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CITES PLANTS AND ANIMALS COMMITTEES HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2000

On Wednesday, the Plants Committee met for its last day to discuss, *inter alia*, significant trade, review of Appendices and issues related to the 9th Plants Committee (PC9). The Animals Committee addressed: the role and functions of Scientific Authorities; traditional medicines; review of animal taxa in the Appendices; seahorses; and time-sensitive research samples. Time-sensitive samples, seahorses and review of taxa were sent back for discussion in working groups. Significant trade in sturgeon, cobra and musk deer, transport of live animals and hard corals were also dealt with in working groups.

PLANTS COMMITTEE

SIGNIFICANT TRADE: The Committee congratulated Germany for an outstanding pre-COP-11 follow-up report of significant trade in medicinal plants (PC.10.2.1), which was adopted.

REVIEW OF APPENDICES: The Committee discussed how to proceed with the review of *Orchidaceae spp.* (PC.10.12.1). The Secretariat reported on the orchids working group's efforts to: separate orchid taxa into various groups depending on quantities and purpose of trade; review taxa requiring checklists; initiate identification materials for frequently traded orchids; and possibly exclude non-traded hybrid orchids. He invited representatives from the US, Australia, Suriname, the Netherlands, South Africa and the American Orchids Society to join the working group, in which Austria suggested including orchid traders and growers.

OTHER PC9 ISSUES: On evaluation of tree species using the new CITES listing criteria, the Netherlands outlined its efforts in information dissemination and agreed to collaborate with the Secretariat to continue review trade in timber species. On nomenclature problems (PC.10.13.2), the Nomenclature Committee Vice-Chair reported progress on: standardizing *Opuntia spp.* listings; covering *Aqualaria spp.* in the overall review of agarwood trade; resolving confusions in *Nordastachys grandiflora* synonyms; and recognizing *Pichorhiza kurrroa* as the only species listed. The Committee noted a taxonomic study of all *Cactaceae*, to be published in 2001.

On the Himalayan yew (*Taxus wallichiana*), (PC.10.13.3) the Nomenclature Vice-Chair said that review of nomenclature was ongoing. The US said various Eurasian species of the *Taxus* genus

were hard to identify and required attention. China offered assistance to the US in continuing studies in yew species nomenclature and taxonomy.

The Committee also discussed possibilities for providing information to the public on the significance of Appendix II. Europe called for providing TRAFFIC with funding for this initiative. The Chair and North America noted a lack of knowledge regarding Appendix II's potential to promote sustainable trade and use, notably among those trading in timber and medicinal plants. Many commented favorably on the use of a US pamphlet, "CITES and the Woods Products Trade" as a model for other Appendix II taxa.

IDENTIFICATION MATERIALS: Germany presented a progress report on identification materials for 19 medicinal and aromatic plants (PC.10.15.1). These materials incorporated US and TRAFFIC East Asia contributions and will be included in the Secretariat's Identification Handbook. Chair Clemente demonstrated Spain's Cordoba University website, which contains detailed information on the distribution, trade, common names, taxonomy and microscopic characteristics of listed tree species. China submitted a recently completed identification sheet for desert-living cistanche (*Cistanche deserticola*).

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Vice-Chair von Arx reported on a morning working group discussion on implementing the CITES strategic vision (PC.10.14.1). He pinpointed actions to: evaluate Party capacities, needs and opportunities to implement CITES; develop a simple guide to the review of significant trade in plants and a database on CITES decisions, procedures and plant species in trade; improve coordination between CITES authorities; include plant experts within Scientific Authorities; develop formats for permits, reporting and trade analysis of listed plant commodities; and promote greater awareness and cooperation among botanists regarding CITES. The UK suggested creating a more widely accessible electronic library of presentations and publications on CITES and plants. The Netherlands placed high priority on improving the scientific basis and information sharing between Scientific Authorities on non-detriment findings in traded plants.

Regarding trade in alien species, Austria noted the relevance of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and suggested consultation with the CBD Secretariat. The Committee decided to entrust Chair Clemente, Vice-Chair von Arx and the Secretariat with drafting and circulating a document which prioritizes projects.

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TRAINING INITIATIVES: The UK reported progress on the distribution of standard slide packages and confirmed continued funding for the project. The US asked for cooperation from all Parties in developing future packages. The Chair reported on the International University of Andalucia's course on all CITES aspects.

RULES OF PROCEDURE: Africa presented proposed changes, which require, *inter alia*: Scientific or Management Authorities to admit observer members; the Chair to participate in agenda drafting; the Secretariat to expedite web document postings; and changing the deadline for completing meeting records from 120 to 60 days after meetings. The Committee approved all proposed changes, except the change in deadline. The EU congratulated the Plants Committee for its "democratic" procedures.

OTHER BUSINESS: Germany presented a report on *Adonis vernalis*. The issue of the relationship between *ex-situ* breeding operations and *in-situ* conservation programmes was postponed until the next Plants Committee meeting, which will be held in Malaysia the first week of September 2001.

CLOSING PLENARY: In closing, South America noted the early conclusion of the meeting as a sign of efficiency. The Chair expressed satisfaction with the work of the Committee, thanked the US for their hospitality and closed the meeting at 5:25 pm.

ANIMALS COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF APPENDICES: Chair Hoogmoed noted that of the 31 species identified for taxa review, only nine reviews have been completed (AC.16.8). North America said it had received positive feedback from range States Scientific and Management Authorities. Asia expressed concern about reviewing species that exist in numerous range States. Africa said it gathered most of its information from the Internet, literature and databases. The Secretariat and Chair Hoogmoed emphasized the need to clearly define a standard review format, and several delegates noted the need for additional range States to complete questionnaires.

Indonesia reviewed the crab-eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) and suggested that, on the basis of literature review and trade reports, the species be taken off Appendix II. North America, supported by Europe and the IWC, suggested keeping this species with other primates in Appendix II. The US's report on saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*), drawn from a recent WCMC review, concluded that the species is properly listed in Appendix II, but may warrant future consideration for uplisting to Appendix I. The US's review of the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), based on responses to a mailed survey, supported maintaining the species on Appendix I.

On maleo (*Macrocephalon maleo*), Indonesia concluded that this bird species should be retained on Appendix I. The Wildlife Conservation Society, with Indonesia, highlighted a captive breeding programme for maleos, aimed at reintroducing populations to the wild. The leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), reviewed by the US, with input from the IUCN's sea turtle specialist group, concluded that an Appendix I listing is appropriate. Mexico and France agreed. Namibia recommended keeping dwarf pythons (*Python anchietae*) on Appendix II. Indonesia recommended retaining golden arowana (*Scleropages formosus*) on Appendix I, based on biological criteria. The UK recommended that Julien's golden carp (*Probarbus jullieni*) remain on Appendix I, based on such criteria as, *inter alia*, limited distribution area and decline in habitat quality. TRAFFIC expressed concern about the high volume of illegal trade of this species from Laos to Thailand. The US recommended, and Oceania supported, keeping black corals (*Antipatharia*) on Appendix II, but said it may need to be listed on Appendix I in the future, based on illegal harvesting information.

The Animals Committee established a working group on the review of the Appendices, to be chaired by North America.

SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITIES: The Secretariat underscored the need to strengthen the role of Scientific Authorities and suggested that a regional meeting of Scientific Authorities convene next year. South and Central America and the Caribbean offered to host the meeting. Mexico asked to be considered part of the South American region for this meeting. Africa underscored the valuable work carried out by Scientific Authorities. North America noted that the CITES Trust Fund supports enhancing Scientific Authorities. The Netherlands, with Israel and Spain, stressed the need to improve communication between Scientific Authorities, particularly in sharing of on non-detriment findings.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINES: The Secretariat presented a document on traditional medicines (AC.16.13), whose work programme will be finalized next year. Oceania supported as highest priority the inventory of captive breeding operations for medicinal use and development of a species checklist, including derivatives and parts traded for their medicinal properties. The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) reported on their work to establish traditional medicine vendor associations. She noted the need for a standardized product labeling system and a comprehensive list of traded animals, which IFAW volunteered to prepare, in collaboration with TRAFFIC.

CONSERVATION OF SEAHORSES: Project Seahorse introduced a document on the conservation of seahorses (*Syngnathidae*) (AC.16.19). She underscored evidence of declining seahorse populations due to trade, and proposed gathering information on the species' biology, catch and by-catch, trade and relevant legislation. She said there was no intention at this time to list seahorses. North America noted significant funding provided for a technical *Syngnathidae* workshop.

TIME-SENSITIVE RESEARCH SAMPLES: Switzerland introduced a document (AC.16.21) on time-sensitive research samples, which sets the goals of: identifying various types of samples transferred internationally between research institutions; categorizing samples based on their commercial, non-commercial and conservation elements; and evaluating the need for expedited transfer of samples. Chair Hoogmoed noted input from different professional areas, such as veterinarian, pharmaceutical and zoological fields. The Secretariat recommended that the working group focus on ways to make sample transfers efficient. Chile asked that all range States be included in the discussion. The US supported the document and the need for timely movement of tissue samples shipments used exclusively for scientific purposes. Israel urged the working group to consider controls on the transfer of eggs, sperm and frozen embryos, which might be disguised as time-sensitive research samples. The European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians noted the document's title does not mention health monitoring or law enforcement.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates celebrated a productive day with the rapid and fruitful conclusion of the Plants Committee meeting and the substantive dialogue of the Animals Committee working groups.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

ANIMALS COMMITTEE: The Committee will reconvene at 9:00 am to discuss animals bred in captivity, caviar labelling, sharks, Black Sea bottlenose dolphin, alien species, and freshwater turtles and tortoises. Working groups are scheduled to meet at 4:30 pm.