent on what one delegate called "nitpicky" issues.

The elephant issue again has taken center stage in the Convention that aims to protect over 30,000 flora and fauna species. Before formal deliberations have even begun, African elephant range States have already highlighted a consensus reached on allowing a strictly regulated form of raw ivory trade. However, some NGOs said the consensus is very "misleading" and that several range States and Parties still have diverging views on the issue. In the words of one delegate, "the elephant debate has only just begun."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

REGIONAL GROUPS: Regional groups will meet from 9:00-10:00 am.

COMMITTEES: Committees will convene at 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. Committee I will meet in Conference Room 1 to consider Appendix I species subject to export quotas, transport of live animals, and species trade and conservation issues. Committee II will meet in Conference Room 2 to consider strategic and administrative matters, including the establishment of committees and cooperation with other organizations.