

## CITES CoP20 Highlights: Thursday, 4 December 2025

On the penultimate day of the twentieth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES CoP20), delegates reconvened in plenary to adopt agenda items considered by Committees I and II.

### Plenary

CoP20 Chair Alisher Salomov (Uzbekistan) welcomed delegates back to plenary, noting that the “next two decisive days will set the direction of global wildlife governance for years to come.”

### Strategic Matters

**Committee reports and recommendations: Election of new regional and alternate regional members:** The CoP agreed to new Standing Committee (SC), Animals Committee, and Plants Committee members as nominated by regional representatives.

### Administrative and Financial Matters

**Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties: Administration of the Secretariat:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.7.1](#).

**Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on administrative and other matters:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.7.2 \(Rev.1\)](#).

**Financial reports for 2023-2025:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.7.3](#).

**Budget and work programme for 2026 to 2028:** The CoP adopted the 6.98% increase in budget specified in paragraph 9, as well as the rest of the Resolution Conf.20.1, in CoP20 Com.II.17.

**Arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.7.5](#).

**Rules of Procedure:** The CoP rejected the draft decision in [CoP20 Doc.4](#).

**Terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee:** KUWAIT made a motion, supported by JAPAN and INDONESIA, and opposed by FIJI, to reopen the item. The motion was defeated by a vote of 26 in favor, 86 opposing, and 17 abstaining.

The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.8](#).

**Emerging operational matters of the committees:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.9](#).

**Access to funding:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.10](#).

**Sponsored delegates project:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.11](#).

### Strategic Matters

**CITES Strategic Vision:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.13 \(Rev.1\)](#).

**Enhancing the work and efficiency of the Convention through the permanent committees:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.14](#) as amended by CoP20 Com.II.5.

**Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.15.1](#) and [CoP20 Doc.15.2](#) as amended.

**Cooperation:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.16.1](#), [16.2](#), [16.3](#), [16.4](#), and [16.5](#) as amended.

**World Wildlife Trade report:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.17](#).

**CITES and forests:** The CoP adopted CoP20 Com.II.15 as amended.

**Language strategy for the Convention:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.19](#).

**Capacity building framework:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.20](#).

**Compliance Assistance Program:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.21](#).

**Country-wide Review of Significant Trade:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.22](#) as amended.

**CITES Tree Species Programme:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.23](#) as amended.

**United Nations World Wildlife Day:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.24 \(Rev.1\)](#).

**CITES gender action plan:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.25](#). RUSSIAN FEDERATION, BAHRAIN, IRAN, SAUDI ARABIA, ALGERIA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, and OMAN noted their opposition.

**CITES Global Youth Network:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.26](#) as amended.

FIJI noted that their request for a new paragraph including language on least developed countries and small island developing states was not reflected.

**Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities:** The CoP agreed to continue using existing terminology with a footnote.

The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.27](#) as amended.

**Draft resolution on the creation of an advisory Subcommittee of the Standing Committee of People Living alongside Fauna and Flora species included in the CITES Appendices (PLFF), a related Voluntary Fund, and their procedures:** The CoP did not accept [CoP20 Doc.28](#).

The CoP invited ZIMBABWE to present a revised proposal on a permanent forum for people living alongside fauna and flora to SC81. The CoP accepted the inclusion of “and other relevant documents” in 20.BB of [CoP20 Doc.27](#) as amended.

**Livelihoods:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.29.1](#) as amended, rejected the retention of decision 20.CC paragraph a), accepted the decision 20.CC as amended, and rejected the new draft decision in CoP20 Com.II.1.

**Integrating human rights, livelihoods, and food security into the implementation of CITES:** The CoP did not adopt [CoP20 Doc.30](#).

**Demand reduction to combat illegal trade:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.31](#) as amended.

**Review of Resolutions:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.32](#) as amended.

**Review of Decisions:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.33](#) as amended.

### Compliance

**National laws for implementation of the Convention:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.34](#) as amended.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION opposed the adoption of the document, asserting that reference to armed conflict is outside the Convention's mandate.

**Implementation of Article XIII and Resolution Conf.14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES compliance procedures:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.35.1](#) as amended.

**Review of the National Ivory Action Plans Process:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.35.2](#) as amended.

**Totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.35.3](#) as amended.

**Review of the provisions of Resolution Conf.17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.36](#), including the amended name of the database in the draft decision.

**Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.37](#) as amended.

### Illegal Trade and Enforcement

**Review of Resolution Conf.11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.38](#) as amended.

**Enforcement matters:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.39](#) as amended.

**Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.40](#) as amended.

**CITES Big Cats Task Force:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.41](#).

**Implementation of the priority recommendations from the review of the ETIS Programme:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.42](#) as amended.

**ETIS categorization of Parties:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.43](#) as amended by CoP20 Com.II.16.

**Ivory seizures and domestic ivory markets:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.44](#).

**Illegal trade in cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.45](#) as amended in CoP20 Com.II.6, but did not adopt the new decision in the latter.

**Marine turtles (*Cheloniidae* spp. and *Dermochelyidae* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.46](#) as amended.

**Tortoises and freshwater turtles (*Testudines* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.47.1](#) and [47.2](#), the latter as amended in Committee and with the draft decisions in CoP20 Com.II.11.

### Regulation of Trade

**Proposal to amend Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19):** The CoP adopted Com.II.13.

**Legal acquisition findings:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.49](#) as amended by CoP20 Com.II.2.

**Non-detriment findings:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.50](#) as amended.

**Non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.51](#).

**Introduction from the sea:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.52](#) as amended.

**Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.53](#) as amended.

**Identification of timber and other wood products:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.54](#) and [54.Add](#) as amended.

**Purpose-of-transaction codes:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.55](#) as amended.

**Electronic systems and information technology:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.56.1](#) as amended as well as [56.2](#) and [56.2.Add](#).

**Review of Resolution Conf.8.13 (Rev. CoP17) on Use of coded-microchip implants for marking live animals in trade:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.57](#).

**Risk assessment and analysis for border control of CITES-listed species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.58](#) as amended.

**Stocks and stockpiles:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.59](#) as amended.

**Transport of live specimens:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.60](#) as amended.

**Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.61](#) as amended.

**Specimens produced through biotechnology:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.62](#).

**Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations':** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.63](#).

**Disposal of confiscated specimens:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Docs.64.1](#), [64.2](#), and [64.3 \(Rev.1\)](#) as amended.

**Labelling system for trade in caviar:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.65](#).

**Trade in stony corals:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.66.1](#) and [66.2](#) as amended.

**Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.67.1](#) and [67.2](#) as amended.

**Review of Resolution Conf.12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.68](#) as amended.

**Guidance on the term 'artificially propagated':** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.69](#).

### Species Conservation and Trade

**Use of phytosanitary certificates as certificates of artificial propagation:** The CoP did not accept [CoP20 Doc.70](#).

**Assessment of Appendix I-listed species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.71](#).

**Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.72](#).

**Trade in endemic species:** The CoP adopted CoP20 Com. II.12.

**West African vultures:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.74](#).

**Conservation of amphibians:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.75](#).

**Elephants:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.76.1](#), [76.3](#), [76.4](#), [76.5](#), [76.6](#), and [76.7](#). It did not adopt [CoP20 Doc.76.2](#).

**Asian big cats (*Felidae* spp.): Implementation of Resolution Conf.12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.77.1](#) as amended.

**Asian big cats in captivity:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.77.2](#) as amended.

**Great apes (*Hominidae* spp.): Report of the Standing Committee:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.78.1](#).

**Conservation of and trade in live great apes:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.78.2](#) as amended.

**Pangolins (*Manis* spp.): Implementation of Resolution Conf.17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on Conservation of and trade in pangolins:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.79.1](#) and CoP20 Com. II.8, as amended.

**Report on Decisions 18.238, 18.239 & 19.200 to 19.204:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.79.2](#) as amended.

**African lions (*Panthera leo*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.80 \(Rev.1\)](#) as amended.

**Jaguars (*Panthera onca*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.81.Add](#) as amended.

**Guidance on non-detriment findings for trade in leopard (*Panthera pardus*) hunting trophies:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.82](#) as amended.

**Songbird trade and conservation management (*Passeriformes* spp.):** The CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.2 as amended.

**Rhinoceroses (*Rhinocerotidae* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.84](#) as amended.

**Saiga antelope (*Saiga* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.85.1 \(Rev.2\)](#), [85.2](#), and CoP20 Com.II.9 as amended.

### Aquatic Species

**Aquatic species listed in the CITES Appendices:** The CoP noted [CoP20 Doc.86](#).

**Eels (*Anguilla* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.87](#) as amended.

**Sharks and rays (*Elasmobranchii* spp.):** The CoP adopted both [CoP20 Doc.88.1](#) and [88.2](#) as amended.

**Seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.89](#) as amended.

**Conservation of and trade in sea cucumbers (*Holothuridae* and *Stichopodidae*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.90](#) as amended.

**Queen conch (*Strombus gigas*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.91](#).

**Marine ornamental fishes:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.92](#) as amended.

**Agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.93](#).

**Boswellia trees (*Boswellia* spp.):** The CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.3.

**Rosewood tree species [*Leguminosae* (*Fabaceae*)]:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.95](#).

**Products containing specimens of Appendix-II orchids (*Orchidaceae* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.96](#) as amended.

**Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*):** The CoP adopted the draft decisions in CoP20 Com.I.4 as amended.

**African tree species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.98](#).

**Neotropical tree species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.99](#).

**Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.100](#) as amended.

### Fungi

**Resolving the implementation of the CoP12 decision that the Convention applies to fungi:** The CoP adopted the draft decisions in CoP20 Com.I.1 as amended.

### Appendices of the Convention

**Considering the 'look-alike' criterion Annex 2B A of Resolution Conf.9.24 (Rev. CoP17) on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II:** ESWATINI, SOLOMON ISLANDS, and others, opposed by the EU and ISRAEL, motioned to reopen debate.

Following a vote of 27 for, 98 against, and 17 abstentions, the motion was rejected.

The CoP did not adopt [CoP20 Doc.102](#).

### Annotations

**Annotations:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.103](#).

**Annotation #15:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.104](#) as amended.

**Implications of the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another Report of the Secretariat at the request of the Standing Committee:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.105.1](#).

**Facilitating legal trade and sustainable use during periods of transition:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.105.2](#) as amended, but without the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev.CoP19).

**Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.106](#) as amended.

**Informal review mechanism of existing and proposed annotations:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.107](#).

**Orchids specimens exempted through annotation #4g):** The CoP adopted the draft decision in [CoP20 Com.II.Rec.13](#).

**Annotation of Cape aloe (*Aloe ferox*):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.109](#).

### Nomenclature Matters

**Standard nomenclature:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.110](#) as amended but without draft decisions 20.AA5 and 20.CC5. The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.110.Add](#) and [CoP20 Doc.110.Add2](#) as amended.

**Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.111](#) as amended.

**Higher taxon listings in the Appendices:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.112](#).

**Taxonomy and nomenclature of African elephants (*Loxodonta* spp.):** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.113](#) and the compromise option to reflect the recognition of the two elephant species in the Appendices.

### Proposals to Amend the Appendices

The CoP adopted Committee I's recommendations on Proposals 1-38 except for the following:

**Striped hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*):** TAJIKISTAN, supported by UZBEKISTAN, made a motion to reopen the debate on CoP20 Prop.6 to transfer the striped hyena to Appendix I. TAJIKISTAN then introduced an amendment to transfer the striped hyena to Appendix II without any annotations.

The CoP adopted the revised proposal by consensus.

**Sea cucumbers (*Actinopyga echinites*, *A. mauritiana*, *A. miliaris*, *A. varians*, *A. lecanora*, and *A. palauensis*):** MONACO requested to reopen debate on CoP20 Prop.36, to include several species of sea cucumber in Appendix II, in order to add a 24-month delay before implementation.

The debate was reopened by a vote of 49 in favor, 79 against, and 12 abstaining.

By a secret ballot of 59 in favor, 72 against, and 8 abstaining, the CoP once again rejected the proposal.

**Rose hair tarantula (*Grammostola rosea*) and look-alikes:** ARGENTINA, supported by BRAZIL, requested reopening CoP20 Prop.38 to include 15 species of tarantulas in Appendix II. ARGENTINA then reintroduced an amendment to include only *Grammostola rosea* in the Appendix II listing, removing the 14 look-alike species from the proposal.

The CoP adopted the amended proposal.

### In the Corridors

Back in plenary, delegates were able to reflect on the work accomplished over the past seven days in committee sessions as the Chair swiftly gavelled the adoptions of the different documents and proposals. 76 agenda items were considered in the morning session alone. "Maybe we'll finish early today?" whispered one observer.

But the fatigue of a two-week meeting finally caught up to some, as calls to reopen items adopted in committee sessions multiplied. At least when an amended uplisting of the striped hyena to Appendix II was adopted by consensus, it showed the flexibility and spirit of cooperation of delegates. "It's been a long day," said Chair at the end of the plenary, and urged parties to get good rest before the final push.

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of CITES CoP20 will be available on Monday, 8 December 2025 at [enb.iisd.org/convention-international-trade-endangered-species-wild-fauna-flora-cites-cop20](http://enb.iisd.org/convention-international-trade-endangered-species-wild-fauna-flora-cites-cop20).

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