

## Summary of the 20th Meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties: 24 November – 5 December 2025

The twentieth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) of the Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) marked the Convention's 50th anniversary as well as a critical moment for biodiversity. With wild populations of plants and animals in drastic decline around the world, it is more urgent than ever to prevent their overexploitation while considering the human communities most proximate to and dependent on them. Commending the “tireless” work of CITES Parties over the previous half-century, CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero pointed out in her opening remarks that this meeting would “set the course for the Convention for the next 50 years.”

To that end, delegates worked through 114 agenda items; adopted 353 decisions; took part in 46 rounds of voting; and reviewed 50 listing proposals, which resulted in 77 new species being added to the appendices. The oceanic whitetip shark, whale shark, and all species of manta and devil rays—along with several birds, reptiles, a monkey, and a tortoise—were granted the highest possible protection under Appendix I. Many more species of flora and fauna were listed on Appendix II, or saw their current listings amended with a zero-export quota annotation, all to ensure that international trade will not impact their survival in the wild.

Meanwhile, CITES protections were relaxed for some species because of effective conservation measures by range states. Trade was reopened, under strictly limited circumstances, for the Kazakhstan population of saiga antelope due to their dramatic recovery nationally. The bontebok, a species of antelope endemic to South Africa, was deleted from Appendix II due to an encouraging population resurgence. And both the Guadalupe fur seal and Parlatore's podocarp, at the behest of range states, were downlisted from Appendix I to Appendix II due to improved conservation status. In other outcomes, Parties recognized two different species of African elephants; decided on stronger caviar labeling requirements; made progress in developing tree species information systems; and adopted two new resolutions on jaguars and eels that will enhance cooperation on their conservation.

In effusive closing remarks, Parties thanked the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting and highlighted that collaboration should not only happen at multilateral negotiations, but also beyond the conference center. Others called for more knowledge-sharing on

anti-trafficking technologies, more investments on the ground to enhance protections for CITES-listed species, and the need to strike a balance between conservation and development.

CoP20 took place from 24 November to 5 December 2025 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Participating in the two-week meeting were 4,638 delegates from governments and observer organizations, and journalists.

### In this Issue

A Brief History of CITES . . . . .	2
CoP20 Report . . . . .	3
Administrative and Financial Matters . . . . .	3
Strategic Matters . . . . .	4
Capacity-building . . . . .	7
CITES and People . . . . .	7
Existing Resolutions and Decisions . . . . .	8
Compliance Matters . . . . .	9
Illegal Trade and Enforcement . . . . .	10
Regulation of Trade . . . . .	11
Exemptions and Special Trade Provisions . . . . .	15
Species Conservation and Trade . . . . .	15
Fauna . . . . .	16
Aquatic Species . . . . .	21
Flora . . . . .	22
Fungi . . . . .	23
Appendices of the Convention . . . . .	24
Annotations . . . . .	24
Nomenclature Matters . . . . .	25
Proposals to Amend Appendices I and II . . . . .	25
Conclusion of the Meeting . . . . .	29
A Brief Analysis of CoP20 . . . . .	29
Upcoming Meetings . . . . .	31
Glossary . . . . .	31

## A Brief History of CITES

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, on 3 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975. There are currently 185 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 are expected to regulate the trade of species listed in three CITES appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade, permitting such trade only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II species may become endangered if their trade is not regulated, thus they require controls aimed at preventing unsustainable use, maintaining ecosystems, and preventing species from entering Appendix I. Appendix III species are subject to domestic regulation by a Party requesting the cooperation of other Parties to control international trade in these species.

To list a species in Appendix I or II, a Party needs to submit a proposal for approval by the CoP, supported by scientific and biological 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 the species should be transferred or removed from the appendices.

Over 40,900 species—including roughly 6,610 species of animals and 34,310 species of plants—are listed under CITES. Parties regulate international trade of CITES listed species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens of these species 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 issuing permits and certificates based on the advice of a 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 an 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).

The first CoP 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 species listed in its appendices. The SC provides general policy and operational direction to the Secretariat concerning the implementation of the Convention, drafts resolutions for consideration by the CoP, and performs any other functions entrusted to it by the CoP.

## Key Turning Points

In 2010, the [International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime](#) (ICWC) was created to further enhance the international cooperation needed to support national efforts to strengthen the enforcement response.

In 2015, the United Nations Group of Friends on Poaching and Illicit Wildlife Trafficking, co-chaired by Gabon and Germany, promoted the first UN General Assembly resolution on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife. [Resolution 69/314](#) and three follow-up resolutions recognize CITES as the primary legal framework for regulating international trade in species of wild animals and plants and combating illicit trafficking in wildlife.

In 2019, General Assembly [Resolution 73/343](#) further underscored the importance of national-level action and commitment to effectively address illegal wildlife trade, urging Member States to “take decisive steps at the national level to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illegal trade in wildlife, on the supply, transit, and demand sides, including by strengthening their legislation and regulations necessary for the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and appropriate punishment of such illegal trade, as well as by strengthening enforcement and criminal justice responses.”

## Recent Meetings

**CITES CoP19:** CoP19 convened from 14–25 November 2023 in Panama City, Panama. CoP19 adopted 46 of the 52 proposals put forward to increase or decrease controls on international trade in wildlife and wildlife products, bringing many species of sharks, lizards, turtles, fish, birds, frogs, and more than a hundred tree species under CITES control to ensure the sustainability of these species in the wild while allowing their international trade. In addition, a record 365 decisions were adopted to advance protection of threatened wildlife species while at the same time allowing international trade.

**CITES SC77:** SC77 convened in Geneva, Switzerland from 6–10 November 2023. Over 717 participants registered for the meeting, which considered 77 agenda items with over 101 related documents spanning some 2,701 pages. Due to time constraints, 17 agenda items were deferred to SC78. Highlights from SC77 included recommendations on: the establishment of the CITES Global Youth Network; seizure reporting on big cats; monitoring elephant poaching; stockpiling timber; and consideration of possible future interaction between CITES and the new Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

**CITES SC78:** SC78 convened from 3–8 February 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, with nearly 600 government delegates and other stakeholders participating. They were tasked with discussing over 127 working documents across 87 agenda items containing more than 200 potential decisions. Even with an extra day added to the working programme—six instead of the usual five for SC meetings—there wasn’t enough time to complete the agenda. As a result, eight substantial issues were deferred for later consideration through Notifications to the Parties before submission to CoP20. Highlights from SC78 included recommendations on: sharks and rays; seahorses; eels; an information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species; and potential cooperation between CITES and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on jaguar conservation.

## CoP20 Report

On Monday, [24 November](#), Aziz Abdulkhakimov, Advisor to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Environment and Chairman of the National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change, welcomed CoP20 participants to Samarkand and encouraged productive discussions and practical collaborations on: integrating artificial intelligence into wildlife monitoring; updating national legislation; and strengthening enforcement.

In a video message, Inger Anderson, Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), said that sustainable trade in wild flora and fauna can deliver for both people and the planet when it is grounded in good governance, the rule of law, and multilateral cooperation.

CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero expressed gratitude to the Government of Uzbekistan for hosting CoP20 and called for the mainstreaming of wildlife conservation in other international processes.

### *Administrative and Financial Matters*

**Election of Chair, Alternate Chair and Vice-Chairs of the meeting and of Chairs of Committees I and II:** On 24 November, the CoP elected Aziz Abdulkhakimov (Uzbekistan) as Chair; Alisher Salomov (Uzbekistan) as Alternate Chair; Patience Gandiwa (Zimbabwe) and Ajit Karna (Nepal) as Vice Chairs; Mathias Lörtscher (Switzerland) as Chair of Committee I; Anna Wong (Singapore) as Chair of Committee II; and Abba Sonko (Senegal) as Chair of the Credentials Committee.

**Adoption of the Agenda and Working Programme:** CoP Chair Abdulkhakimov then introduced the agenda ([CoP20 Doc.2](#)), which was adopted.

The CoP Chair introduced the work programme ([CoP20 Doc.3 Rev.2](#)). BRAZIL, supported by NEW ZEALAND, MEXICO, ARGENTINA, ECUADOR, and DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, requested to move agenda item 73, Trade in endemic species ([CoP20 Doc.73](#)), from Committee II to Committee I. The US and the EU opposed this. CANADA suggested that the Bureau take up the discussion on where to consider this agenda item.

The CoP adopted the work programme, except agenda item 73.

On 25 November, Committee II Chair Wong announced that the Bureau had agreed that agenda item 73 would remain in Committee II.

**Rules of procedure: Proposed amendments to Rule 25.6:** On 24 November, Standing Committee (SC) Chair Naimah Aziz introduced the three proposed amendments to Rule 25.6 and the associated draft decision ([CoP20 Doc.4](#)) regarding the procedure for deciding on proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II that relate to the same taxon but are different in substance.

The first amendment directs the Chair to advise the CoP when there are proposals that relate to the same taxon but are different in substance and allow for each of the proposals to be introduced before submission for discussion or decision.

The second amendment ensures that when the adoption of one proposal implies the rejection of another proposal, the latter proposal would still be submitted in relation to any remaining taxon in the latter proposal.

The third amendment would establish a stepwise approach whereby if any proposal to reduce the restrictive effect on the trade in the taxon is adopted, then no further decision will be made on proposals to add restrictions on the same trade for the same taxon.

While there was consensus on the first two proposed amendments, the third amendment regarding a stepwise approach, and the draft decision directing the SC to continue discussions on it, lacked consensus.

Chair Abdulkhakimov proposed to adopt the rules of procedure with the first two amendments, but not the third, and postponed a decision on the draft decision to the next plenary.

On 4 December, the CoP rejected the draft decision in CoP20 Doc.4.

**Final Outcome:** With the accepted amendments underlined, the Rule of Procedure 25.6 now reads:

“If two or more proposals including proposals amended in accordance with Rule 24, paragraph 2 or in accordance with paragraph 5 of this Rule, relate to the same taxon, but are different in substance, the Chair shall so advise the Conference, clearly indicating the implications of the adoption of one proposal for the other(s), and allow each of the proposals to be introduced prior to submitting any of them for discussion and decision. The Conference shall first decide on the proposal that will have the least restrictive effect on the trade and then on the proposal with the next least restrictive effect on the trade, and so on until all proposals have been submitted to decision. If, in relation to the same taxon, the adoption of one proposal necessarily implies the rejection of another proposal, the latter proposal shall not be submitted to decision.”

**Credentials Committee:** This matter was opened on 24 November in plenary. On Friday, 5 December, the Credentials Committee reported that out of the 165 Parties present, 157 credentials had been approved.

**Admission of Observers:** Delegates agreed to admit the observers listed in [CoP20 Doc.6](#) on 24 November in plenary.

**Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties: Administration of the Secretariat:** On 25 November, Committee II Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.7.1](#).

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December in plenary, the CoP noted the document.

**Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on administrative matters:** On 25 November in Committee II, UNEP introduced [CoP20 Doc.7.2 \(Rev.1\)](#), stressing that UNEP and CITES remain committed to collaborating on activities such as the African Elephant Action Plan and Jaguar 2030 Roadmap.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December in plenary, the CoP noted the document.

**Financial reports for 2023–2025:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.7.3](#) and associated annexes and recommendations. Committee II noted the report and requested the budget working group to consider the recommendations.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP noted the report.

**Budget and work programme for 2026 to 2028:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.7.4](#) and the associated draft resolution and annexes outlining three possible budget scenarios: zero nominal growth (Scenario 1); zero real growth (Scenario 2); and incremental growth (Scenario 3).

Committee II established an in-session budget working group to address CoP20 Doc.7.1, [7.2 \(Rev.1\)](#), [7.3](#), and [7.4](#), including four recommendations and a draft resolution in CoP20 Doc.7.3 and the three budget scenarios in CoP20 Doc.7.4.

On 3 December in Committee II, ZIMBABWE introduced CoP20 Com.II.17, prepared by the budget working group, noting

the amended proposed scenario 3 to reflect an increase of 6.98% to finance the implementation of the costed programmes of work of the Secretariat for the triennium 2026 to 2028.

MEXICO, SENEGAL, the UK, BRAZIL, FRANCE, PANAMA, and others supported the proposed 6.98% increase. KUWAIT, CHINA, the US, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, JAPAN, and others opposed, preferring a zero nominal growth budget. KUWAIT called for a vote.

Committee II accepted paragraph 9 as contained in CoP20 Com. II.17, accepting a 6.98% increase in budget, with 68 in favor, 19 opposed, and 11 abstaining.

The US then requested a vote on the rest of Resolution Conf.20.1, as contained in CoP20 Com.II.17, except for paragraph 9, which the Secretariat clarified had already been agreed.

FIJI protested forcing a vote “despite clear and overwhelming consensus” and stressed that votes should only take place on issues for which there is “a real and substantive split among Parties.”

Committee II agreed to the rest of Resolution Conf.20.1, with 80 in favor, 2 opposed, and 14 abstaining.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.7.4](#) as amended in CoP20 Com.II.17.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- decides that the implementation of the costed programme of work for the triennium 2026–2028 shall be USD 6,597,997 for 2026, USD 7,026,420 for 2027 and USD 7,599,518 for 2028, reflecting an increase of 6.98%;
- adopts the scale of contributions for 2026–2028 as contained in Annex 5; and
- encourages Parties, states not party to the Convention, NGOs, philanthropies, the private sector, and other entities to provide financial or technical assistance to support the effective implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by CoP20.

**Arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties:**

On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.7.5](#) and associated draft decisions.

In response to concerns about the host location for the Secretariat, CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero noted that Switzerland, as host government, contributes USD 1 million a year to CITES and subsidizes 92% of the cost of holding the SC, AC, and PC meetings in Geneva. SWITZERLAND said that changes to the Secretariat host location would impact their future contributions.

Committee II agreed to the draft decisions in Annex I.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.7.5](#).

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- encourages Parties to consider hosting future CoP meetings and to provide financial and in-kind support to other Parties hosting CoPs; and
- directs the Secretariat, with inputs from the SC, to prepare a guidance on raising funds in support of the logistical organization of CoPs and on reducing costs in the event of no offers from potential host countries.

**Terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee:**

On 25 November, Committee II agreed to [CoP20 Doc.8](#), which recommends the adoption of the amendments to Resolution Conf.18.2 on Establishment of Committees, as annexed to the document and the deletion of Decision 18.2.

On 4 December in plenary, KUWAIT made a motion, supported by JAPAN and INDONESIA, and opposed by FIJI, to reopen the

item for a minor edit. The motion was defeated by a vote of 26 in favor, 86 opposing, and 17 abstaining.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.8](#), which lays out the terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee.

**Emerging operational issues of the Committees:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.9](#). After minor textual amendments by AUSTRALIA, Committee II agreed to the document. On 4 December, the CoP adopted it.

**Final Outcome:** In the amended Resolution Conf. 18.2 on Establishment of Committees, the CoP established conditions for hybrid Committee meetings and meeting postponement.

**Access to funding:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.10](#) and Committee II forwarded the document to the budget working group.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Doc.10, which streamlines several decisions on access to funding and adds a decision related to engagement with the Global Environment Facility, its focal points, and its Wildlife Program.

**Sponsored Delegates Project:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.11](#) amending Resolution Conf.17.3 (Rev. CoP19) on the Sponsored Delegates Project.

BRAZIL, supported by CAMEROON, ZIMBABWE, and others, lamented the lack of resources for delegates from developing countries. The EU, with FIJI, highlighted the importance of accountability in the usage of funds. The US proposed a draft decision to ask the SC to consider whether to continue the Sponsored Delegates Project, which was put to a vote.

With 66 opposing, 8 abstaining, and 3 supporting, the US proposal was rejected. Committee II agreed to the document, and on 4 December, the CoP adopted it.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties from developing countries that are subject to an Article-XIII process to request financial support for the participation of a maximum of two delegates in meetings of the SC and CoP; and
- requests the Secretariat to apply clear selection criteria, taking into account the various possible options for the selection criteria and additional ways to prioritize beneficiary Parties, including the guidelines of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the prioritization of small island developing states and least developed countries.

## Strategic Matters

**Committee Reports and Recommendations: Standing**

**Committee:** On 24 November in plenary, Chair Abdulkhakimov invited the CoP to note the Report of the Chair of the SC ([CoP20 Doc.12.1.1](#)).

CANADA expressed concern regarding the extensive intersessional agenda and workload of the Convention. CHINA noted that CITES must remain focused on core issues and not lose sight of critical human dimensions in conservation. KENYA thanked former SC Chair Rosemarie Gnam for her work in chairing the African Elephant Dialogue meeting.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP noted the report.

**Animals Committee:** On 24 November, in plenary, Mathias Lörtscher, Chair of the AC, presented the report ([CoP20 Doc.12.2.1](#)), which includes recommendations to: adopt the amendment to Resolution Conf.14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on Periodic Review of species

included in Appendices I and II; maintain Decisions 19.211 and 19.212 on leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa; and delete Decision 18.175 on captive breeding of Sri Lankan agamids (lizards).

The Secretariat noted that the work in Decision 19.211 and 19.212 could be addressed in the Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative.

NEW ZEALAND and the EU supported all three AC proposals. CHINA opposed the proposed amendment to Conf.14.8 (Rev. CoP19), noting that this may burden periodic review.

The CoP noted the report and adopted its recommendations.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP amended Resolution Conf.14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on periodic review of species included in Appendices I and II and maintained Decisions 19.211 and 19.212 on leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa.

**Plants Committee:** On 24 November in plenary, the CoP noted the report of the PC ([CoP20 Doc.12.3.1](#)), with the EU welcoming the report and commending the work of the intersessional working group.

**Election of new regional and alternate regional members:** On 4 December in plenary, the CoP agreed to new SC, AC, and PC members as nominated by regional representatives.

**CITES Strategic Vision:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.13 \(Rev.1\)](#), with proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.16.4 on Cooperation of CITES with other Biodiversity related Conventions, and Resolution Conf.18.3 on CITES Strategic Vision: 2021–2030.

The US requested the deletion of references to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but did not find support. The EU, supported by FIJI but opposed by the US, suggested adding reference to the Agreement on Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) in the preambular and operative text of the resolutions, while the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and MEXICO suggested restricting mention to preambular text. The EU suggested renewing, not deleting, Decision 19.14 but others opposed.

Committee II agreed to the recommendations and to adding preambular references to the BBNJ Agreement in Resolutions 16.4 and 18.4.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopted indicator 1.4.1 of the CITES Strategic Vision and amendments to Resolution Conf.16.4 on Cooperation of CITES with other Biodiversity related Conventions, and Resolution Conf.18.3 on CITES Strategic Vision: 2021–2030, with the additional preambular text referring to the BBNJ Agreement.

**Enhancing the work and efficiency of the Convention through the permanent committees:** On 24 November in plenary, the Chair of the AC, for the Chairs of the SC, PC, AC, and Finance and Budget Subcommittee, introduced [CoP20 Doc.14](#) and highlighted a draft prioritization matrix for CITES work-directed decisions taken at a CoP.

The Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee requested further language to ensure recommendations would be for the use of the Committee Chairs. MEXICO requested that the proposed intersessional working group consider how and by whom prioritization criteria would be applied, as well as how they would be weighted. CHINA, with BRAZIL, argued that the SC should establish the working group without additional funding. CANADA,

with the EU, said that the matrix requires more refinement and should not be applied until it has been considered by Parties.

MEXICO, ARGENTINA, COLOMBIA, and others underlined the need for the equitable representation of Parties in the intersessional working group. The AC Chair AC clarified that the working group would be open to any Party. CANADA, supported by CHINA and ZIMBABWE, suggested that the issue be considered by an in-session working group.

On 25 November, Committee II established an in-session working group.

On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced CoP20 Com.II.5. On 4 December, the CoP adopted [CoP20 Doc.14](#) as amended by CoP20 Com.II.5.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs, *inter alia*:

- the Chairs of the permanent committees, no later than 90 days after CoP20, to trial the draft assessment factors contained in CoP20 Doc.14;
- the SC to establish an intersessional working group to review and refine, by SC81, the draft prioritization matrix or other approaches, if needed;
- the AC and PC to identify key factors within their respective mandates that could help improve focus and prioritization of the committees' efforts towards enhancing the efficiency of the Convention and provide input to SC81; and
- the Secretariat to publish, no later than 60 days after CoP20, a notification to the Parties inviting opinions and views on the draft assessment factors and provide the responses to the intersessional working group.

**Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade:** On 25

November, Committee II simultaneously considered two documents: the SC report ([CoP20 Doc.15.1](#)), and [CoP20 Doc.15.2](#), submitted by Senegal.

Committee II agreed to the draft decisions in CoP20 Doc.15.1 with minor amendments and rejected the draft resolution in CoP20 Doc.15.2.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs:

- the Secretariat, in consultation with the AC, to update the relevant webpage so that Parties can readily access information on pathogens and wildlife trade from relevant organizations; convey CITES' expertise on wildlife trade to the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health's work; implement the CITES-World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) joint programme of work; and invite WOA to inform the CITES Secretariat when WOA notifiable diseases are reported to WOA in CITES-listed species; and
- the AC to: provide input on CITES-related issues to guidelines by relevant organizations; continue to work with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to reduce zoonosis risk and pathogen spillover associated with wildlife trade; and make recommendations to CITES CoP21.

**Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international organizations:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.16.1](#).

The EU's proposed amendments, except to remove "cooperation" and "coordination" and "national focal points," were accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** In the amended Resolution Conf.16.4 (Rev CoP20) on Cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions,

the CoP encourages Parties to consider further opportunities to strengthen cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions, including at the national level by improving coordination and cooperation between national focal points and strengthening capacity-building activities.

**Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation**

**(GSPC):** On 25 November, Committee II considered [CoP20 Doc.16.2](#). Chair Wong requested the preparation of an in-session document, given the number of requests for amendments.

On 3 December, Chair Wong introduced CoP20 Com.II.4 (Rev.1). The UK and the EU suggested further amendments, notably to retain reference to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** In the amended Resolution Conf.16.5 (Rev. CoP20) on Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) GSPC, the CoP invites Parties to, *inter alia*, promote and enhance collaboration between GSPC through the involvement of CITES authorities in the development of activities contributing to the voluntary complementary actions related to plant conservation and in the incorporation of these activities into relevant plans, programmes and initiatives, including activities related to the GSPC and other national biodiversity strategies.

**Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative:** On 25 November, Committee I agreed to amendments to Resolution Conf.13.3, revised draft decisions on the African Carnivores Initiative (ACI), and new draft decisions on African lions as set out in [CoP20 Doc.16.3](#).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the Secretariat, subject to external resources and informing the AC, to support the range states of the joint CITES-CMS ACI in preparing a revised ACI Programme of Work; review the trade resource kits for African lion (*Panthera leo*) and leopard (*Panthera pardus*), identifying any gaps; and support the development of an inventory and of an African lion database;
- encourages Parties to share trade resource kits for relevant species; and
- directs the AC to advise on the development of trade resource kits, other guidance materials, and an African lion database in areas relevant to its mandate.

**International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime**

**(ICCWC):** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.16.4](#) and its associated information document [CoP20 Inf.15](#), which contained the ICCWC Annual Report 2024.

The US proposed changing “inviting” to “encouraging” the CoP to adopt the draft decision, and rejected the document’s reference to the SDGs, but this was not accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP invites Parties to provide feedback to the Secretariat on ICCWC support and tools and to provide funding to the ICCWC for the implementation of the ICCWC Vision 2030 and its Strategic Action Plan for 2027–2030.

**Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy**

**Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES):** On 25 November, Committee II considered [CoP20 Doc.16.5](#), which recommends the adoption of the draft decisions on the IPBES Assessment on the sustainable use of wild species as annexed in the document.

IPBES highlighted the value of their assessments for the deliberation and policy formulation within CITES. The US opposed while MEXICO, COLOMBIA, the EU, TANZANIA, and others supported the document.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs:

- the SC to review and propose amendments, as appropriate, to resolutions contained in documents PC27 Doc.10, AC33 Doc.11 and SC78 Doc.17; and
- the AC and PC to review the results of the SC review and propose amendments related to scientific aspects.

**World Wildlife Trade Report:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.17](#).

The EU proposed seeking Parties’ feedback on the report. TANZANIA drew attention to [CoP20 Inf.54](#) submitted by South Africa.

Clarifying that there will be a feedback loop for Parties, which can include whether to proceed to commission the overview report, Committee II accepted the document, which was adopted by the CoP, on 4 December.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs:

- the Secretariat, subject to extrabudgetary resources, to prepare an outline for and draft an Overview Report providing information on global trade in CITES-listed species for submission to CoP21; and
- the SC to review the outline and make recommendations to CoP21, as appropriate.

**CITES and forests:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.18](#).

Committee II formed a drafting group to address amendments proposed, notably to allow for PC review of the second draft of the “Report of the interdisciplinary study and the potential scope of an initiative on CITES and Forests.”

On 3 December in Committee II, the EU introduced CoP20 Com. II.15, with a minor editorial amendment. On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs:

- the Secretariat to review and update the CITES Forest Compendium and, subject to external resources, to: collaborate with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests; strengthen reliability of information on trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species in the CITES Trade Database based on PC recommendations; and explore funding opportunities with partners;
- the PC, *inter alia*, to review the report of the interdisciplinary study and the potential scope of an initiative on CITES and Forests and provide feedback to the Secretariat; and
- the SC to provide recommendations at CoP21.

**Language strategy for the Convention:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.19](#) concerning the translation of new and revised CITES Resolutions and Decisions into three additional languages (Arabic, Chinese, and Russian).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat, subject to extrabudgetary contributions, to provide for the translation of all new and revised valid resolutions and decisions into three additional languages (Arabic, Chinese, and Russian), and for the SC to consider the future approach to the Convention’s language strategy.

### Capacity-building

**Capacity-building framework:** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.20](#), which was accepted and adopted by the CoP on 4 December.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the SC, consulting with the AC and PC, to establish an intersessional working group on the development of an integrated capacity-building framework for submission at CoP21.

**Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP):** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.21](#).

The US, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and BAHRAIN opposed mention of gender in the draft decision. The EU, supported by CANADA, suggested waiting for a conclusion on agenda item 25 concerning the CITES Gender Action Plan before further discussions.

On 26 November, Committee II resumed discussions. The US, supported by INDONESIA, KUWAIT, and others, proposed new language to support consideration of “the particular needs of women and men.” The EU, AUSTRALIA, FIJI, and others opposed, preferring to retain the original language. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by UNITED ARAB EMIRATES and IRAN, proposed a compromise text, which was not accepted by the US. The US called for a vote.

With 63 agreeing, 14 disagreeing, and 8 abstaining, Committee II agreed to the original language.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- invites Parties to continue to provide support to Parties subject to compliance mechanisms and other related compliance measures;
- subject to extrabudgetary resources, directs the Secretariat, *inter alia*, to continue assisting Parties through the CAP and to support Parties’ gender mainstreaming in the development, implementation and monitoring of CAP activities, in line with the forthcoming CITES Gender Action Plan; and
- directs the SC to monitor progress on the implementation of the CAP.

**Country-wide Review of Significant Trade (RST):** On 25 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.22](#), which was accepted with minor amendments from the EU and CANADA.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- encourages Parties subject to recommendations under the RST to make use of the Guidance on the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs);
- directs the Secretariat, subject to availability of resources, to provide capacity-building support at the national level to eligible Parties not selected as part of the CAP; and
- directs the AC and PC to review the results of the Evaluation of the country-wide RST process report and consider whether the RST or an adapted CAP could provide more targeted support to relevant Parties, and provide recommendations to the SC.

**CITES Tree species programme:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.23](#). CANADA and the US suggested amendments to, *inter alia*, ensure that the PC and SC have a role in providing guidance on priority activities and on “funding decisions, as appropriate.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat to:

- seek advice and guidance from the PC and SC to assess the potential of the CITES Tree Species Programme to be made permanent;
- provide opportunities for the PC and SC to be involved in providing advice and guidance, including on priority activities and funding decisions to the programme, as appropriate; and
- identify opportunities to leverage the CITES Tree Species Programme to advance complementary areas of CITES work.

### CITES and People

**United Nations World Wildlife Day:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.24 \(Rev.1\)](#), which was accepted.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP noted the document.

**CITES Gender Action Plan:** On 26 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.25](#) containing the draft Gender Action Plan. CANADA, UK, EU, BRAZIL, and others supported the document while the US, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, IRAN, INDONESIA, and others opposed.

The US called for a vote to delete the decisions contained in the document. With 53 agreeing, 22 disagreeing, and 11 abstaining, Committee II agreed to the document and its recommendations.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, BAHRAIN, IRAN, SAUDI ARABIA, ALGERIA, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, and OMAN noted their opposition.

**Final Outcome:** Through the renewal of decisions 19.51-1.53, the CoP agreed, subject to availability of resources, to continue work on the development of the CITES Gender Action Plan for approval at CoP21.

**CITES Global Youth Network:** On 2 December in Committee II, KUWAIT introduced [CoP20 Doc.26](#).

The US requested the addition of the phrase “subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources” and “as appropriate” across the operational paragraphs to consider resource constraints. FIJI requested an additional paragraph encouraging Parties and the Secretariat to ensure balanced regional representation in the Network. Both amendments were accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, invites Parties and the Secretariat, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to collaborate with the CITES Global Youth Network and ensure balanced representation in the network.

**Engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs):** On 26 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.27](#).

Following a debate on terminology, Committee II agreed to wait for the glossary being worked on by the CBD’s Permanent Body on Article 8(j) before discussions continue and use existing terminology with a footnote in the interim.

On the non-binding “Guidance on consulting IPLCs on proposals to amend the Appendices,” the US opposed its publication and called for a vote.

With 78 in favor, 9 against, and 4 abstaining, Committee II agreed to the publication of the non-binding Guidance. On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- agrees to publish the “Guidance on consulting with IPLCs on proposals to amend the Appendices” and to continue using the existing terminology (with a footnote) when referring

to “indigenous peoples,” “local communities,” or “rural communities.”

- invites Parties to consider using the non-binding Guidance; and
- directs the SC to seek and review Party experiences in using the Guidance and make recommendations to CoP21 based on consideration of [SC78 Doc.27](#) and other relevant documents.

**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, a related Voluntary Fund, and their procedures:** On 26 November in Committee II, ZIMBABWE introduced [CoP20 Doc.28](#).

Many Parties expressed sympathy for rural communities living alongside wildlife, and in principle supported their participation in CITES, but strongly opposed the proposed establishment of a dedicated subcommittee, citing concerns with its potential financial and operative implications. Noting a duplication of efforts with [CoP20 Doc.27](#) on engagement of IPLCs, CANADA suggested incorporating CoP20 Doc.28 into CoP20 Doc.27 by directing the SC to continue this work intersessionally.

The CoP did not adopt the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP invites Zimbabwe to present a revised proposal on a Permanent Forum for people living alongside species of wild fauna and flora to SC81.

**Livelihoods:** On 26 November in Committee II, Chair Wong noted that [CoP20 Doc.29.1](#), the report of the SC, and [CoP20 Doc.29.2](#), submitted by Zambia, would be considered together. ZAMBIA introduced CoP20 Doc.29.2, including the addition of text inviting Parties to make use of the six strategies highlighted in a new “Guidance for facilitating the participation of IPLCs in legal and sustainable trade in CITES-listed species.”

Following debate, CANADA offered to prepare a new draft decision inviting further review of the six strategies provided in the Guidance in CoP20 Doc.29.2.

On 3 December in Committee II, CANADA outlined the draft decision in CoP20 Com.II.1, supported by BRAZIL, CHINA, ZIMBABWE, and others.

The US and the EU opposed, arguing that further discussion would be unproductive given diverging positions.

With a vote of 38 for, 33 against, and 19 abstentions, Committee II did not adopt the draft decision.

On 4 December, 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.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- invites Parties to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned in the use of certification and labelling systems for products of CITES-listed species from IPLCs;
- directs the Secretariat, subject to extrabudgetary resources, to support the development of case studies on the use of certification and labelling systems for products of CITES-listed species from IPLCs in international trade to explore feasibility and identify best practices; and
- directs the SC to make recommendations, as appropriate, to CoP21.

**Integrating human rights, livelihoods, and food security into the implementation of CITES:** On 26 November in Committee II, ZIMBABWE introduced [CoP20 Doc.30](#), containing a draft resolution recommending, *inter alia*, that Parties undertake socioeconomic impact assessments where appropriate, and for the

SC to consider the establishment of a working group to explore mechanisms to operationalize human rights-based approaches within CITES.

BOTSWANA, ZAMBIA, and TANZANIA supported the document while SENEGAL, US, KENYA, SUDAN, and many others opposed, noting that this was beyond the mandate of the Convention.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP did not adopt the document.

**Demand reduction to combat illegal trade:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.31](#).

MALAYSIA sought clarification on how Parties can share best practices in implementing the CITES “Guidance on demand reduction.” The Secretariat pointed to a new page on demand reduction on the CITES website and invited Parties to submit additional case studies. INDIA proposed an amendment to encourage collaboration among Parties, which was accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- invites Parties to share their experience in using the “Guidance for CITES Parties to develop and implement demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species” and collaborate through appropriate forums;
- directs the Secretariat, subject to extrabudgetary resources, to organize pilot projects to promote the use of the Guidance, support interested Parties with implementation, and report on progress made to the SC; and
- directs the SC to review the report of the Secretariat and make recommendations, as appropriate.

### Existing Resolutions and Decisions

**Review of Resolutions:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.32](#). MEXICO, the US, ISRAEL, and CANADA introduced amendments to the draft decision to, *inter alia*, ensure consultation with the AC and PC Chairs, direct the SC to submit any recommendations to CoP21, and keep the scope of the review in the context of CITES and international wildlife trade.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- agrees to the amendments to Resolution Conf.10.13 (Rev. CoP18) on Implementation of the Convention for tree species and Resolution Conf.11.11 (Rev. CoP18) on Regulation of trade in plants; and
- directs the SC, in consultation with the AC and PC Chairs, to review Resolution Conf.10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on Cooperation and synergy with the CBD and Resolution Conf.13.2 (Rev. CoP14) on Sustainable use of biodiversity: Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines, to determine if they should be revised and submit recommendations to CoP21.

**Review of Decisions:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.33](#), which reviews decisions not covered in other CoP20 documents.

The US and BRAZIL proposed minor amendments to Resolution Conf.13.3, with the former requesting reference to Black Sea bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus ponticus*) and the latter requesting reference to jaguars (*Panthera onca*), which were accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- agrees to the amendments Resolution Conf.13.3 on Cooperation and synergy with the CMS, including references to Black Sea

bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus ponticus*) and jaguars (*Panthera onca*);

- deletes Decisions 17.108 to 17.110 on Review of Significant Trade; Decision 18.55 on cooperation on the Black Sea bottlenose dolphin; Decisions 19.71 to 19.73 on Malagasy palisanders and rosewoods (*Dalbergia* spp.) and ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.); and Decision 18.209 on Humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*); and
- retains Decision 17.256 on African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*).

### Compliance Matters

**National laws for implementation of the Convention:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.34](#).

Many Parties supported the recommendations, while others disagreed with posting the draft “Guidance on the implementation of the Convention in the event of exceptional circumstances that impede the proper functioning of CITES at the national level” on the CITES website before the SC had reviewed the current version.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the SC to keep under review the draft “Guidance on the implementation of the Convention in the event of exceptional circumstances that impede the proper functioning of CITES at the national level” and update it as appropriate; and
- requests the Secretariat to make this Guidance available on the CITES website.

**Implementation of Article XIII and Resolution Conf.14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES compliance procedures:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.35.1](#).

The UK, supported by CANADA and others, proposed a new draft decision on how to conduct the compliance processes. CHINA suggested consulting with the AC and PC and gathering input from concerned Parties to which the US noted the vagueness of “concerned Parties” and suggested referring to the AC and PC Chairs.

On draft amendments to Resolution Conf.14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES Compliance Procedures, the US proposed an amendment to reflect the non-binding nature of the SC recommendations. CHINA, supported by CANADA and INDIA, highlighted the need to expressly refer to the voluntary nature of the Compliance Action Plan template.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, among others, directs the SC, with the support of the Secretariat and in consultation with the Chairs of the AC and PC, to consider options to improve how it addresses compliance matters in line with Resolution Conf.14.3 (Rev. CoP19) and submits its recommendations to CoP21.

**Review of the National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs) Process:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.35.2](#). The UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE), supported by SINGAPORE, BAHRAIN, VIETNAM, and others, proposed edits to the “Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plan” contained in Annex 1 to, *inter alia*, ensure that demand reduction activities remain focused on illegal ivory. The EU, supported by CONGO, said the Parties’ timeframe should be defined in the UAE’s suggested edits, and the Secretariat suggested 15 days.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopts the draft amendments to Annex 3 to Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on Trade in elephant

specimens, i.e. the NIAP Guidelines; and the draft decision on Review of the NIAP process.

**Totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*):** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong presented [CoP20 Doc.35.3](#).

The US introduced proposed amendments to the draft decisions in [CoP20 Inf.72](#), submitted with Mexico.

The EU, the UK, BRAZIL, and others supported the amendments. SWITZERLAND commended progress made by Mexico, but noted that transit and destination countries must also step up their efforts. MEXICO highlighted progress on strengthening inspections for legal prosecution and increasing penal sanctions. The UK underscored the importance of meaningful collaboration with local communities to implement the Compliance Action Plan.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, encourages:

- Parties and relevant stakeholders to, *inter alia*, take into consideration the information contained in the study on totoaba and vaquita available in Annex 7 to document [SC78 Doc.33.12.1](#);
- Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoabas to fully implement the measures and activities outlined in the online Meeting of Range Transit and Consumer States of Totoaba agreed outcomes document, among others;
- China, other destination countries, the US, and other Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoaba, to, *inter alia*, strengthen information and intelligence gathering regarding and report to SC81 on activities conducted and any associated results achieved;
- Mexico to, among others, fully achieve all milestones of targets in the Compliance Action Plan no later than SC81; and
- China, Mexico, and the US to jointly submit, through the Chair of the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group (TECG), a report to SC81 on the activities conducted in accordance consistent with the TECG terms of reference, as well as associated results achieved.

**Review of the provisions of Resolution Conf.17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity:** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.36](#).

The US, supported by ISRAEL, requested that the database be renamed a “Captive Production tracking and management database.” The UK, opposed by BRAZIL, suggested deleting duplicative language on founder stock.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, including the amended name of the database in the draft decision.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopted the proposed amendments to paragraphs 2(d) and (h) of [Resolution Conf.17.7 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) and the proposed decision directing the Secretariat to, subject to external funding and available Secretariat resources, develop, test, and maintain a Captive Breeding tracking and management database as an essential tool for the effective implementation and transparency of the process under Resolution Conf.17.7 (Rev. CoP19).

**Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.37](#).

INDIA, TANZANIA, and others supported the recommendation to adopt the amendments to Resolution Conf.8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on National laws for implementation of the Convention. The US proposed textual amendments in the preamble to refer to the National Legislation Project (NLP) when noting that approximately

one-third of Parties have not taken appropriate measures. The UK noted that the Secretariat should consider the Convention text when supporting Parties to improve or assess their legislation under the NLP.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopts the amendments to Resolution Conf.8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on National laws for implementation of the Convention, including inviting Parties that have adopted domestic measures to implement the Convention to identify potential loopholes in their national CITES-implementing legislation, and to adopt any necessary amendments.

### Illegal Trade and Enforcement

**Review of Resolution Conf.11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.38](#).

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by UAE, SUDAN, and others, proposed that the Secretariat remind Parties to respond to requests for information on potential compliance matters. CHINA preferred to remove reference to differentiated liability, which was noted but not accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopts the amendments to [Resolution Conf.11.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on compliance and enforcement, including recommending that Parties raise awareness among professional bodies in their national jurisdiction of the need for members to comply with CITES; and encourage professional bodies to provide CITES training for their members, and, where appropriate, to develop codes of conduct relating to trade in and management of CITES-listed species.

**Enforcement matters:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.39](#).

INDIA, supported by CANADA, the UK, and others, proposed deleting reference to the CITES Management Authorities. INDONESIA suggested including financial intelligence units. KYRGYZSTAN suggested two new draft decisions: recommending that Parties enhance coordination and information exchange to ensure completeness of annual illegal trade reports to CITES; and encouraging the translation of the “Guidelines for preparing and submitting annual illegal trade reports” into all six UN languages. KAZAKHSTAN suggested an additional draft decision encouraging Parties to use the CITES Illegal Trade Database to inform enforcement efforts.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, recommends Parties to enhance coordination and information exchange between CITES Management Authorities, customs, border and other authorities to ensure completeness of annual illegal trade reports to CITES, and encourages Parties to use the CITES illegal trade database to inform national and international enforcement efforts to address unsustainable and illegal wildlife trade.

The CoP encourages Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to support the translation of the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report in all six UN official languages.

**Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.40](#), noting a minor edit from the Secretariat to specify that draft decision 20.BB is subject to extrabudgetary resources.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs Parties and donor organizations to notify the Secretariat of any funding opportunities that should be included on the CITES website;
- directs the Secretariat, *inter alia*, to make information available on the CITES website about initiatives, projects and funding opportunities, and, subject to extrabudgetary resources, to work with ICCWC partners to continue providing targeted support to combat wildlife crime; and
- encourages Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations and other entities to support CITES Parties in their efforts to implement the Convention and combat wildlife crime.

**CITES Big Cats Task Force:** On 28 November, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.41](#).

TANZANIA, BENIN, UGANDA, LIBERIA, RWANDA, and KENYA, as range states for big cats, highlighted the progress made during the CITES Big Cats Task Force meeting and the CITES-CMS Joint ACI meeting in 2023.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- encourages Parties affected to make every effort to fully implement the strategies, measures, and activities outlined in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document and report on its implementation to the Secretariat;
- directs the Secretariat to report to the SC the implementation and any recommendations; and
- directs the SC to consider the report and recommendations of the Secretariat and make recommendations to Parties or the Secretariat, and report on the implementation to CoP21.

**Implementation of the priority recommendations from the review of the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) Programme:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.42](#).

SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA, UAE, and others noted key concerns regarding data validation and its relation to [CoP20 Doc.76.5](#) on the ETIS report. SINGAPORE proposed an amendment to direct the Secretariat to consider any views provided by Parties through a notification, in revising the draft protocol in Annex 2a of SC78 Doc.65.2.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat, in consultation with TRAFFIC and Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) – ETIS Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and taking into account any views provided by Parties and observers through a notification, revise, as appropriate, the draft protocol in Annex 2a of document SC78 Doc.65.2 taking into consideration the different scenarios associated with the status of records subject to inquiry and their implications for the ETIS analysis. The CoP also directs the SC, through the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, to consider the revised draft protocol.

**ETIS categorization of Parties:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.43](#).

The EU requested amendments to include contextual information in step 1 of the “Guidelines to the NIAP process,” among others. JAPAN opposed, noting that this reduces transparency, and that the relationship between criterion 1 and 2 should be clarified. UAE asked for clarity on how categorizations are derived. QATAR noted that several elements need further clarification, such as differentiation with transiting territories.

Chair Wong established a working group to look at recommendation 13a of CoP20 Doc.43.

On 3 December in Committee II, SINGAPORE introduced CoP20 Com.II.16.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended by CoP20 Com.II.16.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, among others, directs the Secretariat, subject to external resources, to work with the MIKE-ETIS TAG and the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup and, in consultation with TRAFFIC, address the following aspects, among others and where appropriate, in the implementation of priority recommendation 7 on the development of Standard Operating Procedures and methodology documentation of the ETIS Programme.

**Ivory seizures and domestic ivory markets:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.44](#), which recommends noting that due to the constraints identified by the MIKE-ETIS TAG, the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, and the Secretariat, it was not feasible to undertake the analysis.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP noted that due to the constraints identified by the MIKE-ETIS TAG, the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, and the Secretariat in relation to the analysis outlined in Decision 19.99, it was not feasible to undertake the analysis.

**Illegal trade in cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*):** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.45](#).

KUWAIT, supported by CANADA, UAE, QATAR, and SAUDI ARABIA, suggested integrating matters relating to illegal trade in cheetahs into the CITES Big Cat Task Force under [CoP20 Doc.41](#). ETHIOPIA proposed amendments to the draft decisions to, *inter alia*, urge for stronger enforcement across the full supply chain.

The Secretariat agreed to prepare an in-session document compiling edits and a new draft decision based on Kuwait's suggestion which, if adopted, would go into CoP20 Doc.41.

On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced CoP20 Com.II.6, highlighting the additional draft decision proposed by Kuwait. The US, ETHIOPIA, and others opposed the additional decision, stressing that illegal trade in cheetahs differs from other big cats and requires standalone work. The EU proposed a compromise to avoid duplication of work with the CITES Big Cats Task Force, which was accepted.

Committee II accepted the amended decisions in the document, without the new draft decision proposed by Kuwait.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended in CoP20 Com.II.6, but did not adopt the new decision in the latter.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, among others, encourages Parties affected by illegal trade in cheetahs to make every effort to fully implement the recommendations outlined in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document.

**Marine turtles (*Cheloniidae* spp. and *Dermochelyidae* spp.):** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.46](#), drawing attention to the Secretariat's edits to, *inter alia*, adjust terminology to reflect the development stages of marine turtles.

FIJI stated that the illegal take of marine turtles was "not only an ecological harm but a cultural violation."

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The amendments to Resolution Conf.19.5 on conservation of and trade in marine turtles include recommending to affected Parties to take all necessary actions to prevent illegal trade in marine turtles, including through addressing its drivers

and developing and implementing evidence-based strategies, in engagement with Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other stakeholders.

**Tortoises and freshwater turtles (*Testudines* spp.):** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.47.1](#) and [CoP20 Doc.47.2](#) on trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles from Madagascar.

PANAMA, with the US, suggested an additional draft decision on preparing a report proposing country-specific recommendations to address illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, and agreed to prepare an in-session document.

Committee II adopted the amendments to Resolution Conf.11.9 (Rev. CoP18) on conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, noted the report from Madagascar, and agreed on the draft decisions as consolidated by the Secretariat and with amendments from the floor.

On 3 December in Committee II, PANAMA introduced CoP20 Com.II.11, which was accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification to Parties to collect information on implementation of Resolution Conf.11.9 (Rev. CoP18) and, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, in collaboration with members of the ICCWC, the Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and other relevant experts prepare a report to SC82;
- directs affected Parties to establish national level strategic partnerships that include subnational governments to collaborate across relevant sectors to combat illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles; and
- requests Madagascar to seek financial support and technical assistance, as needed, through the Parties, the Secretariat, and relevant conservation partners for the implementation of the decision.

## Regulation of Trade

**Proposal to amend Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19):** On 29 November in Committee II, CAMEROON introduced [CoP20 Doc.48](#), highlighting the importance of amending Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on permits and certificates to address issues related to delays.

Chair Wong noted the Secretariat's comments on the document, which JAPAN, UAE, CANADA, and others supported. The US, supported by the EU, MALAYSIA, AUSTRALIA, and others opposed, underscoring that an export permit does not guarantee legality.

Committee II established a working group.

On 3 December, the US introduced CoP20 Com.II.13, including the draft decision to address concerns regarding stricter domestic measures.

Citing insufficient time for discussion, CAMEROON, supported by GABON, proposed to include language on clear and predictable deadlines and to delete reference to fulfilling obligations related to stricter domestic measures. The US and the EU opposed.

Committee II agreed to the document without amendment, following a vote of 71 for, 17 against, and 13 abstentions.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP recommends that Parties with stricter domestic measures ensure that administrative formalities and regulatory procedures required for the implementation of such measures are undertaken in a timely and efficient manner.

**Legal acquisition findings (LAFs):** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.49](#).

BRAZIL, on behalf of ARGENTINA, BELIZE, COLOMBIA, and others, and supported by MEXICO, called for incorporating draft guidance on LAFs as an amendment to Resolution Conf.18.7 (Rev. CoP19) instead of as a standalone posting on the CITES website, disagreed with the document as it stood, and supported the term “founder stock.” CHINA, CANADA, and the EU called for the SC to establish an intersessional working group to reach an agreed definition for “founder stock.” NEW ZEALAND, supported by AUSTRALIA, suggested referring to “the generation taken from the wild as the original founding stock.” The US and the EU suggested additional draft decisions.

The Secretariat said they would prepare an in-session document compiling proposed new edits and draft decisions for further discussion.

On 2 December, Chair Wong introduced CoP20 Com.II.2, and Parties made extensive recommendations. BRAZIL suggested reopening the draft “Guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental/breeding stock” to include language on founder stock, where relevant. CANADA, the UK, and JAPAN opposed.

Committee II first voted to reopen discussion of the draft guidance, with 38 in favor, 29 against, and 10 abstaining; and, with a second vote of 52 in favor, 9 against, and 15 abstaining, to re-include discussion of founder stock as relevant.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- invites Parties to continue using and provide feedback on their use of the Rapid Guide for making legal acquisition findings to the Secretariat;
- directs the Secretariat to continue organizing workshops and other capacity-building activities on LAFs, and report to the SC on progress in implementing Resolution Conf.18.7 (Rev. CoP20); and
- directs the SC to establish an intersessional working group to consider guidance on chain of custody, consider resolutions on artificially propagated specimens and species bred in captivity, and report its conclusions and any additional guidance to CoP21.

**Non-detriment findings (NDFs):** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.50](#).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopts the draft decisions in Annex I of CoP20 Doc.50, which, *inter alia*, invite Parties to share feedback on the use of CITES NDF guidance in order for the Secretariat to provide draft amendments to said guidance.

**NDFs for species of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.51](#) with draft decisions on introduction from the sea.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP agrees to consider the draft decisions to address the relevant recommendations and implementation matters raised at the technical workshop on NDFs for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction.

**Introduction from the sea:** On 29 November in Committee I, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.52](#), noting proposed amendments by the Secretariat.

JAPAN, AUSTRALIA, and others supported the document. The EU proposed deleting draft decision 20.BB and including a new paragraph for draft decision 20.AA on submitting the report of the outcome of information received from implementation to SC81.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the Secretariat to monitor the implementation of Resolution Conf.14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on introduction from the sea;
- requests Parties to submit information on applicable legislation and regulations; and
- directs the SC, subject to available resources, to prepare guidance on introduction from the sea.

**Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species:** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.53](#).

The US proposed adding “including guidance on referencing such materials on CITES-checklist of species.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification to Parties to share information on identification materials for CITES specimens, challenges, and gaps;
- directs the AC and PC to establish a working group on identification materials to review Parties’ information and prepare a selection of identification materials to be reviewed and prioritized; and
- directs Parties to support the working group by providing relevant materials to the Secretariat.

**Identification of timber and other wood products:** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.54 Add.](#), noting it was a revision of CoP20 Doc.54 that updates the decisions.

The US proposed adding a reference to enforcement authorities and the UK to geographic origin. INDIA encouraged Parties to adopt a regional, inclusive, and technology-driven approach to implementation.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs Parties to prioritize the development of identification material for priority CITES-listed tree species and look-alike species that may not be of conservation concern;
- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification to Parties to provide information to the Secretariat relating to priorities for CITES-listed tree species and frontline information for timber identification, and make this information available on the CITES website; and
- directs the PC and relevant stakeholders to prioritize CITES-listed tree species for which identification materials, databases, and tools should be developed.

**Purpose-of-transaction codes:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.55](#).

Purpose-of-transaction codes lay out reasons for transactions of species between countries (i.e. commercial, scientific, etc.). Parties disagreed on the proposed definition of [purpose-of-transaction code](#) “P” (personal) as well as on the mandate of an intersessional working group. They eventually agreed that the working group should consider purpose-of-transaction codes “P” and “B” (Breeding

in captivity or artificial propagation) as priorities, noting that code “Z” (zoo) has already been defined, but may need minor amendments.

Committee II did not agree to amendments to Annex I of Resolution Conf.12.3 and adopted the draft decisions of purpose-of-transaction codes with the above amendments.

The US, supported by CHINA, introduced several amendments as contained in [CoP20 Inf.79](#). The EU, with the UK, CANADA, and NEW ZEALAND, proposed developing a guidance instead of revising Resolution Conf.14.6 (Rev. CoP16). Noting that such work is part of the core mandate of the Convention, AUSTRALIA, supported by the UK, proposed replacing “subject to external funds” to “subject to available resources.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the SC to re-establish an intersessional joint working group to review the use of purpose-of-transaction codes by Parties, focusing on clearly defining purpose-of-transaction codes to encourage their consistent use.

**Electronic systems and information technologies and authentication and control of permits:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.56.1](#) and SWITZERLAND introduced [CoP20 Doc.56.2](#).

BAHRAIN, supported by UAE and RUSSIAN FEDERATION, proposed an amendment to ensure the feasibility study would address, *inter alia*, legal and cyber-security concerns, and stressed that any hub should be voluntary. The US proposed an additional decision to consider technical options related to implementation of nomenclatural changes.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the documents as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs Parties to use the CITES electronic permitting toolkit and relevant guidelines in implementing electronic CITES systems, sharing experience and challenges with other Parties, and maintain reliable backup systems to ensure continuity of electronic permits systems;
- directs the SC to provide recommendations on the Secretariat’s assessment at CoP21, monitor and advise Parties on traceability systems for CITES-listed species; and
- directs the Secretariat to, subject to extrabudgetary resource availability, assess the long-term technical and financial feasibility of a hub model for CITES electronic permit data exchange, and provide capacity-building and advisory services to support Parties interested in implementing electronic solutions for CITES permit and certificate management.

**Review of Resolution Conf.8.13 (Rev. CoP17) on Use of coded-microchip implants for marking live animals in trade:** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.57](#), noting the proposal by the Secretariat to include “subject to external resources.”

INDIA, supported by the US and GABON, proposed issuing a notification to Parties to seek comments on the draft guidance document. The UK, supported by NIGERIA, suggested accounting for existing materials when developing the guidance.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to prepare an overview of resolutions on marking, and develop guidance on various issues in relation to marking;
- directs the AC to consider the overview and draft guidance and submit its recommendations to the SC for consideration; and

- directs the SC to consider the overview and draft guidance and the AC’s recommendations to submit its own recommendations to the CoP for CoP21.

**Risk assessment and analysis for border control of CITES-listed species:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.58](#).

The UK suggested bringing the substance of soon-to-be deleted Decision 19.153, on integrating risk profiles into broader national customs risk management systems, into the text of the resolution. KYRGYZSTAN requested two additional draft decisions: recommending that Parties unofficially translate inspection and risk assessment guidelines for CITES trade controls; and, with the US’ amendment, encourage Parties to share information on lessons learned.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties to undertake risk assessments to develop risk profiles for CITES-listed specimens; and
- directs the Secretariat to work with the World Customs Organization to develop guidance on a risk-based analysis of inspection and analysis under CITES permit issuing systems.

**Stocks and stockpiles:** On 29 November, in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.59](#), noting the comments of the Secretariat.

BRAZIL opposed restricting the definition of privately held stockpiles to only those specified in a resolution or decision. INDIA noted that the definition should distinguish between stockpiles for species in different CITES Appendices. The UK and others noted that museums should be included on the list of exemptions. BENIN, TOGO, BURKINA FASO, and others asserted that seized and confiscated specimens still under an enforcement procedure should be deleted in the exemptions list in the definition.

Committee II established a drafting group.

On 3 December, the UK introduced CoP20 Com.II.14 and proposed a minor amendment.

BENIN, supported by KENYA, NIGERIA, and others, proposed to add a 100-kilogram threshold for seized or confiscated specimens. AUSTRALIA, the US, and the EU opposed. With a vote of 18 for, 82 against, and 10 abstentions, the amendment was not accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Com.II.14 as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopted the definition of stockpiles as laid out in CoP20 Com.II.14 and amended in Committee II by the UK.

**Transport of live specimens:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.60](#), noting the Secretariat’s recommendation not to adopt the draft decision due to limited Party uptake of negotiated IATA discount codes.

The UK, supported by CANADA and the US, suggested identifying alternative options or mechanisms to give management authorities ongoing IATA regulations access. The ASSOCIATION OF ZOOS AND AQUARIUMS, supported by the US and CANADA, proposed adding reference to “the regulated community.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat to work with IATA to make access codes available at nominal costs or for free to management and enforcement authorities.

**Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.61](#).

The UK, supported by the EU, JAPAN, CANADA, and others, proposed extending the validity period of musical instrument certificates from three to ten years. The US preferred, and Parties agreed, to add a subparagraph to the draft decisions that would, *inter alia*, have the intersessional working group consider the validity period.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to request Parties to describe individual implementation arrangements for exemptions and simplification procedures for the rapid movement of wildlife samples and musical instruments, identifying implementation challenges, and make results available to the SC;
- directs the Secretariat to develop, for the CITES website, a new webpage and register of rapid movement of wildlife samples for diagnostic and/or conservation purposes, and a new webpage and register on non-commercial movement of musical instruments;
- directs the Secretariat to develop simplified guidance materials on the above topics; and
- directs the SC to review the simplified guidance.

**Specimens produced through biotechnology:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.62](#).

The US proposed removing the list of potential invited organizations for discussions on trade in biotechnology products. Following opposition, the US suggested only removing the World Health Organization, but this was not accepted. On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the SC, in close collaboration with the AC and PC, to continue discussing trade in biotechnology products that might affect trade in CITES-listed specimens; communicate matters requiring scientific advice to the AC and PC; and make recommendations for consideration at CoP21;
- directs the AC and PC to provide relevant scientific advice and guidance on these matters to the SC; and
- directs the Secretariat to convene a meeting to facilitate the discussions described above, subject to the availability of external funds.

**Definition of the term ‘appropriate and acceptable destinations’:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.63](#), submitted by the SC in consultation with the AC.

The EU recalled that the AC has further identified the need to clarify language related to re-export of elephants that have been kept *ex situ*, outside of range states. INDIA proposed shortening the timeframe for the issuance of the notification to Parties from one year to six months to allow for Party feedback to be considered at the 81st meeting of the AC. The Secretariat explained that this was not feasible as decisions come into force only after three months.

Committee II accepted the document, and on 4 December, the CoP adopted it.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification inviting feedback on experience with using guidance documents related to this topic, and report back;
- directs the AC to review this report and make appropriate recommendations to the SC; and
- directs the SC to review this report and the AC’s recommendations and make appropriate recommendations for CoP21.

**Disposal of confiscated specimens:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong indicated that [CoP20 Doc.64.1](#) and [CoP20 Doc.64.3](#) would be considered together.

On the amendments to Resolution Conf.17.8 (Rev. CoP19), ISRAEL suggested specifying “registered” commercial facilities. The EU, AUSTRALIA, and SENEGAL expressed concern that there may not be sufficient registered facilities. The US suggested a compromise of “preferably registered,” which was accepted.

On the renewal of decisions on the disposal of confiscated specimens, the US introduced CoP20 Doc.64.3 and [CoP20 Inf.78](#). MALAYSIA, the EU, SOUTH AFRICA, and others opposed the establishment of a voluntary register of placement facilities, given that this issue is already addressed by Annex 3 to the resolution.

On the insertion of a new paragraph 7 in the resolution, the EU proposed an amendment to clarify that relevant authorities can request financial support. The US emphasized the need to capture costs associated with care and transport. The UK proposed an edit to ensure support could be proactively provided. Chair Wong proposed a compromise, which was accepted.

KENYA introduced [CoP20 Doc.64.2](#), including a proposal to delete the word “disposal” from the title of Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species and replace it with the word “custody.”

UAE, MEXICO, the EU, and others opposed replacing “disposal” with “custody,” underscoring that the change would require significant changes in national legislation.

Committee II:

- agreed to the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.17.8 (Rev. CoP19) contained in CoP20 Doc.64.1, as further amended by the Secretariat and on the floor;
- rejected the draft decisions in CoP20 Doc.64.3;
- agreed to retain decisions 19.169, 19.171, and 19.173, without the proposed amendments in Inf.78;
- accepted the new paragraph 7 of the resolution, as amended by the Secretariat and on the floor; and
- rejected the proposal to replace “disposal” but agreed to the Secretariat’s proposed amendments to Annex 1, Option 1(e) in the resolution.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP agreed to the committee’s recommendations as described above. It also:

- directs the Secretariat to continue collecting information on the management of seized and confiscated live animals, and report to the SC; and
- invites Parties and relevant stakeholders to share information with the Secretariat on existing networks and resources on seized and confiscated live animal management.

**Labelling system for trade in caviar:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.65](#), which was accepted.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP noted the report on the use of QR codes in the application of the CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar and the recommendations of the SC on this issue.

**Trade in stony corals:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.66.1](#) including revised decisions, new decisions, and amendments to Resolution Conf.11.10 (Rev. Cop15) on trade in stony corals.

Expressing concern with the definition of “substrate” in the amended resolution, the EUROPEAN PET ORGANIZATION, on behalf of other organizations and supported by INDONESIA and FIJI, requested an amendment to the revised decision directing the SC to make recommendations on possible amendments to the resolution, rather than its annex only. NEW ZEALAND, supported by CANADA, AUSTRALIA, and the UK, asked to restrict the amendments to the issue of substrate.

Chair Lörtscher suggested limiting the amendment to include the word “substrate” in the decision, which was accepted.

AUSTRALIA introduced [CoP20 Doc.66.2](#) containing proposed amendments to the definitions contained in Annex 1 of Resolution Conf.11.10 (Rev. CoP15) and suggested an additional amendment to ensure alignment with Resolution Conf.10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on specimens of animal species bred in captivity. The US objected, proposing instead to continue discussion on this matter during the intersessional period. The US also proposed, but did not receive support for, an additional amendment to include reference to “subsequent generations” in line with Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on permits and certificates.

Committee I agreed to CoP20 Doc.66.1 as amended, and to CoP20 Doc.66.2 as amended by AUSTRALIA.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the documents.

**Final Outcome:** The COP, *inter alia*:

- directs the AC to consider information provided in the annex of AC33 Doc.24 and report to CoP21;
- directs the SC to make further recommendations as necessary on possible amendments to the definition of live coral in the annex to Resolution Conf.11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on trade in stony corals;
- invites Parties to implement the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports on illegal trade when issuing CITES documents;
- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification inviting Parties to share experiences in implementing the guidelines; and
- adopts the amendments to Resolution Conf.11.10 (Rev. CoP15) contained in Annex 1 of CoP20 Doc.66.2.

### **Exemptions and Special Trade Provisions**

**Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source: Report of the Standing Committee:**

On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.67.1](#).

The US and ISRAEL opposed the draft decisions, which would establish an intersessional workshop, but did not break consensus. Committee II agreed to the document with minor amendments.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the Secretariat to develop terms of reference and modus operandi for a technical workshop on the review of trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animals and plants not of wild source; share these for comment by Parties; and prepare the workshop; and
- directs the SC to consider the workshop report and submit recommendations to CoP21.

**Considerations and recommendations for ranching of aquatic species:** On 2 December in Committee II, the US introduced [CoP20 Doc.67.2](#).

The EU, supported by HONDURAS, requested extending the decisions to terrestrial species. The UK, CANADA, and others opposed, citing the AC’s workload.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the AC to consider the current definition of “ranching” and its application to aquatic species, and whether new guidance would be appropriate, reporting on the outcome to the SC; and
- directs the SC to consider the recommendations proposed above and pass them on for consideration at CoP21.

**Review of Resolution Conf.12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Registration of operations that breed Appendix I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.68](#).

MEXICO, supported by CHINA, SWITZERLAND, and others, and opposed by the US, requested deletion of the reference to the SC in the amended paragraph 5(h) of Resolution Conf.12.10 (Rev. CoP15). The EU, the UK, and UAE suggested other amendments.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopted the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.12.10 (Rev. CoP15).

**Guidance of the term “artificially propagated”:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.69](#).

FIJI requested a new draft decision encouraging Parties to verify and document the legal origins of parental stock for specimens produced under source codes A (artificially propagated plants, non-commercial/general) or Y (signifies plants from “assisted production”) and requested reference to the use of source code Y.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to maintain the Guidance on terms related to the artificial propagation of CITES-regulated plants and the Guide to the application of CITES source codes as living documents;
- encourages Parties to use these guidance documents to provide feedback to the Secretariat;
- directs the PC to review and approve any revisions of these guidance documents, and to analyze and identify potential inconsistencies on the use of source code D (artificially propagated Appendix-I plants for commercial purposes) in Res. Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19), Res. Conf.9.19 (Rev. CoP15), and Res. Conf.11.11 (Rev. CoP18).

**Use of phytosanitary certificates as certificates of artificial propagation:** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.70](#), which was rejected due to overwhelming lack of support.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP did not adopt the document.

### **Species Conservation and Trade**

**Assessment of Appendix I-listed species:** On 26 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.71](#).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP notes the report and the recommendations by the AC and PC and deletes Decisions 19.184 and 19.185.

**Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade:** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.72](#), highlighting the Secretariat’s amendments.

JAPAN, KUWAIT, and CHINA disagreed with the draft decision establishing the proposed webpage, citing concerns over the reliability of the information that Parties might post on it. CANADA suggested amendments to eliminate the involvement of the SC. CHINA, supported by JAPAN and GABON, suggested that range states should be consulted before information on endemic species is posted, while the UK and the EU said this was not feasible. KUWAIT, supported by CANADA, suggested deleting draft decision 20.CC on inviting intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other experts to share information with Parties.

Committee I agreed to the draft decisions as amended by the Secretariat except for 20.AA (d), 20.CC, and 20.DD, which were deleted, and established a drafting group to find agreement on 20.BB.

On 3 December in Committee I, the UK introduced CoP20 Com.I.5, prepared by the drafting group on the basis of [CoP20 Doc.72](#). They noted that the updates related to three key themes: greater transparency; safeguards for information not publicly available; and reviewing mechanisms.

MEXICO, supported by the US, proposed that Parties should be able to upload directly to the CITES website. CHINA noted that Parties should refer to the mechanism developed in relation to uploading information for possible inclusion on the CITES website.

Committee I accepted the draft decisions included in CoP20 Com.I.5 as amended.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to develop a dedicated page where Parties can upload material related to species at risk of extinction and their look-alikes;
- invites Parties to upload information on methodologies, information, or analysis on species and taxa at risk of extinction, prioritizing best available data;
- invites intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and other experts to submit similar information above; and
- directs the SC to review progress on implementing decisions 20.AA-20.CC.

**Trade in endemic species:** On 29 November in Committee II, BRAZIL introduced [CoP20 Doc.73](#) and a new set of draft decisions in [CoP20 Inf.56](#), which take into consideration the Secretariat's comments and aim to, *inter alia*, ensure that states of origin of endemic species are consulted regarding potential transactions.

NEW ZEALAND, supported by PAPUA NEW GUINEA and SAMOA, suggested amendments to the draft decisions in CoP20 Inf.56 to involve the AC and PC in investigating and providing input on endemic species. The US suggested amendments to pare down the scope of work in draft decisions. Noting they did not support a proposed study on trade in threatened endemic species listed in Appendix I and II, they suggested new draft decisions.

Committee II established a working group to revise and consolidate the draft decisions.

On 3 December, AUSTRALIA introduced CoP20 Com.II.12, noting square brackets in the first draft decision.

BRAZIL offered compromise language involving founder stock such that guidance would consider discussions from the intersessional working group.

The US recommended that a draft decision aimed at the Secretariat developing case studies should be redirected towards Parties, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, academia, and other relevant stakeholders. FIJI

opposed. After a vote of 84 in favor, 3 against, and 11 abstaining, Committee II reverted to the original draft decision language in CoP20 Com.II.12, and accepted the document with Brazil's compromise language.

Committee II accepted the document with the compromise language.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties to consult with the country of origin before issuing or accepting permits or certificates for specimens of CITES-listed endemic species;
- directs the Secretariat to commission a series of representative case studies on trade in CITES-listed endemic species, and present the case study findings to the SC with its recommendations; and
- directs the SC to advise on the terms of reference for the above case studies, assess the case studies, and make recommendations to CoP21 where appropriate.

### Fauna

**West African vultures (*Accipitridae* spp.):** On 25 November, Committee I approved document [CoP20 Doc.74](#). The EU encouraged West African range states to implement zero annual export quotas for all Appendix II vulture species.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- urges West African vulture range states to ensure that national laws for vulture protection are effectively implemented; to ensure that international trade in West African vultures is only allowed according to CITES requirements; and to work with relevant experts and organizations to implement demand reduction strategies as well as public awareness campaigns to ensure vulture protection;
- urges Parties, West African range states, and relevant intergovernmental organizations and NGOs to collaborate in West African vulture conservation and restoration by implementing related conservation plans, and exchange scientific knowledge and expertise on West African vultures; and
- requests that the Secretariat liaise with the CMS to support capacity-building activities for West African range states.

**Conservation of amphibians (*Amphibia* spp.):** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.75](#). The EU, opposed by INDONESIA, proposed the deletion of the draft decision on the development of conversion factors, which are ratios used to convert trade data for specimens (parts and derivatives) from one unit of measurement to another. SINGAPORE clarified that certain species for which Singapore is reported as a source of wild-caught specimens are non-native. BRAZIL, on behalf of several Parties, proposed amending the draft decision to ensure information collected on current levels of trade considers compatibility with conservation of the species in the wild.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- invites Parties to collect information on priority species identified in the revised species prioritization matrix and share it with the Secretariat;
- directs the Secretariat to update the prioritization matrix, develop a conversion factor table for CITES-listed amphibian species in trade, identify existing identification materials, and report its findings to the AC; and

- directs the AC to consider the above report and make recommendations to CoP21.

**Elephants (*Elephantidae* spp.): Implementation of Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on trade in elephant specimens:** On 27 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.1](#).

The EU, UK, KENYA, and others opposed deleting Decisions 19.36 and 19.37 and called for the renewal of these decisions to ensure continued funding for the MIKE and ETIS programmes.

Committee II agreed to:

- renew Decisions 19.35, 19.36, and 19.37, with a specific reference to ETIS included in Decision 19.36;
- adopt the amendments to Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on trade in elephant specimens; and
- adopt the draft decisions on management of stockpiles.

Committee II noted that: the new project funded by the EU will include a feasibility study and voluntary testing of data collection and reporting methods to monitor illegal killing for other CITES-listed species in Africa; and future funding from the EU would be contingent on the inclusion of data collection and reporting of multiple species.

It also noted the “List of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants” endorsed by the SC.

NIGERIA, BENIN, KENYA, and others supported the retention of a paragraph in Decision 18.226 (Rev. CoP20), which encourages Parties in the trade of Asian elephants to provide information on the implementation of the decision for reporting by the Secretariat to the SC.

Committee II agreed on draft decision 20.AA with an additional paragraph (c) for the reporting by the Secretariat, and to revise Decision 18.266 (Rev. CoP20) with the retention of paragraph (e).

NIGERIA, the UK, and others called to renew Decisions 19.107 and 19.108 on trade in Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*).

Committee II agreed to renew these decisions, noting the need to update cross-referencing to SC meetings, and to delete Decisions 19.102 and 19.103 on trade in mammoth ivory.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- requests Parties that have not closed domestic ivory markets to report to the Secretariat on the measures they are taking to do so;
- directs the Secretariat to compile these reports for the SC, which will consider them and report back at CoP21; and
- directs the Secretariat, subject to resources, to provide training support to Parties on management of stockpiles of CITES-listed specimens.

**Implementing aspects of Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on the closure of domestic ivory markets:** On 27 November, in Committee II, BURKINA FASO introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.2](#), submitted with Ethiopia, Niger, and Senegal.

JAPAN, with NEW ZEALAND, UAE, NAMIBIA, KUWAIT, and others, opposed the draft revised decisions on closure of domestic ivory markets proposed in CoP20 Doc.76.2, noting that directing states in matters relating to domestic markets is outside CITES’ mandate. The EU, ZIMBABWE, and THAILAND noted that the appropriate procedure to identify Parties of concern is through the NIAP process.

The UK, supported by the US, proposed deleting “unless the ETIS Data Aggregates indicate ivory seizures connected to them are

at negligible levels” in the call for Parties to submit a report pursuant to Decision 18.117 (Rev. CoP20).

Noting the comments of Senegal, Committee II did not agree to [CoP20 Doc.76.2](#).

**Final Outcome:** The CoP did not adopt the document.

**Ivory stocks and stockpiles:** On 27 November, in Committee II, KENYA introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.3](#), highlighting the renewal of draft decisions regarding unreported government-held, significant privately held, and poorly secured ivory stockpiles. Chair Wong clarified that since Committee II had already agreed on proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19) under agenda item 76.1, Committee II would now consider the remaining recommendations.

Many Parties supported renewing the decisions. The EU, along with ZIMBABWE, TANZANIA, and the US, did not see the value in renewing the decisions, citing the Secretariat’s workload, but the EU and US said they would not oppose.

On 5 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to identify Parties that have not provided information on government-held and significant privately held stocks of ivory, and report to the SC;
- directs the SC to consider whether further actions are necessary based on said report; and
- urges Parties to comply with CITES provisions on trade in elephant specimens.

**Report on MIKE:** On 26 November in Committee II, the Secretariat introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.4](#), calling on the Parties to take note of the document.

Many Parties commended the Secretariat for their efforts. UGANDA, SENEGAL, and others noted that data gaps continue to exist, and not all elephant sites are recognized. INDIA and KENYA proposed distinguishing human-elephant conflict-related deaths from the illegal killing of elephants.

**Final Outcome:** On Friday, 5 December, the CoP noted the document.

**Report on the ETIS:** On 26 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.5](#), prepared by the Secretariat with analysis and interpretation coordinated by TRAFFIC.

MALAYSIA, CHINA, SINGAPORE, and others expressed concerns on the methodology under the NIAP identification. UAE, supported by KUWAIT, QATAR, and others, proposed several textual amendments to improve data validation processes. The EU, with the US, opposed, noting that the issue of data validation should be addressed under [CoP20 Doc.42](#). The UK, with KENYA, noted the value added by the network analysis to complement cluster analysis, and proposed an amendment to Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19). SENEGAL proposed drafting a new decision to integrate network analysis within the NIAP process.

TRAFFIC expressed their willingness to work with Parties to improve the methodology and subject it to a peer-review process.

Committee II agreed to establish a working group.

On 3 December in Committee II, SINGAPORE introduced CoP20 Com.II.10, which was accepted.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the SC to consider matters contained in paragraph 6(b) to (g) of document SC78 Doc.65.5 on Exchange of information between the annual illegal trade report and ETIS, and make recommendations as necessary to CoP21;

- invites TRAFFIC, in consultation with the MIKE-ETIS TAG, subject to availability of external funding, to subject the network analysis methodology to the scientific peer-review process and share any resulting publication to the Secretariat for onward submission to the SC; and
- directs the SC to review the publication by the Secretariat, to make recommendations as to the inclusion and role of the network analysis in ETIS reports for the CoP, and to provide guidance on how the ETIS analytical outputs should inform Party-specific compliance measures, including NIAP participation.

**Results of the African elephant dialogue meeting:** On 27 November in Committee II Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.6](#). On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP welcomed the outcome of the African elephant range state dialogue meeting, as set out in the Communiqué of the meeting, and agreed to the deletion of Decisions 19.167 and 19.168.

**Sustainable financing for the African elephant conservation and management:** On 27 November in Committee II, ZIMBABWE introduced [CoP20 Doc.76.7](#), highlighting draft decisions on sustainable financing for the conservation and management of African elephants.

ZIMBABWE called for a vote on the proposal from KENYA and BENIN to establish an in-session drafting group to refine draft decision 20.AA(b) on convening a technical workshop for African elephant range states to consider mechanisms for sustainable management of elephants and ivory stockpiles. Committee II established a drafting group.

On 3 December, ZIMBABWE introduced CoP20 Com.II.3 and proposed a further amendment to specify that the workshop would consider mechanisms for “sustainable financing.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat, in consultation with the African elephant range states and the SC through its Chair, to convene a technical workshop for African elephant range states to consider mechanisms for sustainable financing for management of elephants and ivory stockpiles, and to invite to the technical workshop, relevant experts and financial institutions as identified, agreed to and approved by the range states;
- invites African elephant range states to provide the necessary background information needed for the workshop;
- encourages all CITES Parties to report the status of stockpiles as of December 2025 pursuant to Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP19); and
- directs the SC to review the draft terms of reference for engaging a consultant to consolidate the background technical information for the technical workshop, consider the results, and propose the way forward to CoP21.

**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:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.77.1](#).

The US, supported by the EU, proposed to amend Resolution Conf.12.5 (Rev. CoP19): to include information provided by transit and consumer states; to capture the entire trade chain in addition to range states; and, subject to external funding, for the Secretariat, with the Chairs of the SC and AC, to commission a report to the CoP on the status of Asian big cats in the wild. CHINA opposed,

asserting that the information provided by range states is sufficient. Many Parties opposed deleting Decision 18.105, which directed Parties to address illegal trade in leopard parts and derivatives. CHINA supported the deletion.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP retains Decision 18.105 and instructs the Secretariat to report to the SC and CoP on the status of Asian big cats in the wild, their conservation, and trade controls in place in Parties, using information provided by the range, transit and consumer states on measures taken. The CoP instructs the Secretariat, subject to external funding and in consultation with the AC and PC through their Chairs, to commission the report to the CoP.

**Asian big cats in captivity:** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.77.2](#), noting that the Secretariat added comments to delete reference to Decision 14.69.

The EU proposed revising the language on the draft decisions on tigers (*Panthera tigris*) in captivity. The PHILIPPINES noted that the term “large numbers” remains undefined, which may result in potential inconsistencies. RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by CHINA, called to delete reference to euthanasia.

INDIA, NEPAL, the US, and others opposed deleting reference to Decision 14.69.

Committee II agreed to: note the report and recommendation of the SC; adopt the draft decisions as amended by the EU and Russian Federation; retain reference to Decision 14.69; and delete the remaining decisions.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP encourages Parties in whose territories there are facilities breeding or housing tigers for purposes other than conservation breeding programmes, to, among others, consider taking the methodical approach in the decision regarding these facilities to improve their conservation and education value, in accordance with their domestic legislation. The CoP encourages all governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and NGOs to urgently provide funds and other assistance to Parties with such facilities.

**Great apes (*Hominidae* spp.):** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.78.1](#) and UGANDA introduced [CoP20 Doc.78.2](#), highlighting draft decisions on the re-establishment of a CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force. The Chair noted that the Secretariat had proposed, in CoP20 Doc.78.2, an alternative set of draft decisions.

Noting the additional Secretariat workload that would be involved in re-establishing a CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force, KUWAIT and several other Parties supported the Secretariat’s draft decisions. SENEGAL, the EU, the US, and others supported the draft decisions proposed by range states, with the US and MALAYSIA suggesting edits.

Committee II noted CoP20 Doc.78.1 and established a drafting group for CoP20 Doc.78.2.

On 3 December, UGANDA introduced CoP20 Com.II.7.

The UK requested language “urging” rather than “encouraging” Parties. RWANDA requested language on consulting range states.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties affected by illegal trade in great apes to, among others, prioritize the disposal of live confiscated specimens to the country of origin or if that is not possible to an accredited sanctuary within the natural range of the species and

avoid trade in live specimens sourced from the wild, confiscated, or of unknown origin (source codes W, I and U) other than in exceptional circumstances;

- encourages Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations and other entities to support CITES Parties in efforts to repatriate species;
- directs the Secretariat, in consultation with range states and the SC Chair, to draft terms of reference and modus operandi for a CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force and submit them to SC81 for review and feedback. The Task Force will focus on specific challenges with enforcement in combating the illegal international trade in live great apes; and
- directs SC81 to consider the draft terms of reference and modus operandi prepared by the Secretariat, and provide feedback and revisions, and report on the implementation and any relevant recommendations to CoP21.

**Pangolins (*Manis spp.*): Implementation of Resolution Conf.17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on Conservation of and trade in pangolins:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.79.1](#).

INDIA proposed moving the deadline for reporting of the level of stocks to 31 October to maintain uniformity with the reporting of annual illegal trade data. The US, supported by the UK and the EU proposed aligning the reporting dates to before 28 February for the sake of consistency. CHINA suggested using the aggregated summary of pangolin stockpile declarations of Parties with their permission. The US, supported by the EU, highlighted, *inter alia*, the need to include time-bound and measurable recommendations.

Committee II established a working group to look at the draft decisions.

On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced CoP20 Com.II.8.

CHINA requested, among others, additional language outlining “feasible and proportionate” as well as time-bound and measurable considerations, taking into consideration Party capacities.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document and CoP20 Com.II.8, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties in whose territories pangolin specimen stockpiles exist to fully implement paragraph 3 of Resolution Conf.17.10 (Rev. CoP19) to ensure that strict control measures are in place and maintained to secure these stockpiles and duly report to the Secretariat;
- requests the Secretariat to take into consideration the capacity of the Party concerned, suggest time-bound and measurable recommendations directed to Parties (range, transit and consumer countries), as appropriate, for consideration by SC82; and
- instructs the Secretariat, prior to each CoP meeting and pending external funding, to prepare a report in consultation with the pangolin range states and Parties affected by illegal trade in pangolins, on the conservation status of pangolins in the wild and measures put in place by Parties.

**Report on Decisions:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.79.2](#), noting comments from the Secretariat including on a proposal to invite the IUCN to further develop conversion parameters for all pangolin species.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to report to the AC any updates from the IUCN Species Survival Commission Pangolin Specialist Group

and other relevant experts and in collaboration with the pangolin range states on the further development of conversion parameters for all pangolin species;

- directs the AC to review the conversion parameters for all pangolin species, developed in line with the provisions and reported under the decisions, and make recommendations as appropriate; and
- encourages Parties and relevant stakeholders to support pangolin range states with resources to implement in-situ pangolin conservation and management programmes and the IUCN to further develop conversion parameters for all pangolin species.

**African Lions (*Panthera leo*):** On 25 November, Committee I agreed to the amendments in the revised draft decisions set out in [CoP20 Doc.80 \(Rev.1\)](#) with some additions: the EU suggested specific reference to reviewing a report on the comparative study of African lion population trends, and to add a sub-decision for Parties to undertake national population counts where necessary. The US supported CONSERVATION FORCE’s suggestion that these be population “estimates.”

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the AC to review any relevant update of the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa that relate to the AC’s mandate that has been brought to their attention by the Secretariat, and to review the report on the comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices with special attention to gaps in population data highlighted in the study, and information reported by the Secretariat and submit recommendations to the Secretariat, SC, and African lion range states, as appropriate; and
- encourages Parties to undertake national population estimates where necessary to enable proper monitoring and drafting NDFs and increase enforcement efforts to detect illegal, unreported or misreported trade in specimens of African lion and other big cats.

**Jaguars (*Panthera onca*):** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.81](#) and MEXICO introduced [CoP20 Doc.81.Add](#) on the outcomes of the second meeting of the jaguar range states in September 2025.

CANADA proposed amendments to the draft resolution to encourage Parties to consider limiting the breeding of jaguars to serve a clearly defined, nationally determined conservation purpose, and to clarify that the SC should provide input on, but not determine, the terms of reference and modalities for the operationalization of the Intergovernmental Platform for jaguars.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the CoP20 Doc.81.Add as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages jaguar range states and other Parties, as relevant, to actively implement the Regional Action Plan for Jaguar Conservation developed at the second jaguar range states meeting;
- directs the Secretariat, subject to availability of extrabudgetary resources and within the mandate of CITES to identify relevant activities in the Regional Action Plan for Jaguar Conservation; and
- directs the SC to provide inputs on the terms of reference of the Steering Committee of the Intergovernmental Platform for jaguars.

**Guidance on NDFs for trade in leopard (*Panthera pardus*) hunting trophies:** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.82](#).

The EU, supported by UGANDA, proposed several amendments and a new decision to facilitate information sharing on the making of NDFs with importing countries. The US recommended that CITES NDF guidance modules incorporate best practices. BOTSWANA expressed concern about the financial implications of the proposed amendments.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, directs:

- the Secretariat, subject to external resources and as part of the ACI, to support range states, upon request, to consolidate existing information relating to the management and monitoring of leopard and hunting quotas and assist Parties in the making of non-detriment findings for trade in leopard hunting trophies in compliance with Resolution Conf.10.14 (Rev. CoP19); and
- Parties that have quotas for leopard hunting trophies established under Resolution Conf.10.14 (Rev. CoP19) to consolidate information and share with leopard range states through the ACI, as well as other relevant Parties, in particular importing countries, as appropriate.

**Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes spp.):** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.83](#).

MALAYSIA, INDIA, and NIGERIA supported the document. BRAZIL, supported by NEW ZEALAND and COLOMBIA, and opposed by the US and CANADA, proposed a set of new draft decisions ([CoP20 Inf.52](#)) to ensure continued implementation of the recommendations from the technical workshop. The EU proposed similar draft decisions. JAPAN said there was insufficient time for consideration. Committee I formed a drafting group.

On 29 November, BRAZIL presented the new decisions as agreed by the drafting group (CoP20 Com.I.2).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.2, with a minor amendment by Japan.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- encourages Parties to make use of the information and implement the recommendations contained in document AC33 Doc.39 and the annex of CoP20 Doc.83 that resulted from the technical workshop on songbird trade and conservation;
- directs the Secretariat to issue notifications to Parties, make recommendations and other relevant information available on the CITES website, and report to the AC;
- directs the AC to consider and review information and recommendations and prioritize actions it considers most urgent and report to CoP21; and
- encourages Parties and relevant stakeholders to collaborate and consider funding the implementation of the decision and support the preparation of further listing proposals for songbirds.

**Rhinoceroses (*Rhinocerotidae* spp.):** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.84](#).

The US, supported by KENYA, proposed amendments to establish an intersessional working group and to direct Indonesia to report on implementation. The UAE, CHINA, MALAYSIA, and others opposed.

Committee II agreed to the document as amended by the US, but without the proposal to establish the working group.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, among others:

- encourages Parties where illegal markets for rhinoceros horn exist to develop programmes targeted at key identified audiences, taking into consideration the provisions in Resolution Conf.17.4 (Rev. CoP19) on “Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species” and taking advantage of the experience and expertise developed in other jurisdictions and by other organizations;
- encourages Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and associated trafficking to fully implement the strategies and proposed actions outlined in the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting outcome document, as relevant, and to report on the implementation to the Secretariat; and
- encourages Indonesia to strengthen measures and carry out activities to monitor and protect its Javan rhinoceroses (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) population, to regularly review these measures and activities, and to report on the implementation of this decision to the Secretariat.

**Saiga antelope (*Saiga spp.*):** On 28 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced the report of the Secretariat (CoP20 Doc.85.1(Rev.2) and KAZAKHSTAN introduced CoP20 Doc.85.2, submitted with the Russian Federation.

For [CoP20 Doc.85.1\(Rev.2\)](#), CHINA disagreed with deleting a reference to international cooperation. The US, supported by the UK, called to retain “collaborate in the conservation and restoration” of saiga antelopes. UZBEKISTAN proposed including documentation of stockpile volumes.

For [CoP20 Doc.85.2](#), Chair Wong noted the amendment to Decision 19.213 (Rev. CoP20) proposed by the Secretariat to include, where possible, the origin of the saiga species. JAPAN opposed the deletion of source code “Unknown” (U). The EU proposed including source code “Pre-Convention specimens” (O). CANADA, supported by the US, opposed directing management authorities on how to conduct their activities. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION underscored that saiga antelopes have clearly defined geographical boundaries, which makes source code U inadequate to regulate trade.

On 29 November, Chair Wong re-opened the discussion. Committee II established a drafting group to consider the recommendation to eliminate the use of source code U to trade in saiga antelope parts and derivatives for commercial purposes.

On 3 December, KAZAKHSTAN introduced CoP20 Com.II.9, which Committee II accepted with minor amendments from the US.

Chair Wong then re-opened [CoP20 Doc.85.1\(Rev.2\)](#). The EU introduced a number of edits, including: referring to saiga horns rather than “parts” or “specimens”; a new subparagraph encouraging Parties to exchange information; and a new draft decision urging saiga range states to evaluate the impact of trade in wild saiga following CoP20, and report on the established monitoring and reporting system and on how revenue from legal saiga horn trade is used to support conservation. CHINA requested that range states be “encouraged” to establish internal market controls, while the EU preferred “request.” The US requested language to ensure coverage of the entire trade chain. The UK requested language encouraging extrabudgetary funding for the Secretariat.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Doc.85.1(Rev.2), CoP20 Doc.85.2, and CoP20 Com.II.9, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs, among others, all Parties trading in specimens of saiga antelope species to:

- take all possible measures to establish the origin of saiga antelope horn to be exported and re-exported from countries outside the saiga range;
- not apply source code U to trade in saiga antelope specimens;
- strictly apply source code O, which applies only to saiga antelope specimens removed from the wild prior to 16 February 1995, and should limit its application only to specimens from stockpiles reported to the Secretariat; and
- exercise due diligence in reviewing requests to trade in saiga antelope specimens with source code U or O.

The CoP urges further range states and consumer and trading countries of saiga parts and derivatives, *inter alia*, to establish internal market controls for saiga horns, register the number and volume of stockpiles and the provenance of saiga horns held in them, and label horns and products.

### Aquatic Species

**Aquatic species listed in the CITES Appendices:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.86](#).

**Outcome:** On 5 December, the CoP noted the report.

**Eels:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.87](#) containing a draft resolution on trade, conservation, and management of anguillid eel species (*Anguilla* spp.) and draft decisions.

The US proposed two amendments to the resolution to: include a reference to illegal eel trade in the preamble; and replace the third operative paragraph on ranching. CHINA, supported by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, expressed concern that the resolution covers non-listed species and suggested minor amendments to address this. The EU proposed amendments to strengthen language on illegal harvest and trade in the resolution and proposed to delete the draft decision to explore options to facilitate discernment between aquaculture-raised and wild European eels, which the UK and AUSTRALIA opposed. JAPAN proposed other amendments to recognize the development of rapid DNA identification technologies.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- invites Parties and relevant stockholder to provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of the resolution on trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species, as well as information on illegal trade and enforcement; and
- urges Parties in which illegal harvest or trade of anguillid eel species occurs to strengthen existing measures that safeguard the effective implementation of the Convention, ensuring that the trade in CITES-listed anguillid eels is legal, sustainable, and traceable.

**Sharks and rays: Report of the Standing Committee:** On 28 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.88.1](#) on sharks and rays (*Elasmobranchii* spp).

NEW ZEALAND, supported by several others, proposed mentioning CMS. CMS suggested alternative wording, which was accepted. The UK and the EU, opposed by AUSTRALIA, preferred the amendments made to question 3 on laws and regulations applying to legality of the specimen in [CoP20 Doc.49](#), already adopted by Committee II. JAPAN, supported by the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, proposed an amendment to ensure consistency in the language on “coastal state” with other international trade agreements. The US, supported by NEW ZEALAND, the UK, the EU, and others, opposed.

The US, on behalf of CANADA and MEXICO and supported by the EU, proposed edits to the draft decisions on sharks and rays regarding inclusion of information on catch location ([CoP20 Inf. 65](#)). AUSTRALIA suggested amendments to grant the SC authority to develop further guidance should it be required. JAPAN made a minor amendment to focus the decision on international trade.

Committee I agreed to: CMS’s proposed amendments to Annex 3 of the resolution, but without the amendment to question 3; the draft decisions on sharks and rays regarding inclusion of information on catch location, as amended; the draft decisions on the feasibility of an adapted RST process for sharks and rays, with minor textual amendments from NEW ZEALAND and CHINA; and the draft decisions on hosting the electronic NDF tool on the CITES website, with CANADA’s suggestion of a disclaimer that using the tool is not a requirement for Parties.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the SC to, among others, consider if there is a need to develop new guidance or identify existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives for international trade, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II; and, if there is a need, develop such guidance that Parties may use, as appropriate.

**Draft decisions on trade, conservation, and management of deep-water elasmobranchs:** On 28 November in Committee I, the EU introduced [CoP20 Doc.88.2](#), supported by the UK.

CANADA, with CHINA, AUSTRALIA, and JAPAN, preferred adopting the draft decisions as amended by the Secretariat to limit the scope to CITES-listed species. Chair Lörtscher suggested forming a drafting group to find consensus, but CHINA, AUSTRALIA, and CANADA opposed.

Committee I rejected the Secretariat amendments in a vote with 47 in favor, 26 against, and 51 abstaining; and adopted the original draft decisions in a vote with 73 in favor, 14 against, and 40 abstaining.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat, subject to external funding, to contact appropriate technical and scientific experts within 12 months of the conclusion of CoP20, and to prepare technical documents relating to deep-water elasmobranchs that consider the replies to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/088, among others.

The CoP directs the AC and SC to consider the report of the workshop(s) or online meetings and make recommendations to CoP21.

**Seahorses:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.89](#) on seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.). Committee II accepted the draft decisions with edits from the Secretariat, as well as revised Decisions 19.229-19.230 with minor edits from the US.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP encourages source, transit, and consumer Parties for which there is evidence of illegal and/or unsustainable international trade in dried seahorses to implement the regulation of international trade in seahorses by collaborating with key stakeholders and species experts to develop national or regional plans of action to improve the implementation of CITES regulations, among others.

**Conservation of and trade in sea cucumbers:** On 28 November in Committee I, the US introduced [CoP20 Doc.90](#), including amendments by the Secretariat.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA suggested including technical experts and range states in the proposed workshop. AUSTRALIA proposed an amendment to ensure that Pacific Island states could also receive support from the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO). SAUDI ARABIA, echoed by CHINA, called for amendments to limit the decisions to CITES-listed species.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification inviting Parties to provide concise summaries of new information on their Stichopodidae and Holothuridae conservation and management activities and highlight any questions or implementation concerns;
- directs the AC to consider any findings or recommendations submitted by the Secretariat and develop recommendations within its mandate to ensure sustainable and legal international trade;
- directs the SC to consider the outcomes of the decision and develop recommendations within its mandate to ensure sustainable and legal international trade;
- encourages Parties governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations, donors, and other entities to support the implementation of the Convention for Stichopodidae and Holothuridae, including by providing funding; and
- invites the FAO to share information on conservation and management-related work and support, upon request, the exporting countries of CITES-listed species of Stichopodidae and Holothuridae to ensure well-regulated sustainable management of, and trade in, the species.

**Queen Conch:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.91](#) proposing the renewal of decisions on Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP renews Decisions 19.233 to 19.236.

**Marine Ornamental Fishes:** On 27 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.92](#), which contains multiple draft decisions on analytical tools to support the prioritization of marine ornamental fishes.

Many Parties supported the Secretariat's recommendation not to adopt the draft decisions. The US, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, the EU, and others wished to retain them. ISRAEL suggested an amendment to draft decision 20.EE to include language on a potential Appendix III listing.

As a compromise, NEW ZEALAND suggested retaining draft decisions aimed at Parties increasing their data capacity on and prioritization of marine ornamental fishes.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP invites Parties to review the catalogue of marine ornamental fish species in international trade in Annex 4 of document AC33 Doc.44 (Rev.2) and identify species of high priority that may warrant further research or other considerations, such as an Appendix III listing.

## Flora

**Agarwood-producing taxa:** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.93](#) on agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.), including proposed

amendments to Resolution Conf.16.10 on Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, which amends Resolution Conf.16.10. to include, *inter alia*, reference to specimens that are neither artificially produced nor wild-caught as "assisted production."

**Boswellia trees (Boswellia spp.):** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.94](#), including Secretariat amendments to draft decisions.

KENYA and UGANDA expressed support for the proposed in-person meeting of stakeholders, with PAKISTAN offering to host. SWITZERLAND, supported by the EU, said that the revised decisions do not adequately balance responsibility among range states and other stakeholders, and suggested convening a drafting group. INDIA, OMAN, BAHRAIN, and SAUDI ARABIA opposed the proposal to consider including native species of *Boswellia* spp. in Appendix III. CANADA, supported by the UK, proposed amendments to ensure that the draft decisions do not exceed the mandate of the scientific committees. Committee I established a drafting group.

On 3 December, SWITZERLAND introduced CoP20 Com.I.3 prepared by the drafting group, noting that the revised decisions are intended to enable the Secretariat to focus more on facilitation and support, rather than implementation. She also noted that the in-person *Boswellia* meeting is meant as an opportunity to exchange information and reach conclusions on how to address threats to *Boswellia* trees.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.3.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to issue a notification to Parties to inform range states about the in-person *Boswellia* meeting, and the PC to organize and participate in the meeting, as appropriate;
- invites range states to host and Parties and others to fund the *Boswellia* species in-person meeting; and
- directs the SC to consider the PC's recommendations from the meeting and make its own, as appropriate, to CoP21.

**Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]:** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.95](#). Citing the need to prioritize, CANADA proposed deleting several draft decisions, but received no support.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP:

- directs the Secretariat to, among others, focus capacity-building efforts for CITES-listed rosewood tree species on the 13 high priority and 14 medium priority species identified in the "Report on the conservation and trade of CITES-listed rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]"; and
- invites Parties, when developing NDFs for CITES-listed rosewood tree species, to consider using as a baseline reference the Report and its factsheets, in conjunction with the Module on NDFs for tree species of the CITES NDFs Guidance and provide feedback and information to the Secretariat.

**Products containing specimens of Appendix-II orchids**

**(Orchidaceae spp.):** On 2 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.96](#). Committee II agreed to the document as amended by the Secretariat.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the PC to look into drafting a footnote annotation like the P3 footnote for Orchidaceae that would explain what is needed to satisfy the condition “derived from artificial propagation” for the purposes of defining the term when used in an annotation exemption.

**Brazilwood (*Paubrasilia echinada*):** On 26 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.97](#) with draft decisions on brazilwood (*Paubrasilia echinada*), then formed a working group, chaired by Canada, to consider the document along with [CoP20 Inf.Doc.46](#) and CoP20 Prop.46 and prepare an in-session document recommending a way forward.

On 3 December in Committee I, CANADA introduced CoP20 Com.I.4, noting that the working group had reached consensus on, *inter alia*, revised draft decisions that aim to create a harmonized approach to enhancing the traceability of *Paubrasilia echinata*.

Committee I agreed to the draft decisions contained in CoP20 Com.I.4, as amended on the floor by AUSTRALIA, CANADA, the EU, and the US.

On 5 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.4.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs Parties to, *inter alia*:

- develop a harmonized approach for *Paubrasilia echinata* to enhance traceability of individual musical instruments and their accessories, noting existing examples of relevant approaches already used for other CITES-listed species;
- take all possible measures to establish the origin of regulated *Paubrasilia echinata* specimens to be exported and re-exported from countries outside of Brazil, including but not limited to enquiries to countries of previous import and sufficient evidence that such specimens were not obtained in violation of the laws of the country of origin; and
- undertake due diligence on compliance and enforcement and closely scrutinizing consignments of covered CITES-listed *Paubrasilia echinata* specimens and accompanying CITES documents to ensure that illegal specimens are not laundered into legal trade.

The CoP also directs Parties and intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, commercial traders/producers, the music industry, and interested stakeholders to:

- provide funding for the implementation of CoP20 decisions on brazilwood;
- implement a harmonized approach to enhance traceability of *Paubrasilia echinata* individual bows, bow blanks, and wood stockpiles;
- support efforts and projects to: prevent illicit harvesting and trading of *Paubrasilia echinata*; research alternative materials to produce musical instrument bows; conserve and restore the natural habitat of *Paubrasilia echinata*; promote awareness of the current extinction risk of *Paubrasilia echinata* and its connection with the string-cord music instrument production; and
- fund research on: silviculture for *Paubrasilia echinata*; the quality of wood originated from planted trees to be used in the bow-making industry; and near infrared spectrometry or other technologies for the rapid differentiation of bows produced from wild and planted trees.

**African tree species:** On 25 November, Committee I approved the recommendations in [CoP20 Doc.98](#) without amendments.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP notes the updated list of African tree species and associated CITES processes.

**Neotropical tree species:** On 25 November, Committee I approved the recommendations in [CoP20 Doc.99](#) without amendments.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP notes the findings and conclusions relating to neotropical tree species contained in the annex to the document.

**Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species:** On 25 November, in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.100](#).

The US requested asking the PC to provide guidance on implementing the draft decisions.

INDIA, supported by BRAZIL and opposed by the US, suggested an additional draft decision on developing monitoring systems alongside national and regional centers of excellence for medicinal and aromatic plant species. CANADA requested clarification on the definition of “cross-reference” between CITES and Medicinal Plant Names Service databases.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs:

- the Secretariat to, among others, submit the revised study developed with inputs from the PC Nomenclature Specialist as summarized in document PC27 Doc.32.1 Add to the PC;
- the PC to review the report and provide guidance to inform the implementation of paragraphs (b) and (c); and
- the SC to review the report of the PC and make recommendations to the CoP, as appropriate.

## Fungi

**Resolving the implementation of the CoP12 decision that the Convention applies to fungi:** On 25 November in Committee I, the UK presented [CoP Doc.101 \(Rev.1\)](#), which includes decisions to provide scientific and technical advice to the SC on fungi, and for the SC to consider how CITES Parties might take a common approach to fungi.

CHINA, supported by BAHRAIN and KUWAIT, and opposed by the UK and EU, requested additional language clarifying that Article 1 of the Convention does not include fungi in its definition of “specimen.” Discussions were suspended to allow for a drafting group.

On 28 November, MEXICO introduced CoP20 Com.I.1 prepared by the drafting group. The UK suggested additional amendments, including a new draft decision encouraging Parties to consider the advice of the AC, PC, and SC when considering potential fungi-related proposals.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Com.I.1 as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*:

- directs the Secretariat to assist the SC, AC, and PC in their implementation of the decisions;
- requests the AC and PC to also take into consideration the information contained in [SC78 Inf.27](#) and responses received to the issued notification;
- requests the SC to review the existing CITES provisions to explore whether further clarifications or amendments may be appropriate to address matters related to fungi; and
- encourages Parties to consider the advice of AC, PC, and SC when considering potential proposals to include species of fungi in the CITES Appendices.

### Appendices of the Convention

**Considering the ‘look-alike’ criterion Annex 2B A of Res. Conf.9.24 (Rev. CoP17) on criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II:** On 25 November, in Committee I, the UK introduced [CoP20 Doc.102](#), including additional amendments on the scope of a proposed study to be undertaken by the Secretariat.

Extensive discussions followed, with CANADA, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, AUSTRALIA, and others supporting the UK’s amendments, and the EU, the US, PANAMA, and others opposing. The EU suggested that such criteria should first be discussed by the AC and PC to make recommendations to the SC. After further discussion, the EU, supported by the US, expressed openness to issuing a notification to Parties requesting their interpretation of Criterion A and these views being compiled, but not undertaking an additional study.

On 26 November, Committee I continued deliberations. The UK and EU confirmed that no compromise had been reached overnight. COLOMBIA, on behalf of several Parties and supported by JAPAN, GABON, NEW ZEALAND, and others, proposed additional amendments to the original UK formulation, notably to use “assessment” rather than “study.” Committee I proceeded to two votes: on the proposal from the Chair, as amended by the EU; and on the proposal from the UK, as amended by Colombia.

The first proposal did not meet the required two-thirds majority with 59 supporting, 63 opposing, and 6 abstaining.

The second proposal was also rejected with 79 supporting, 40 opposing, and 10 abstaining.

On 4 December in plenary, 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.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP rejected the document.

### Annotations

**Annotations:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.103](#).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the SC to re-establish the working group on annotations.

**Annotation #15:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.104](#).

Noting the availability of numerous traceability models and guidelines, the US, supported by the EU, suggested deleting the draft decision on a study to develop guidelines specific to CITES-listed trees. CANADA suggested narrowing the scope of the draft decisions to CITES-listed trees with enforcement challenges.

Committee II agreed to, *inter alia*, adopt the draft decisions as amended on traceability systems for CITES-listed tree species and request the Secretariat to publish the revised “Report on the impact of CITES exemptions for Dalbergia and Guibourtia” on the CITES website.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, directs the Secretariat to request Parties and organizations to provide information on traceability systems and related resources, make those available on the CITES website, and share any related recommendations with the SC.

**Implications of the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another: Report of the Secretariat:** On 29 November in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced the report of the Secretariat ([CoP20 Doc.105.1](#)) and its draft decisions.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the SC to further consider the draft Guidance and best practices related to periods of transition and possible transitory measures, and make relevant amendments and recommendations available for consideration at CoP21.

**Facilitating legal trade and sustainable use during periods of transition:** On 2 December in Committee II, the US introduced [CoP20 Doc.105.2](#) with proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.13.6 (Rev. CoP18) and Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP18).

The US, with CANADA, suggested noting that a pre-Convention certificate could be issued for pre-Convention specimens. The EU opposed. CANADA and BRAZIL suggested, among others, that retrospective payment could be issued for a pre-Convention specimen. The EU, supported by NIGERIA, CHINA, and FIJI, supported the amendments by the Secretariat and recommended adding language such that a bill of lading or customs declaration could be considered further proof of export.

Committee II did not accept the changes to paragraph 23(c) or paragraph 12(a) of Resolution Conf.12.3 (Rev. CoP19), instead agreeing to continue discussions intersessionally; and accepted the changes to paragraph 3 of Resolution Conf.13.6 (Rev. CoP18).

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, 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:** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.106](#).

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document, including the recommendations to delete Decisions 18.317(Rev. CoP19) and 19.265 on Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species.

**Informal review mechanism for existing and proposed**

**annotations:** On 25 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.107](#).

The US opposed the Secretariat’s suggestion for a small study on implementation challenges. CANADA called for the deletion of draft decision 20.BB. Committee I agreed to the document without draft decision 20.BB.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP, *inter alia*, directs the Secretariat to issue a notification inviting Parties to provide information on any implementation issues with annotations in Appendices I–III of the document, and prepare a report to the SC.

**Orchid specimens exempted through annotation #4(g):** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.108](#).

The UK, the US, SWITZERLAND, and others did not support the revised decisions. The EU instead proposed a draft decision directing the PC to draft a footnote explaining the “derived from artificial propagation” condition, which the US specified would apply to annotation exemptions.

Committee II rejected the revised decisions but agreed to the new draft decision from the EU as amended.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the draft decision in CoP20 Com.II.Rec.13.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the PC to draft a footnote explaining the “derived from artificial propagation” condition.

**Annotation of Cape aloe (*Aloe ferox*):** On 3 December in Committee II, Chair Wong introduced [CoP20 Doc.109](#), which was accepted.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP adopted the recommendations of Committee II to note the information contained in the document.

### Nomenclature Matters

**Standard nomenclature:** On 2 December in Committee I, the Nomenclature Specialist introduced [CoP20 Doc.110](#) and addenda.

The US said that high priority should be given to the draft decisions on developing an updated checklist for the family *Cactaceae* and suggested referring to AviList when updating a standard nomenclature reference for birds.

CANADA suggested deleting draft decision 20.AA5. The Nomenclature Specialist suggested deleting 20.CC5, since it references 20.AA5. The US noted that the “CITES checklist of Diospyros: Madagascar populations, large tree species” is improperly attributed to the Secretariat, instead of the responsible taxonomists from Madagascar, and, with the UK, proposed retaining the name *Bulnesia sarmientoi*.

On 4 December, 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.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP adopts the proposed revisions on Standard nomenclature concerning flora as presented in Annex 1 to CoP20 Doc.110 Add.2, retaining *Bulnesia sarmientoi* and the proposed revisions on Standard nomenclature concerning fauna as presented in Annex 2 to the document.

The CoP, *inter alia*, directs:

- the Secretariat, in close cooperation with the PC’s nomenclature specialist to seek feedback from Parties and relevant experts on their experience in using the standard nomenclature reference for aloes in Resolution Conf.12.11 (Rev. CoP20) on Standard nomenclature; and
- the AC to continue its work towards the adoption of an updated standard nomenclature reference for birds, taking into consideration previous work done, as well as the consolidated checklist of birds of the world, AviList, and develop a recommendation for consideration at CoP21.

**Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings:** On 2 December in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.111](#) with proposed amendments to Resolution Conf.9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on implementation of the Convention for species in Appendix III and Resolution Conf.12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on standard nomenclature.

The EU proposed adding “if necessary, the taxonomic scope” when revising the nomenclature of an Appendix-III listing. NEW ZEALAND suggested referring to the “scientific” name.

**Final Outcome:** On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document as amended in Committee I.

**Higher taxon listings in the appendices:** On 26 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.112](#). The AC Nomenclature Specialist and the Chair specified that the proposed amendment was procedural and would not necessarily force changes on taxon or species listings.

On 4 December, the CoP adopted the document.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP amends Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on Standard nomenclature and recommends that whenever a change in the name of a taxon included in the appendices, or the taxonomic level in which a taxon is included in the appendices, is proposed:

- the Secretariat, in consultation with the AC or PC, determine whether this change would alter the scope of protection for fauna or flora under the Convention; and
- the CoP also consider the proposal.

### Taxonomy and nomenclature of African Elephants

**(*Loxodonta spp.*):** On 29 November in Committee I, Chair Lörtscher introduced [CoP20 Doc.113](#), which contains options for how to reflect the nomenclature change for African elephants. Parties were divided between the three options, so Chair Lörtscher allowed African range states to discuss further.

On 2 December, Chair Lörtscher re-opened this item to hear from African range states, and ZIMBABWE noted consensus on option c with amendments to read, for Appendix I: *Loxodonta spp.* (except the populations of *L. africana* of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are included in Appendix II subject to annotation A10).

On 4 December, the CoP adopted CoP20 Doc.113 and the compromise option to reflect the recognition of the two elephant species in the appendices.

**Final Outcome:** The CoP directs the Secretariat to consult the MIKE-ETIS TAG to advise on whether an analysis of trends in the proportion of illegally killed elephants based on the two species of African elephants (as reflected in the nomenclature change) can be provided and carry out the analysis if feasible.

### Proposals to Amend Appendices I and II

Unless otherwise specified, discussion on the listing proposals ([CoP20 Doc.114 \(Rev.1\)](#)) took place in Committee I and the CoP addressed the proposals on 4 and 5 December.

**Bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus pygargus*):** On 2 December, SOUTH AFRICA introduced CoP20 Prop.1 to delete this endemic antelope from Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Dorcas gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*):** On 29 November, NIGER introduced CoP20 Prop.2 to include the dorcas gazelle (*G. dorcas*) in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Saiga (*Saiga tatarica*):** On 29 November, KAZAKHSTAN introduced CoP20 Prop.3 to amend the zero export quota annotation for saiga (*S. tatarica*) to exclude specimens from Kazakh populations and an amendment, negotiated with the US, the EU, and the UK, to add additional safeguards ([CoP20 Inf.75](#)). MONGOLIA opposed, pointing to enforcement challenges.

The CoP adopted the amended proposal.

**Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*):** On 29 November, SOUTH AFRICA introduced CoP20 Prop.4 to delete the populations of this species in Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe from Appendix II. SENEGAL, BENIN, NIGER, RWANDA, and others opposed, citing enforcement challenges. In response to taxonomical concerns, the NOMENCLATURE SPECIALIST clarified that the AC would work to update the nomenclature for genus *Giraffa*.

The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*):** On 29 November, the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO introduced CoP20 Prop.5 to include the species under Appendix I. JAPAN opposed but chose not to block consensus. The CoP approved the proposal.

**Striped Hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*):** On 29 November, TAJIKISTAN introduced CoP20 Prop.6 to include striped hyena (*H. hyaena*) in Appendix I. ALGERIA, IRAN, KAZAKHSTAN, and others expressed support. The EU, TANZANIA, the UK, and ZAMBIA said that the proposal does not meet Appendix I criteria. ESOWATINI suggested an Appendix II listing instead. By a secret ballot of 75 for, 47 against and 13 abstentions, Committee I rejected the proposal.

In plenary on 4 December, TAJIKISTAN, supported by UZBEKISTAN, made a motion to reopen the debate on CoP20 Prop.6. The CoP agreed. TAJIKISTAN then introduced an amendment to transfer the striped hyena to Appendix II without any annotations, noting this would enable range states to gather further data collection on trade impacts. The CoP adopted the revised proposal by consensus.

**Guadalupe fur seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*):** On 29 November, MEXICO introduced CoP20 Prop.7 to transfer this species from Appendix I to Appendix II, citing increasing population levels. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Caribbean monk seal (*Monachus tropicalis*):** On 29 November, MEXICO introduced CoP20 Prop.8 to delete this species from Appendix I due to its likely extinction. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Southern white rhinoceros (*Cerathotheirum simum simum*):** On 29 November, NAMIBIA introduced CoP20 Prop.9 to amend the annotation of this species in Appendix II to allow for international trade to verified trading partners, and within a limit of 200kg per annum, for: live animals for *in-situ* conservation only; hunting trophies; and registered government and privately held horn stock.

JAPAN, ESOWATINI, ZIMBABWE, and others supported, while the EU, CONGO, TANZANIA, and others opposed. By a secret ballot of 31 in favor, 70 against, and 18 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**South-western black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis bicornis*):** On 29 November, NAMIBIA introduced CoP20 Prop.10 to transfer the south-western black rhinoceros from Appendix I to Appendix II, with an annotation to allow the sale of registered rhinoceros horns.

JAPAN, ESOWATINI, BOTSWANA, and others supported the proposal, citing Namibia's conservation efforts. The EU, KENYA, SENEGAL, and others opposed, concerned that it would fuel illegal trade. ZIMBABWE, supported by ZAMBIA, called for a dialogue meeting on the sustainable financing of rhinoceros conservation. By a secret ballot of 28 for, 80 against, and 9 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Linnaeus's two-toed sloth (*Choloepus didactylus*) and Hoffman's two-toed sloth (*Choloepus hoffmanni*):** On 3 December, BRAZIL introduced CoP20 Prop.11 to include these two species of sloths in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Golden-bellied mangabey (*Cercocebus chrysogaster*):** On 3 December, the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO introduced CoP20 Prop.12 to uplist the golden-bellied mangabey from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*):** On 29 November, NAMIBIA introduced CoP20 Prop.13 to allow Namibia to trade in registered stocks of raw ivory of Namibian origin from this species, deleting all annotations from the Namibian population under Appendix II.

BOTSWANA, JAPAN, and CHINA supported the proposal. SENEGAL, the EU, KENYA, and many others opposed, arguing that it would undo the work of ending the global ivory trade. By a

secret ballot of 22 in favor, 81 against, and 14 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*):** On 29 November, BOTSWANA introduced CoP20 Prop.14 to amend the annotation pertaining to elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe to harmonize the conditions of trade in live African elephants.

NIGER, supported by KENYA and SENEGAL, suggested including a definition of "appropriate and acceptable destinations." ZIMBABWE, supported by SOUTH AFRICA and KENYA, suggested that further discussion among African range states was needed to reach consensus on the export of Appendix I live elephants.

Discussions resumed on 2 December. ZIMBABWE, with ZAMBIA and others disagreed with changing "specimen" to "parts and derivatives." while SENEGAL and NIGER preferred the change. The Secretariat noted that changing "specimen" to "parts and derivatives" would mean that trade of live elephants is subject to less stringent measures, and SENEGAL agreed to retain the use of "specimen."

The CoP adopted the proposal as amended.

**African hornbills (*Bycanistes spp. and Ceratogymna spp.*):** On 3 December, NIGERIA introduced CoP20 Prop.15 to include these two African hornbills genera in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**White-backed vulture (*Gyps africanus*) and Ruppell's vulture (*Gyps rueppelli*):** On 3 December, NIGER introduced CoP20 Prop.16 to uplist these two vulture species from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*):** On 3 December, CANADA introduced CoP20 Prop.17 to downlist *Falco peregrinus* from Appendix I to Appendix II.

KUWAIT, the UK, CHINA, and others supported the proposal, asserting that the species no longer meets the Appendix I biological criteria. DJIBOUTI, the EU, ARGENTINA, and others opposed, citing insufficient global data to justify the downlisting. As a compromise, NEW ZEALAND proposed adding a zero annual export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes, which was accepted.

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL clarified that while some metric data used in the IUCN Red List in 2021 was of poor quality, current data still suggest that peregrine falcon is of least concern globally.

By a secret vote of 61 for, 74 against, and 7 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal.

The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Great-billed seed-finch (*Sporophila maximiliani*), chestnut-bellied seed-finch (*Sporophila angolensis*), black-billed seed-finch (*Sporophila atrirostris*), large-billed seed-finch (*Sporophila crassirostris*), thick-billed seed-finch (*Sporophila funereal*), and Nicaraguan seed-finch (*Sporophila nuttingi*):** On 3 December, BRAZIL introduced CoP20 Prop.18 to include *Sporophila maximiliani* in Appendix I and the other five seed-finch species in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Hispaniolan giant galliwasp (*Caribicus warreni*):** On 3 December, the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC introduced CoP20 Prop.19 to list the Hispaniolan giant galliwasp (*Caribicus warreni*) in Appendix I.

JAPAN suggested an Appendix II listing but said they would not oppose consensus. The EU encouraged the Dominican Republic to propose two look-alike species, *Caribicus anelipistus* and *Caribicus*

*darlingtoni*, for an Appendix III listing at the next CoP to enable the monitoring of trade in all three species. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Mount Elliot leaf-tailed gecko (*Phyllurus amnicola*):** On 3 December, AUSTRALIA introduced CoP20 Prop.20 to list the Mount Elliot leaf-tailed gecko in Appendix II, noting the species' appearance in international trade despite national protections. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Ringed thin-tail gecko (*Phyllurus caudiannulatus*):** On 3 December, AUSTRALIA introduced CoP20 Prop.21 to list the ringed thin-tail gecko in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Galápagos marine iguana (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*):** On 3 December, ECUADOR introduced CoP20 Prop.22 to transfer the Galápagos marine iguana (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Galápagos land iguanas (*Conolophus* spp.):** On 3 December, ECUADOR introduced CoP20 Prop.23 to transfer the three species of land iguanas endemic to the Galápagos islands from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Bale and Ethiopia mountain adders (*Bitis harensis* and *Bitis parviocula*):** On 2 December, ETHIOPIA introduced CoP20 Prop.24 to list these endemic snakes in Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Rattlesnakes (*Crotalus* spp.) and Ground rattlesnakes (*Sistrurus* spp.):** On 2 December, MEXICO introduced CoP20 Prop.25 to include *Crotalus lepidus* and *Crotalus ravus* and the genera *Crotalus* and *Sistrurus* in Appendix II. By a vote of 46 for, 66 against, and 26 abstentions, Committee I rejected the proposal. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Home's hinge-back tortoise (*Kinixys homeana*):** On 2 December, CAMEROON introduced CoP20 Prop.26 to uplist Home's hinge-back tortoise (*Kinixys homeana*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Epirus water frog (*Pelophylax epiroticus*), pool frog (*Pelophylax lessonae*), marsh frog (*Pelophylax ridibundus*), and Albanian water frog (*Pelophylax shqipericus*):** On 2 December, the EU introduced CoP20 Prop.27 to include the four *Pelophylax* species in Appendix II, to be delayed by 18 months. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*):** On 27 November, PANAMA introduced CoP20 Prop.28 to transfer the oceanic whitetip shark from Appendix II to Appendix I.

ZIMBABWE, on behalf of the African region, NEW ZEALAND, SRI LANKA, the BAHAMAS, OMAN, and many others expressed support. JAPAN and CHINA objected, arguing that the proposal lacks scientific rationale, would negatively impact scientific activities, and isn't necessary due to existing strong protections. The CMS reminded CITES Parties who are also CMS Parties of their legal obligations when deciding on inclusion of species in CITES Appendices. SAINT LUCIA requested a secret ballot. With 110 in favor, 22 against, and 6 abstentions, Committee I adopted the proposal, as did the CoP.

**School Shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) and Smoothhounds (*Mustelus* spp.):** On 27 November, BRAZIL introduced CoP20 Prop.29 to include school shark (*G. galeus*) and smoothhounds (*Mustelus* spp.) in Appendix II and an amendment to the proposal to delay implementation by 18 months.

NEW ZEALAND proposed an annotation to exclude its populations, which received no support. JAPAN objected to

“unnecessary” trade restrictions. Committee I adopted the amended proposal on 28 November. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Manta and devil rays (*Mobulidae* spp.):** On 28 November, ECUADOR introduced CoP20 Prop.30 to uplist these species from Appendix II to Appendix I. JAPAN opposed, citing a lack of scientific evidence. INDONESIA, with CHINA, suggested an amendment that would only see *M. alfredi* and *M. birostris* uplisted. The amendment was rejected by a vote of 17 in agreement, 108 against, and 10 abstaining. The CoP adopted the original proposal.

**Whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*):** On 28 November, MALDIVES introduced CoP20 Prop.31 on the transfer of the whale shark (*R. typus*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. AUSTRALIA pointed to the updated view of the population status in [CoP20 Inf.21](#). JAPAN opposed but did not break consensus. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Giant guitarfishes (*Glaucostegus* spp.):** On 28 November, BENIN introduced CoP20 Prop.32 to add an annotation requiring a zero annual export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes to the *Glaucostegus* spp. listing under Appendix II.

CANADA, JAPAN, and CHINA opposed, citing, among others, that accepting the annotation would effectively list the species under Appendix I. By a secret ballot of 105 for, 23 against, and 7 abstaining, Committee I accepted the proposal. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Wedgefishes (*Rhinidae* spp.):** On 28 November, SENEGAL introduced CoP20 Prop.33 to add an annotation requiring a zero annual export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes to the *Rhinidae* spp. listing under Appendix II. JAPAN, INDONESIA, and CHINA opposed, citing insufficient evidence and a lack of consultation with range states. CANADA suggested that concerned Parties should consider including these species in the RST process instead. By a secret ballot of 118 for, 20 against, and 2 abstaining, Committee I accepted the proposal. The CoP adopted it.

**Gulper sharks (*Centrophoridae* spp.):** On 28 November, the UK introduced CoP20 Prop.34 to include this species under Appendix II with an amendment for an 18-month delay to implementation.

INDONESIA, JAPAN, and KYRGYZSTAN opposed, noting negative economic impacts on small-scale fisheries. By a secret ballot of 113 in favor, 19 against, and 6 abstaining, Committee I accepted the amended proposal, and the CoP adopted it.

**Anguillid eels (*Anguilla* spp.):** On 27 November, the EU introduced CoP20 Prop.35 to include the genus *Anguilla* spp. in Appendix II, with entry into effect delayed by 18 months.

Supported by the UK, ISRAEL, and MONACO, the EU argued that all anguillid eel species meet the look-alike criteria, particularly as juveniles, and that national measures and species-by-species regulation alone are not sufficient. There was significant opposition from a few Parties, citing the health of non-CITES-listed eel populations, the availability of rapid identification technologies, challenges in enforcement, and the negative impacts on livelihoods. JAPAN requested a secret ballot. With 35 for, 100 against, and 8 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal, as did the CoP.

**Sea cucumbers (*Actinopyga echinites*, *A. mauritiana*, *A. miliaris*, *A. varians*, *A. lecanora*, and *A. palauensis*):** On 27 November, the EU introduced CoP20 Prop.36 to include six species of sea cucumbers under Appendix II. The UK, the US, and FIJI supported the proposal. Many opposed, leading to a vote. With 50 in favor, 76 against, and 9 abstaining, the proposal was rejected.

In plenary on 4 December, MONACO requested reopening the debate to add a 24-month delay before implementation. The EU, US, and SENEGAL supported the proposal, while JAPAN, INDONESIA, CHINA, and many others opposed. By a secret ballot of 59 in favor, 72 against, and 8 abstaining, the CoP once again rejected.

**Golden sandfish (*Holothuria lessoni*):** On 27 November, the EU introduced CoP20 Prop.37 to include golden sandfish (*H. lessoni*) in Appendix II. JAPAN and SOLOMON ISLANDS opposed but relented in the face of broad support. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Rose hair tarantula (*Grammostola rosea*) and look-alikes:** On 2 December, BOLIVIA introduced CoP20 Prop.38 to list the tarantula *Grammostola rosea* and 14 look-alike species in Appendix II, amended to include a 12-month delay for implementation. By a secret ballot of 72 in favor, 54 against, and 9 abstaining, Committee I rejected the proposal.

In plenary on 4 December, ARGENTINA, supported by BRAZIL, requested re-opening the proposal. ARGENTINA reintroduced an amendment to include only *Grammostola rosea* in the Appendix II listing, removing the 14 look-alike species from the proposal. CHINA, CHILE, URUGUAY and others supported the revised proposal. The UK, JAPAN, MONACO, and CANADA noted that while the species still does not meet the biological criteria for Appendix II, they will not block consensus. The CoP adopted the amended proposal.

**South African abalone (*Haliotis midae*):** South Africa withdrew CoP20 Prop.39 to include the population of South Africa in Appendix II with the annotation “dried specimens only.”

**American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*):** On 26 November, the US introduced CoP20 Prop.40 to amend an annotation to exclude finished products of sliced roots from artificially propagated plants. CANADA, INDONESIA, and the EU opposed, noting that the amendment could lead to possible laundering. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Chilean Palm (*Jubaea chilensis*):** On 27 November, CHILE introduced CoP20 Prop.41 to include the Chilean palm (*Jubaea chilensis*) in Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Pony-tailed palms (*Beaucarnea hookeri* and *Beaucarnea glassiana*):** On 27 November, MEXICO introduced CoP20 Prop.42 to include the ponytailed palms (*B. hookeri* and *B. glassiana*) in Appendix II. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Guggul (*Commiphora wightii*):** On 26 November, the EU introduced CoP20 Prop.43 to include guggul (*C. wightii*) in Appendix II. INDIA, supported by CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CONGO, CAMEROON, and others, objected, arguing that an updated population assessment is needed. PAKISTAN supported the proposal, citing the decline in its wild population due to overharvesting and increasing international demand. OMAN, supported by UAE, SAUDI ARABIA, BAHRAIN, and others, said that the species is not currently under threat in Oman and that listing is unnecessary. CHINA expressed concern that the proposal would lead to the disruption of other legal and sustainable trade in resin. ESWATINI urged range states to implement domestic conservation measures and recommended against the listing. The UK suggested an annotation to exclude some types of finished products. The EU, opposed by INDIA and OMAN, suggested striking a working group to draft an annotation. Committee I rejected the proposal.

In plenary on 5 December, PAKISTAN, supported by the EU, motioned to reopen the debate to consider an amendment to help

with enforcement concerns through an annotation to include extracts, gums, and resins, but exclude finished products packaged for retail trade. The CoP adopted the proposal as amended, with 79 in favor, 39 against, and 15 abstaining.

**Cycad spurge (*Euphorbia bupleurifolia*):** On 2 December, SOUTH AFRICA introduced CoP20 Prop.44 to transfer this endemic dwarf succulent from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Red doussié (*Azelia bipindensis*):** On 26 November, CONGO introduced CoP20 Prop.45 to delete the red doussié (*A. bipindensis*) populations of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon from Appendix II. The EU, US, UK, and CANADA opposed, arguing that the species still meets the look-alike criterion and lacks robust traceability. After a vote of 49 in favor, 56 against, and 24 abstentions, Committee I rejected the proposal, as did the CoP.

**Brazilwood (*Paubrasilia echinata*):** On 26 November, BRAZIL introduced CoP20 Prop.46 to transfer brazilwood (*Paubrasilia echinata*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. Recognizing both the legitimacy of Brazil’s concern and the importance of travel for musical instruments, the EU, supported by the UK, CANADA, and JAPAN, proposed an in-session working group to consider stronger protections for brazilwood without unintended or burdensome side effects for musicians. The INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF VIOLIN AND BOW MAKERS noted his organization’s current work with Brazil on conservation, as well as the potentially devastating effects of an Appendix I listing on bow making. TRAFFIC highlighted the continued illegal trade of bows and the need for more specific traceability systems. Chair Lörtscher established a working group, chaired by Canada, to consider CoP20 Prop.46 along with [CoP20 Doc.97](#) and [CoP20 Inf.Doc.46](#).

On 3 December, CANADA introduced CoP20 Com.I.4, noting that the working group had reached consensus on, *inter alia*, a proposed amendment to CoP20 Prop.46 to retain *Paubrasilia echinata* on Appendix II, with a revision to Annotation #10 imposing a zero quota for wild-harvested specimens (source code W) traded for commercial purposes while allowing the non-commercial transport of finished musical instruments and their accessories. The CoP adopted the proposal as amended.

**African padauk (*Pterocarpus soyauxii*):** On 26 November, GABON introduced CoP20 Prop.47 to delete the African padauk (*P. soyauxii*) populations of Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon from Appendix II. CONGO, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, and CAMEROON, supported by CÔTE D’IVOIRE, INDIA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and others, pointed to “robust” central African populations, sustainable management practices in the proponent states, and improvement in identification technologies as justification for the deletion. The EU, KENYA, and UK opposed given the look-alike criteria, potential enforcement challenges with a split listing, and accessibility issues with identification technologies, and, in the case of the US, the lack of species-specific data. Committee I voted and rejected the proposal, with 51 in favor, 57 against, and 20 abstentions.

In plenary, GABON, on behalf of central African states, said they would not reopen the proposal but noted that central African states have provided data showing robust management and traceability for the relevant populations. The CoP rejected the proposal.

**Aloes (*Aloe* spp.):** On 27 November, SWITZERLAND introduced CoP20 Prop.48 to amend the listing of *Aloe* spp. in Appendix II to include four species previously treated under the genus *Chortolirion* (*A. bergeriana*, *A. jeppeae*, *A. subspicata*, and *A. welwitschia*). The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Parlatore's podocarp (*P. parlatorei*):** On 26 November, ARGENTINA introduced CoP20 Prop.49 on the transfer of Parlatore's podocarp (*P. parlatorei*) from Appendix I to Appendix II, and proposed an amendment to include a zero export quota, based on consultation with other range states. BRAZIL and MEXICO supported the proposal as amended. The US said the proposal did not follow the periodic review process and lacked scientific justification given information gaps on the Bolivian population.

BOLIVIA, noting regional support for the proposal, emphasized that adding a zero-export quota would allow for time to undertake population studies. TRAFFIC, also on behalf of IUCN, supported the amendment in line with the precautionary principle. Committee I rejected the proposal, by a vote of 69 in favor, 38 against, and 18 abstentions.

In plenary on 5 December, ARGENTINA, supported by BRAZIL, requested to re-open the proposal. ARGENTINA reintroduced an amendment to include a zero-export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes. The CoP adopted the proposal as amended by consensus.

**Avonia quinaria:** On 2 December, SOUTH AFRICA introduced CoP20 Prop.50 to transfer this endemic dwarf succulent from Appendix II to Appendix I. The CoP adopted the proposal.

**Cape aloe (*Aloe ferox*) and Candelilla (*Euphorbia antisyphilitica*):** On 27 November, the UK introduced CoP20 Prop.51 suggesting a minor amendment to annotation #4 for Cape aloe (*A. ferox*) and Candelilla (*E. antisyphilitica*). The CoP adopted the proposal.

### Conclusion of the Meeting

**Determination of the time and venue of the next regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties:** The CoP accepted Panama's offer to host CoP21 in 2028.

**Closing Remarks:** CITES Secretary-General Yvonne Higuero thanked the Government of Uzbekistan, and particularly its Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change, for hosting the meeting, and commended Parties, the Secretariat staff, and "many others behind the scenes at CoP20" for their constructive work over the past two weeks. She called for delegates to carry forward the spirit of Samarkand—one of "cooperation, respectful dialogue, and shared responsibility"—as they work to translate the momentum built at CoP20 into meaningful action.

CoP Alternate Chair Alisher Salomov (Uzbekistan) noted that ancient Samarkand was a hub for scholars, artists, philosophers, religious leaders, intellectuals, and scientists from around the world. He said this legacy had been renewed by CoP20, which brought over 3,000 delegates from 180 countries to the city, marking a "historic moment for Uzbekistan and Central Asia." Reminding everyone that "nature transcends borders," he gaveled the meeting to a close at 11:47 am.

### A Brief Analysis of CoP20

Two thousand years ago, the city of Samarkand was the center of the world. Once a major stopping-point along the Silk Road, a trade route that reached from Europe to Asia, more recently it has become a hub for meetings of multilateral environmental agreements, including 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). CITES Secretary-General Yvonne Higuero called for CITES to be "a modern Silk Road—not only for goods, but for knowledge, commitments, and action to conserve life on Earth."

It would not undersell the atmosphere, then, to say that expectations were high. This was the first CITES CoP in Central Asia, home to many charismatic species such as saiga antelope, Persian leopard, striped hyena, and what one delegate called the "grumpy, but majestic" manul (Pallas's cat). Reflecting the cultural, economic, and ecological value of the species under their care, countries in the region are increasingly becoming important voices in CITES as they strive to protect their unique flora and fauna.

The CoP also marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Convention. At the conference opening, Secretary-General Higuero declared that CoP20 was where "the course will be set for the Convention for the next 50 years." While delegates celebrated decades of accomplishments, they also acknowledged that today's conservation challenges are unprecedented, complex, and interlinked, putting pressure on the half-century old Convention.

Did the spirit of the Silk Road lead delegates down the path of sustainable conservation? Did Samarkand's convivial history let science, local knowledge, and state politics come together for the benefit of all wild flora and fauna vulnerable to international trade? This brief analysis will explore these questions through the outcomes at CoP20, and reflect on the road ahead.

### Past Successes and New Challenges

Just as the Silk Road linked distant cultures, range states are linked by their shared species. Decisions taken in one state with a healthy wildlife population can still impact those with more threatened populations. The contrasting responses to Kazakhstan's saiga proposal and Namibia's rhino and elephant proposals highlighted this reality.

After decades of severe population decline caused by poaching and disease, saiga numbers in Kazakhstan have rebounded dramatically, from 21,000 individuals in 2003 to nearly 4 million in 2025, prompting the country to request to lift its zero-export quota and reopen trade. One observer described this as "one of the strongest cases seen yet for regulated trade." The proposal was adopted, despite Mongolia's concerns about the impact of trade—and the threat of this encouraging illegal trade—on its own still-fragile saiga population, but only with amendments negotiated with Parties who were concerned about the potential impacts on illegal trade.

Meanwhile, Namibia put forward three similar proposals to allow it to trade in government-owned southern white and south-western black rhinoceros horn, and elephant ivory stocks. While the rebounds have not been as dramatic as for saiga, all three species in Namibia have experienced recovery. Yet, the proposals for the three species were rejected. Was the recovery not dramatic enough?

The answer is unclear. Both countries assured Parties that the revenue generated from the trade would be reinvested into conservation efforts. They argued that the funds available for their

continued conservation are dwindling, leaving them with “no choice but to find other ways to generate revenue for...conservation.” In their view, reopening trade is not only appropriate given the healthy species populations in their countries, it is essential for their continued protection.

Yet, generally speaking, significant opposition to downlisting remains. In part, CITES Parties were haunted by the specter of the 2008 ivory sell-off, which some argue reversed decades of conservation progress by fuelling increased poaching and providing a cover for illegal trade. Other elephant and rhino range states such as Kenya, Benin, and Niger emphasized that while some domestic populations may be healthy, reopening trade would stimulate global demand, further threatening more endangered populations in other range states.

Some Parties pushed back, arguing that conservation successes should not lead to what they considered “punishment” for states that generally need more funding for conservation than is currently available. These Parties emphasized that trade restrictions are meant to be temporary conservation measures until populations recover to a point where reopening trade for sustainable use will not negatively impact the species. The next intersessional period will be an important test of whether opening up Kazakhstan’s saiga population to trade was the appropriate response to conservation success. As one delegate put it: “Second chances, once lost, do not return.”

### *Speaking Up Along the Road*

One long-time CITES delegate remarked midway through CoP20 that “we’re hearing from countries that have never spoken up before.” Indeed, small island developing states like Fiji, Samoa, and the Solomon Islands were prominent voices during the discussions on sharks and rays, underscoring both the economic and cultural significance of those species for their countries. Smaller range states, like Ecuador, Bolivia, Cameroon, and others, also took charge by putting forward listing proposals, yet several faced significant hurdles in getting those proposals adopted, particularly when relying on biological and trade data stemming from local experts, often not published in English.

This situation played out in the debate over Tajikistan’s proposal to list the striped hyena in Appendix I, as well as Argentina, Bolivia, and Panama’s Appendix II listing proposals for the rose hair tarantula and fourteen lookalike species. Pointing to data from the field, the range states argued that their listing proposals were necessary given population decline and threats from illegal trade. The fact that the rose hair tarantula looks like species of less endangered spiders, which are popular as pets, makes it particularly vulnerable to illegal trafficking (as one observer described it: “They all look like big, hairy spiders!”)

Nevertheless, despite being proposed and broadly supported by range states, both measures initially did not pass, largely because the science—meaning analyses from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and TRAFFIC—was deemed insufficient to demonstrate that the species met their respective listing criteria. In both cases, international and local analysis reached different conclusions, notably on the rate of decline for hyenas and the scope of trade data for the relevant tarantula species. The proponents themselves acknowledged the uncertainty, but argued that greater protection would allow for further analysis, and that “the absence of [data] doesn’t mean the absence of risk.” The Tajik

delegate urged Parties to support the proposal: “If we fail to act now, we risk losing not only a species, but the rarest gift conservation ever offers: a second chance.”

Several Parties later noted the claim of “insufficient science” may have reflected a lack of engagement with the available local evidence (for instance, literature published only in Russian on striped hyena population trends combined with what conservationists in the field are seeing). In plenary, once more delegates had examined the data, acknowledged the conservation concerns, and “listened to the range states,” they adopted by consensus amended proposals to list the striped hyena and to only list the rose hair tarantula, but none of its look-alikes, in Appendix II. These cases demonstrate that while range states have been taking CITES issues into their own hands, and even coming together in blocs—as with the increasingly powerful and united African Group—translating data from the field to CITES decisions continues to be a challenge.

### *The Weight of a Thousand Caravans*

At the beginning of the meeting, several Parties expressed fears that the Convention’s workload had grown so much that CITES would crack under its own weight. As the Chair of the Animals Committee (AC), on behalf of the other CITES Committee Chairs noted, the steady increase in the number of decisions without a concurrent increase in capacity has led the Convention to a “breaking point.”

That fear did not come to pass, but countermeasures are desperately needed. In the end, Parties adopted 353 decisions—fewer than the 365 agreed at CoP19, but still monumental. The AC Chair proposed a prioritization matrix that would help them prioritize implementation of CoP decisions based on certain “assessment factors,” ranging from CITES mandate alignment to impact on Party implementation. The Chairs will trial this approach in their respective workplans over the next three months.

Many of the decisions adopted are also to be implemented with extrabudgetary resources. While this condition lessens the Secretariat’s existing fiscal constraints, at least in the short run, the decisions still add to their Herculean workload. This tension was exemplified when the UK requested, and failed to obtain, a study on the application of the Convention’s criteria for listing a species as “look-alike”—subject to extrabudgetary resources. The issue is important, given that look-alike listing proposals often generate significant debate, and proponents argue that Parties need more guidance on the criteria’s application and understanding of its effectiveness. While the study would be subject to extrabudgetary resources, opponents pointed out that it would still “tie up [Secretariat] resources,” diverting their attention from other important priorities. Following a vote, the proposal was rejected.

The Secretariat and Parties alike recognize that CITES desperately needs more capacity. Given the scale of work before the Convention and the Secretariat, Parties agreed to a modest 6.98% increase to the budget—which is better than the zero nominal growth budget scenario several Parties were pushing for. But while this increase effectively matches inflation, it is still insufficient to accomplish all the mandated work. With the Convention’s caravan bearing more weight than ever, it remains to be seen how it will find the predictable, long-term core funding and staffing it sorely needs to travel down a difficult road.

**CITES: The Silk Road Ahead**

There was much to celebrate at CoP20. In a historic milestone for marine species, CITES strengthened protections for over 70 species of sharks and rays. It established stronger safeguards for endemic species—from geckos to sloths—that are particularly vulnerable to the pet trade. CoP20 revealed more emboldened voices and more unity among range states, and saw the easing of trade protections as a result of conservation successes. Indeed, not only Kazakhstan’s saiga has bounced back from the brink. So has the bontebok, a South African antelope, which was deleted from Appendix II due to a similar recovery in its wild populations. At the behest of range states, the Guadalupe fur seal and Parlature’s podocarp were also downlisted from Appendix I to Appendix II due to their improved conservation status. These species offer reasons to hope that second chances are possible.

Still, the road ahead is grueling, given the huge number of decisions that need to be implemented with limited resources before delegates reconvene at CoP21 in Panama in 2028. Cooperation—among Parties, range states, the Secretariat, non-governmental organizations, and even other multilateral bodies—will be key to ensuring that, in the words of CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero, “The momentum built here translates into meaningful action.” In this respect, CITES implementation is like the silk of Samarkand’s scarves, or a spider for that matter: fragile as individual strands, yet strong when woven together.

**Upcoming Meetings**

**UNEA-7:** The seventh meeting of the UN Environment Assembly will convene under the theme “Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet.” **dates:** 8-12 December 2025 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** [unep.org/environmentassembly](https://unep.org/environmentassembly)

**IPBES 12:** The 12th session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES 12) will consider interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health as well as transformative change. It will be preceded by a Stakeholder Day on 2 February 2026. **dates:** 3-8 February 2026 **location:** Manchester, UK **www:** [ipbes.net/events/ipbes-12-plenary](https://ipbes.net/events/ipbes-12-plenary)

**CBD SBI 6:** The sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will review implementation of the CBD, including on matters related to resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, the Gender Plan of Action, capacity-building, and status update on national biodiversity strategies and action plans, national targets and national reporting. **dates:** 16-19 February 2026 **location:** Rome, Italy **www:** [cbd.int/meetings/SBI-06](https://cbd.int/meetings/SBI-06)

**CMS COP15:** The Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals will convene COP 15 with the theme “Connecting Nature to Sustain Life” to highlight the vital role of ecological connectivity in conserving ecosystems that support migratory species and human well-being. **date:** 23-29 March 2026 **location:** Campo Grande, Brazil **www:** [cms.int/cop15docs](https://cms.int/cop15docs)

**CBD SBSTTA 28:** The 28th meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) will discuss, among other things, the global review of progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF); synthetic biology; sustainable wildlife

management; and marine and coastal biodiversity. **dates:** 27 July - 1 August 2026 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** [cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-28](https://cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-28)

**CBD SBI 7:** The seventh meeting of the SBI will continue its work on reviewing implementation of the CBD and the GBF, ahead of COP 17. **dates:** 4-12 August 2026 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** [cbd.int/meetings/SBI-07](https://cbd.int/meetings/SBI-07)

**UNCCD COP 17:** Set to take place during the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, the COP to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification will bring Parties together to build on efforts to promote the sustainable management, restoration, and conservation of rangelands while accelerating action against desertification, land degradation, and drought. **dates:** 17-28 August 2026 **location:** Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia **www:** [unccdcop17.org](https://unccdcop17.org)

**CBD COP 17:** The 17th meeting of the CBD COP, the 12th Meeting of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CP-MOP-12), and MOP 6 to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilization (NP-MOP-6) will review GBF implementation and address policy- and implementation-related issues under the CBD and its Protocols. **dates:** 19-30 October 2026 **location:** Yerevan, Armenia **www:** [cbd.int/meetings/COP-17](https://cbd.int/meetings/COP-17)

**CITES CoP21:** The 21st meeting of the CITES CoP will take place in Panama City, Panama. **date:** 2028 **location:** Panama City, Panama **www:** [cites.org](https://cites.org)

For additional upcoming events, see: [sdg.iisd.org](https://sdg.iisd.org)

**Glossary**

AC	Animals Committee
ACI	African Carnivores Initiative
BBNJ	Biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction
CAP	Compliance Assistance Programme
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CoP	Conference of the Parties
ETIS	Elephant Trade Information System
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IPLCs	Indigenous Peoples and local communities
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants
NDFs	Non-detriment findings
NIAPs	National Ivory Action Plans
PC	Plants Committee
RST	Review of Significant Trade
SC	Standing Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme