



SUMMARY OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA: 11-15 JANUARY 2016

The sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee (SC66) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 11-15 January 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland. Close to 500 participants from national governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations attended the meeting. The Committee addressed a long agenda, including, among others: livelihoods, captive breeding, and species trade and conservation, with discussions focusing on elephants and National Ivory Action Plans, rhinos, Asian big cats, saiga antelope, great apes, pangolins, sharks and rays, sturgeons and paddlefish, ebony and rosewoods and African teak.

Among different decisions, SC66 agreed to suspended trade in specimens of wildlife originating in Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Venezuela for failure to adopt appropriate measures for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Drawing attention to 14 parties (Bhutan, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Grenada, Guinea, Mali, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Panama, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, San Marino, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), that have failed to submit annual reports for three consecutive years and have not provided adequate justification for this, SC66 agreed to suspend all trade with them if they do not submit their annual reports within 60 days.

SC66 also recommended that parties suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with Nigeria, Angola and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic until these parties submit progress reports on National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs) implementation, acknowledging that some progress has been made towards NIAP actions.”

At the close of the meeting, CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon announced that Tajikistan joined the Convention as its 182nd member, with the accession effective on 30 March 2016.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of CITES	2
SC66 Report	3
Administrative and Financial Matters	3
Strategic Matters	5
Captive Breeding and Trade in Species Listed in Appendix I	7
Registration of Operations that Breed Appendix-I Animal Species in Captivity for Commercial Purposes	8
Enforcement	8
Asian Big Cats	8
Cheetahs	9
Elephants	9
Pangolins	12
Rhinoceroses	12
Snakes	13
Sturgeons and Paddlefish	13
Ebonies, Rosewoods, Palisanders from Madagascar	14
Bushmeat	14
Great Apes	15
Humhead Wrasse	15
Saiga Antelope	15
Sharks and Rays	16
Tibetan Antelope	16
Totoaba	16
Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles	16
Review of Resolutions	17
Amendment of the Appendices	17
National Laws for Implementation of the Convention	17
Exports and Imports of CITES Specimens Subject to National Decisions	17
Application of Article XIII	18
African Teak	18
National Reports	19
Review of Significant Trade in Appendix II Species	19
Trade Control and Traceability	20
Regional Matters	21
Closing Plenary	21
A Brief Analysis of SC66	21
Upcoming Meetings	22
Glossary	23

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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. As of January 2016, there are 181 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 regulate wildlife trade through controls and regulations on species listed in three appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade, permitting such trade only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix-II species are those that 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 those subject to domestic regulation by a party requesting the cooperation of other parties to control international trade in that species.

In order to list a species in Appendix I or II, a party needs to submit a proposal for approval by the Conference of the Parties (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 or not the species should be transferred or removed from the appendices.

There are approximately 5,600 fauna species and 30,000 flora species protected under the three CITES Appendices. Parties regulate international trade of CITES species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens listed in its appendices 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).

CONFERENCES OF THE PARTIES: 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.

CITES CoP13: CoP13 met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2-14 October 2004. Delegates addressed a range of topics, including 50 proposals to amend the CITES Appendices. CoP13 approved the listing of ramin, agarwood-producing taxa, the great white shark and the humphead wrasse in Appendix II, as well as the uplisting of the Irrawaddy dolphin from Appendix II to I. Regarding the African elephant, Namibia saw its request for an annual ivory quota rejected, but was allowed to proceed with a strictly-controlled sale of traditional ivory carvings. Delegates also agreed on an action plan to curtail unregulated domestic ivory markets. Namibia and South Africa were each allowed an annual quota of five black rhinos for trophy hunting, and Swaziland was allowed to open up strictly controlled hunting of white rhinos. Other decisions focused on synergies with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), while enforcement issues also received considerable attention.

CITES CoP14: CoP14 met in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 3-15 June 2007. Delegates addressed a range of topics including: the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013; a guide on compliance with the Convention; management of annual export quotas; and species trade and conservation issues, including Asian big cats, sharks and sturgeons. Delegates agreed that no cetacean species should be subject to periodic review while the International Whaling Commission moratorium is in place. CoP14 approved the listing of: slender-horned and Cuvier's gazelles and slow loris on Appendix I; Brazil wood, sawfish and eel on Appendix II; and to amend the annotation on African elephants to allow a one-off sale of ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe with a nine-year resting period for further ivory trade. Media spotlight was on negotiations on the future of ivory trade and African elephant conservation, with many highlighting the consensus by African range states as a major achievement.

CITES CoP15: CoP15 met in Doha, Qatar, from 13-25 March 2010. The meeting considered 68 agenda items and 42 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. CoP15 adopted resolutions and decisions directed to parties, the Secretariat and Convention bodies on a wide range of topics including: electronic permitting; Asian big cats; rhinoceroses; bigleaf mahogany; and Madagascar plant species. Regarding species listings, CoP15 decided to list, among others: Kaiser's spotted newt; five species of tree frogs; the unicorn beetle; rosewood; holywood; and several Madagascar plant species.

CITES CoP16: CoP16 met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3-14 March 2013. The meeting adopted 55 new listing proposals, including on sharks, manta rays, turtles and timber. Nine proposals were rejected (Caspian snowcock, Tibetan snowcock, saltwater crocodile, Siamese crocodile, South American freshwater stingray, Rosette river stingray, blood pheasant and two species of freshwater turtles). Three proposals were withdrawn: Southern white rhino and two African elephants.

Three were not considered: Indochinese box turtle; Ryukyu black-breasted leaf turtle; and Annam leaf turtle. The CoP also adopted strong enforcement measures to address wildlife crime.

SC64: SC64 convened in Bangkok, Thailand, on 14 March 2013. The meeting discussed: national ivory action plans, wherein the SC Chair noted the willingness of the eight parties concerned to cooperate to produce ivory action plans and to report on their implementation; and the establishment and renewal of working groups.

AC27 AND PC21 MEETINGS: AC27 convened in Veracruz, Mexico, from 28 April to 1 May 2014. AC27 was followed by the Joint Meeting of the AC and PC, which took place in Veracruz, Mexico, from 2-3 May 2014. Finally, PC21 met in Veracruz from 4-8 May 2014. The Committees focused on the levels of global commercial trade in products and derivatives of CITES-listed species, and the identification of cases of unsustainable use of species of conservation concern. Some species were highlighted for special review, including lions and cheetahs. The Committees also recommended bringing international trade in long-tailed macaque monkeys, Fischer's two-horned chameleons, West African and Asian three-spot seahorses and *Euphorbia itremensis* back to sustainable levels. The Committees also expressed concern over the sustainability of international trade in specimens of polar bears, pangolins, tortoises and turtles, and butterflies, and planned to examine these cases in more detail at their next meetings.

SC65: SC65 convened from 7-11 July 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. On Asian big cats, the SC agreed to establish an intersessional working group to report back at SC66. On cheetahs, the SC mandated the newly established intersessional working group to coordinate with the Secretariat on the organization of a workshop before the next AC meeting. On rhinos and elephants, the SC adopted recommendations requesting non-complying countries to meet a tight deadline to take actions, or suspension of trade may be considered.

AC28: AC28 convened from 30 August - 3 September 2015 in Tel Aviv, Israel. The AC addressed a lengthy agenda, including: extinct or possibly extinct species; freshwater stingrays; periodic review of species included in Appendices I and II; evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade (RST); captive-bred and ranched specimens; snake trade and conservation management; production systems for specimens of CITES-listed species; RST of Appendix-II species; and conservation and management of sharks. Delegates also considered proposals for possible listings at CoP17.

PC22: PC22 convened from 19-23 October 2015 in Tbilisi, Georgia. PC22 discussed: guidance on making non-detriment findings (NDFs) for trees; the Action Plan for Malagasy ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.) and Malagasy Rosewoods (*Dalbergia* spp.); capacity building; extinct or possibly extinct species; evaluation of the RST; harvesting of and trade in *Prunus africana* (African cherry); timber identification; amendment of the annotation for Appendix-II orchids to exempt finished products packaged and ready for retail trade containing components of Appendix-II orchids; standard nomenclature; and regional reports.

SC66 REPORT

On Monday, 11 January, SC Chair Øystein Størkersen (Norway) opened the meeting noting the busy agenda. He highlighted National Ivory Action Plans, stronger alliances with other organizations, UN General Assembly Resolution 69/314 on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as recent main achievements. He urged participants to complete the work needed before the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17).

CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon welcomed participants to SC66 and the European Union (EU) as a new party to the Convention. Noting the size and importance of SC66, he said the heightened interest in SC meetings will be the norm and has to be planned and budgeted for. He highlighted increased international support and financing, such as the new Global Environment Facility (GEF)-supported Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development.

SC66 then adopted the meeting's agenda (SC66 Doc.3) and the programme of work (SC66 Doc.4 Rev.1).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

RULES OF PROCEDURE: On Monday, SC66 adopted the Rules of Procedure for the SC (SC66 Doc. 5.1). The Secretariat introduced a document on the proposed process to review the Rules of Procedure of CITES bodies (SC66 Doc. 5.2), highlighting: inconsistencies in the participation of observers in the various Committees; the lack of guidance on the establishment and mandate of working groups; moving to a paper smart system where all documents would be uploaded on the CITES website rather than sent in hard copies; provision for the possibility of e-voting; and adjustments to reflect the fact that the EU, a regional economic integration organization, has now become a party to the Convention.

The EU, Norway, China, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Lewis and Clark College supported revising the Rules of Procedure. The US, for North America, supported the revision of the Rules of Procedure by CoP17 and requested the opportunity to provide written comments on amendments regarding the participation of regional economic integration organizations.

Japan, noting that several parties have not accepted the Gaborone Amendment of Article XXI to permit accession by regional economic integration organizations, supported the request by North America. Indonesia suggested reducing the number of working groups and reflecting further on e-voting.

Outcome: SC66 noted the Rules of Procedure and requested the Secretariat to prepare, in consultation with the Chairs of the AC, PC and SC, revised Rules of Procedures for CITES bodies and circulate for comments before CoP17.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST IN THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS COMMITTEES: On Monday, the Secretariat reported on the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 8). He invited SC66 to consider recommending to CoP17 the extension of Decision 16.9 to assess the functioning of the conflict of interest policy and make recommendations for

refining the definition of conflict of interest, if appropriate, and for a mechanism to deal with such conflicts for consideration at CoP17; and of Decision 16.10 for the Secretariat to compile examples of conflict of interest procedures under other relevant agreements and organizations. He further recommended reviewing the conflict of interest policy, and providing amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) as necessary for consideration at SC70, for adoption at CoP18.

Underscoring the need for transparency, the EU said they wanted conflict of interest declarations to be made public. Norway expressed support for the timeline. The US supported the document in the short term but said a formal decision-making mechanism might be necessary in the long term if the current rules prove insufficient. New Zealand pointed out that while actual conflicts of interest should be rare, it is also important to prevent against perceived conflicts of interests.

Outcome: SC66 agreed to endorse the extension of Decisions 16.9 and 16.10 at CoP17 and to provide amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) on establishment of committees as necessary for consideration at SC70, and eventual adoption at CoP18.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SECRETARIAT: Report of UNEP on administrative matters: On Monday, UNEP reported on collaboration with CITES on administrative matters (SC66 Doc. 9.1), covering, *inter alia*: support provided under the UN Office at Geneva (UNOG); a new UN system-wide Enterprise Resource Planning system, “Umoja”; and the report of the Task Team established to support effective multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) operation. Noting the CITES Trust Fund continues to be administered by UNEP until 31 December 2017, she invited SC66 to request an extension beyond 2017 at the next meeting of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) in May 2016.

The US lamented that the late submission of this UNEP report was not acceptable. Kenya said they were happy Umoja was functioning, explaining they had previously experienced difficulties with administration of the African Elephant Fund.

SC66 noted the report.

Report of the Working Group on options for administrative hosting arrangements for the CITES Secretariat: On Wednesday, the US, Chair of the Working Group, presented the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 9.3) including an option paper prepared by the Secretariat in the annex describing the current administrative arrangements and three possible options for revising them. He reported that the Working Group met briefly during SC66 and agreed it could continue with a narrower mandate to look at the financial implications of the various options, taking into account forthcoming reports by UNEP.

The EU, South Africa, Norway and Japan supported the extension of the Working Group. UNEP pointed out that it should be given the opportunity to fully contribute to the Working Group and noted that the outcomes of UNEA in May 2016 will be important considerations for the Working Group’s deliberations.

Colombia and Germany requested to participate in the Working Group. Egypt queried whether SC66 should take a

decision on this matter. Japan asked whether the options could be implemented without changing the Convention. Norway, noting UNEP’s intention to revise its MoU with CITES, suggested the Working Group add this as a potential task to its terms of reference.

SC Chair Størkersen noted this is an ongoing, party-driven process and the SC is not taking any decision at this stage.

Outcome: The SC noted the report and agreed to the participation of Colombia and Germany in the Working Group.

FINANCIAL MATTERS: Financial reports for 2014 and 2015: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 10.1), noting, *inter alia*, that with the adoption of Umoja, CITES bank accounts will no longer be operational as dispensing accounts, emphasizing that this represents a great loss for the Secretariat as the bank accounts enabled the Secretariat to operate in an efficient manner. The US proposed exploring alternative hosting arrangements for CITES.

Outcome: The SC noted the report and requested that the Finance and Budget Subcommittee explore, as suggested by the US, alternative hosting arrangements for the Secretariat, especially in light of the disruptions caused by Umoja, including a proposal with potential alternative scenarios to be considered at CoP17.

Report on proposed budget scenarios for 2017-2019: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 2, noting the increasing number of activities the Secretariat is tasked with and the limited human resources to address them. He emphasized the three proposed scenarios to be tabled at CoP17.

The Finance and Budget Subcommittee met during the week.

On Friday, Botswana, as Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, presented the report (SC66 Com. 5). Switzerland outlined the benefits of retaining the CITES Secretariat in Geneva.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the report and recommended that CoP17 not proceed with Decision 16.2(a) regarding exploring the necessity and feasibility as well as the legal and other implications of the GEF becoming a financial mechanism for CITES.

WILDLIFE DONOR ROUNDTABLE: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 10.4) describing the roundtable on illegal wildlife trade organized in cooperation with the World Bank, the UN Development Programme, UNEP and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and offering options for follow-up activities, including side events at CoP17 or future roundtables.

Outcome: SC66 noted the report and supported the Secretariat’s idea to organize, pending available resources, a second donor roundtable to explore the potential for scaled-up financial resources to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife.

ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL MEETINGS: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 11, recommending that CoP17 be invited to include an extra paragraph in its resolution on financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2017-2019, encouraging donor funding for special meetings, particularly in regions where most parties use French or Spanish

as the official language, to include provisions for translation into the working languages of the Convention and disburse funds in a timely manner.

The US suggested minor editorial changes. Niger suggested cancelling any special meeting when no funds for translation and interpretation are provided.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendation presented in the document, as orally amended by the US.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 17TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP17): On Monday, South Africa presented an update on the arrangements for CoP17 to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 24 September – 5 October 2016 and noted it will include a high-level ministerial meeting.

Outcome: SC66 noted the update, as orally presented by South Africa.

Preparation for CoP17: On Monday, the Secretariat presented the draft agenda (SC66 Doc. 12.2) and draft working programme (SC66 Doc. 12.3) for CoP17.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the documents without discussion.

Rules of Procedure: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced a document on the Rules of Procedure of the CoP (SC66 Doc. 12.4), highlighting possible options for amending Rule 26 on Majority and Rule 30 on Amendments regarding the majority required for amending the Rules of Procedure: option one proposing a two-thirds majority and option two proposing a simple majority.

The EU, the US and Norway supported the simple majority option. Japan did not support reopening the debate on this issue, explaining this was resolved at CoP16 and, with Botswana, Australia, Mexico, South Africa, Kuwait, China, and Viet Nam, supported the two-thirds majority option.

Outcome: The SC agreed to make no changes to Rules 26 and 30 of the Rules of Procedure of the CoP and to refer back to the interpretation of these rules, as agreed by CoP16.

Guidance on the submission of credentials: Report of the Working Group: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 12.5 and China, who chaired the intersessional Working Group on this matter, provided further clarifications. The US proposed including wording for accepting the credentials of officials working in an acting capacity. Norway supported finalizing the checklist and the adoption of the Draft Guidance for Submission of Credentials for Representatives at CoP17.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the suggestions made by the US and adopted the Working Group's recommendations.

Sponsored Delegates Projects: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 12.7, highlighting that donors have been approached and requested to assist parties so they can participate in CITES meetings. The EU stressed the importance of the sponsorship programme and proposed its formalization at CoP17.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the report and noted the EU's support for formalizing the Sponsored Delegates Projects.

STRATEGIC MATTERS

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS ON TACKLING ILLICIT TRAFFICKING IN WILDLIFE AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs): On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 13, noting UN General Assembly Resolution 69/314 on illicit trafficking: aims at both supply and demand side of wildlife trafficking; recognizes the role of CITES as an international legal instrument for conservation of wildlife and its linkages with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the UN Convention against Corruption, and the work of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC).

South Africa emphasized that both consumptive and non-consumptive use of wildlife contribute to sustainable livelihoods. The EU, with Norway, welcomed the adoption of the two resolutions. Colombia stressed that sustainable use by local communities is the most effective means for wildlife conservation. UNEP referred to the development by UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) of an analytical framework for predicting illegal trade that could form the basis for an early warning system.

SC66 noted the document.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITES STRATEGIC VISION: 2008-2020: On Wednesday, Brazil presented document SC66 Doc. 14, noting the contribution of CITES to the achievement of the Strategic Plan adopted by the CBD and the Aichi Targets, and requested SC66 to submit a proposal to CoP17 with recommendations on how CITES can contribute to Aichi Target 12.

The US, supported by Israel, encouraged Brazil to submit a document to CoP17 regarding decisions that would involve the Animals, Plants, and Standing Committees. Australia expressed concern about duplicating the Special Reporting Requirements Working Group's work drafting a decision for CoP17 to monitor progress with CITES' strategic vision. Norway suggested producing terms of reference for studies on the most endangered Appendix I listed species. New Zealand noted species with multiple range states or migratory species would require considerable reporting between countries.

Outcome: SC66 noted the document and recommended Brazil draft text for CoP17, considering complementarity with existing initiatives.

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the report on the celebration of the World Wildlife Day (SC66 Doc. 15.1 (Rev. 1)) on 3 March, and relevant recommendations, including for developed countries to use it as an opportunity to draw attention to wildlife challenges and for parties and other interested stakeholders to make voluntary contributions to secure the organization of World Wildlife Day 2016. Botswana, as Chair of the Working Group, announced the 2016 theme is "The future of wildlife is in our hands" with the sub-theme "The future of elephants is in our hands." Pointing to synergies, UNEP said the 2016 World Environment Day on 6 June will be dedicated to illegal trade in wildlife.

SC66 noted the report.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: On Wednesday, the Secretariat provided an overview of cooperation with other organizations, noting its efforts to be focused and pragmatic.

Options to strengthen cooperation, collaboration and synergies between CITES and the other biodiversity-related conventions: On Wednesday, the Secretariat reported on document SC66 Doc. 16.2, outlining five areas of cooperation: UNEP-related activities; the Biodiversity Liaison Group; processes led by the CBD; cooperation with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS); and information and knowledge management through the UN Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (InforMEA). He invited SC66 to provide guidance on how much effort the Secretariat should devote to synergies processes, and to endorse the draft decision for CoP17.

The US said synergies are most effectively leveraged at the national level and did not support joint reporting among conventions. Australia and Egypt encouraged more streamlined reporting across biodiversity-related conventions.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the document with minor amendments, including the recommendation that parties participate in activities to strengthen synergies at the national level among biodiversity-related conventions.

FAO - Report of the Working Group: On Wednesday, the Chair of the SC Working Group on Cooperation with FAO introduced the relevant report (SC66 Doc. 16.3), highlighting the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Several parties expressed support for cooperation between CITES and FAO and the draft MoU.

The SC noted the report and draft MoU.

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES): Report of the working group: On Wednesday, Mexico, Chair of the SC Working Group on IPBES, introduced the relevant report (SC66 Doc. 16.4). Several parties expressed support for the recommendations, including the recognition that at present, there is no need for a resolution that specifically refers to the relationship between CITES and IPBES.

The SC endorsed the report.

International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC): On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant report (SC66 Doc.16.5). Many parties spoke in support of the work done by ICCWC.

Outcome: The SC noted the report and encouraged parties to make full use of the ICCWC indicator framework for wildlife and forest crime developed by the Secretariat on behalf of ICCWC.

COOPERATION BETWEEN PARTIES AND PROMOTION OF MULTILATERAL MEASURES: On Wednesday, South Africa, Chair of the Working Group, presented document SC66 Doc. 17, noting that the Working Group is not proposing any new resolution or a revised resolution. Indonesia called for more inclusive an effective cooperation to tackle illegal trafficking of wildlife. The EU supported the recommendations by the Working Group.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the document and the issues highlighted in it, and agreed to consider the recommendations in paragraph 8(c) under the agenda item on Implementation relating to Captive Breeding.

CITES AND LIVELIHOODS: On Wednesday, Peru, Co-Chair of the Working Group on CITES and Livelihoods, introduced the document prepared by the Working Group (SC66 Doc. 18), including a draft decision.

Several parties supported the work done by the Working Group, including the request to conduct case studies as well as use the handbook produced for the application of the CITES and Livelihoods toolkit and guidelines. IUCN, on behalf of TRAFFIC, underscored the importance of recognizing the role of local communities in sustainably using natural resources and combating wildlife crime.

On Friday, Peru presented the draft decision (SC66 Com. 2), noting an addition by Australia directed to the Secretariat to cooperate with UN agencies, and international and regional organizations to support capacity-building activities that support parties to implement the Convention as an important part of enabling livelihoods.

The SC agreed to the proposal by the Working Group with the addition suggested by Australia.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the report and the draft decision, which, *inter alia*, calls on:

- parties to promote the use of the CITES and Livelihoods toolkit, guidelines and handbook; and
- the Secretariat to facilitate the organization of workshops and side events to showcase successful livelihood experiences and exchange lessons learned, in collaboration with interested parties and relevant international and regional organizations.

WILDLIFE TRADE POLICY REVIEWS: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 19). The Republic of Korea suggested sharing information on illegal trade occurring domestically.

The SC noted the report.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Proposal for consolidating resolutions and decisions on capacity building: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the proposal (SC66 Doc. 20.1 (Rev.1)).

Niger, supported by Kuwait, expressed concern about the dependence on virtual teaching for capacity building, given the internet access issues in some of the countries and offered some amendments to the proposed draft decisions.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the report and invited the Secretariat to submit its draft decisions to CoP17, taking into account the comments made by Niger.

Needs Assessment for Strengthening the Implementation of CITES: On Wednesday, Australia, Chair of the Working Group, presented the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 20.2 (Rev.1)), suggesting that the Working Group has completed its mandate.

Niger proposed the SC request the Secretariat to: issue a notification to parties inviting developing countries and countries in transition to communicate their precise training needs and formulate proposals for training; and report on this matter at the next SC.

Outcome: SC66 noted the document and requested the Secretariat to issue a notification to parties, as proposed by Niger, and report on the matter at SC69.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PLANTS

COMMITTEE: On Wednesday, the PC Asia representative introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 21) announcing that the PC Vice-Chair would step down.

SC66 noted the document.

CAPTIVE BREEDING AND TRADE IN SPECIES LISTED IN APPENDIX I

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION RELATING TO CAPTIVE-BRED AND RANCHED SPECIMENS:

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced its report (SC66 Doc. 41.1), noting that it was asked to look at case study examples. He observed that the percentage of specimens in trade from non-wild origin is increasing. By contrast, he noted that parties have not found ways to respond to this increase in trade, noting a lack of implementation practices and overarching policies. He also raised the question as to whether captive-breeding is beneficial or not to the conservation of the same species in the wild. He noted commercial trade in Appendix I species bred in captivity as well as dubious implementation of resolutions on captive breeding. He called for building greater capacity and new compliance measures.

AC Chair Carolina Caceres (Canada) presented the AC report (SC66 Doc. 41.2), which includes findings of the Working Group on Implementation of the Convention relating to Captive-Bred and Ranched Specimens, highlighting that non-compliance is a threat to species conservation in the wild.

The EU welcomed the efforts made by the Secretariat on the appropriate use of source codes. The US noted that the use of source codes is a core issue for the implementation of the Convention. He supported reviewing ambiguity in implementation of codes and exemptions. Norway supported the recommendations in the Secretariat's report as well as to do a review of the species bred in captivity and traded as highlighted in the AC report. South Africa, supported by Canada, expressed concern as to captive breeding's impact on species conservation in the wild. TRAFFIC, on behalf of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and other NGOs, welcomed the AC report, noting the impacts of captive breeding on species in the wild. He also highlighted the use of source codes and the need to treat the issue of incorrect use separately from that of deliberate misuse of source codes.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CONVENTION AS IT RELATES TO THE TRADE IN SPECIES LISTED IN APPENDIX I: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP:

On Monday, the US, Chair of the Working Group, introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 32.3), noting the overlap between the work of this Group and that of the AC Working Group on Implementation of the Convention Relating to Captive-Bred and Ranched Specimens.

The EU supported the views of the Working Group and urged the Secretariat to inform the SC on progress made when implementing Article XIII on International Measures of the Convention. He also suggested, supported by Norway, the idea of exploring the establishment of a compliance committee. He did

not support the recommendations on the review of the proposed resolution on captive breeding, noting much work has been done by the AC. Finally, he did not support the continuation of the Working Group. China noted that a new compliance mechanism for Appendix I species is not necessary and did not support the continuation of the Working Group. Israel noted that Appendix I species bred in captivity are always treated as such and not as Appendix II species for trade purposes.

On Monday, SC66 mandated a working group to look at SC66 Doc. 41.1 and 2 and Doc. 32.3 jointly.

On Thursday, the US suggested a change in paragraph 12 of Doc. 32.3 to recommend that the SC urge the Secretariat to move as expeditiously as possible with regard to compliance issues raised under Article XIII and to keep the SC informed of these issues intersessionally as well as at meetings of the SC.

On Friday, New Zealand, Chair of the in-session Captive Breeding Working Group, presented document SC66 Com. 10 and provided details on recommendations concerning: Secretariat liaison with Panama over their exports of poison arrow frogs; consideration of resource implications for the AC and PC; and suggested preambular language for Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13). On the draft resolution on a review of trade in animal species bred in captivity for CoP17, he listed a four-stage sequence of activities proposed by the Working Group: identification of species-country combinations for review; consultation with countries and compilation of information; review and recommendation by the AC and SC; and measures to be taken regarding the implementation of recommendations.

At the request of the Working Group Chair, Colombia submitted text for its recommendation on exports of *Crocodilus fuscus* (Caiman) from Colombia.

Explaining they were unaware the Working Group would be making recommendations, Guatemala expressed concern that they were not able to contribute to these discussions. The EU supported the Working Group's recommendations and noted the recommendations suggested by the Working Group's report provide an opportunity to make sure trade occurs in line with the Convention.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the document with a draft resolution and draft decisions for adoption at CoP17. The draft resolution directs the AC and SC, in cooperation with the Secretariat, relevant experts and in consultation with parties, to review biological, trade and other relevant information regarding animal species subject to significant levels of trade using source codes C, D, F or R, to identify problems associated with the implementation of the Convention and to develop solutions in accordance with the proposed four-stage sequence.

The draft decisions call on the Secretariat to: review ambiguities and inconsistencies in the application of the use of source codes R, F, D, A and C, including the underlying CITES policy assumptions and differing national interpretations that may have contributed to uneven application of these provisions, as well as the captive breeding issues presented in SC66 Doc. 17; submit the review to parties and stakeholders for comments through a notification; and submit its conclusions and recommendations along with the comments of parties and stakeholders to the SC.

With regard to *C. fuscus*, SC66 calls on Colombia to, *inter alia*, inform the Secretariat by 28 February 2016 about regulations and mechanisms that enable the Colombian CITES Management Authority to monitor and control exports of this species and the appropriate use of source codes, with a special attention being given to procedures that ensure that regulations are not circumvented on the occasion of the cutting of the skins.

ILLEGAL TRADE IN BAHAMIAN ROCK IGUANAS (CYCLURA RILEYI): REPORT OF THE CONTACT GROUP:

On Monday, the US, Chair of the Contact Group, introduced document SC66 Doc. 32.4, noting that Bahamas committed to use the ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit.

Outcome: SC66 noted that the recommendations related to the use of the Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit of ICCWC are currently being implemented.

REGISTRATION OF OPERATIONS THAT BREED APPENDIX-I ANIMAL SPECIES IN CAPTIVITY FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

REGISTRATION OF FACILITY A-US-524 (HYACINTH MACAW AVIARY, INC.) FOR HYACINTH MACAW:

On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 42.1 on an application from the US to include *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus* (Hyacinth macaw) in the CITES Register of operations that breed Appendix I animal species for commercial purposes and the objection by Bolivia. Bolivia and the US provided their respective positions on the issue. Bolivia requested, and the US agreed to, a vote on the issue.

Outcome: By a vote of five votes in favor, and four against, and seven abstentions, SC66 agreed to the deletion in the Register of captive breeding operations of Hyacinth Macaw Aviary Inc., in the US, for the breeding of *A. hyacinthinus*.

REGISTRATION OF THE OPERATION “NOUVELLE DÉCOUVERTE” BREEDING RADIATED TORTOISE:

On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant report *Astrochelys Radiata* (radiated tortoise) (SC66 Doc. 42.2) asking the SC to consider the objection by Madagascar concerning the registration of the captive breeding operation in Mauritius.

Outcome: SC66 proposed to revisit this issue at CoP17, in light of Mauritius’ absence at this meeting.

ENFORCEMENT

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented its report (SC66 Doc. 32.1) outlining enforcement-related activities since SC65, and recommendations. Highlighting the importance of increased efforts to combat corruption, he suggested a draft decision on developing guidelines to promote integrity policies and assisting parties to mitigate the risks of corruption in the CITES-related trade chain.

The US, Australia, South Africa and the EU supported the recommendations. The US, drawing attention to the report on illegal harvesting and trade of marine turtles (SC66 Inf. 7) proposed the SC ask the Secretariat to bring this issue to CoP17.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendations by the Secretariat and the proposal made by the US to develop a draft decision on marine turtles. In the recommendations, SC66:

- requests ICCWC, subject to external funding, to develop guidelines that could be used to promote adequate integrity policies, and assist parties to mitigate the risks of corruption in the trade chain as they relate to CITES-listed specimens; and
- encourages all parties to increasingly draw upon INTERPOL notices as a tool to bring those involved in illegal trafficking in wildlife to justice.

DISPOSAL OF ILLEGALLY TRADED AND CONFISCATED SPECIMENS OF APPENDIX I, II AND III SPECIES: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP:

On Thursday, Switzerland presented document SC66 Doc. 32.2, highlighting a proposal for consolidating Resolutions Conf. 9.9, 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) and Conf. 10.7 (Rev. CoP15) and two draft decisions for the development of a questionnaire on practices for the disposal of confiscated specimens and plants, and for the SC to report on implementation of the decisions at SC69.

The US suggested minor editorial changes to the recommendations. Indonesia suggested considering sales of confiscated specimens and cost of recovery. South Africa, the EU, Norway and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) supported the recommendations.

IUCN offered to share its revised guidelines for disposal of confiscated animals.

Outcome: SC66 forwarded the decisions and the consolidated resolution as amended by the US to CoP17 and referred the decision on the continuation and mandate of the Working Group to CoP17. The consolidated draft resolution, with regard to specimens that are exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention, recommends that when specimens are exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention, importing parties:

- consider that the seizure and confiscation of such specimens are generally preferable to the definitive refusal of the import of the specimen;
- notify as soon as possible the management authority of the state from which the specimens were consigned of the violation and of any enforcement actions taken concerning these specimens; and
- when the import of specimens that have been exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention is refused by the country to which the specimens are consigned, the exporting or re-exporting party take the measures necessary to ensure that such specimens are not re-entered into illegal trade, including monitoring their return to the country and providing for their confiscation.

ASIAN BIG CATS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT AND THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP:

On Monday, the Secretariat presented its report (SC66 Doc. 44.1), including draft decisions for CoP17 and recommendations to the SC. China, Chair of the Working Group on Asian Big Cats, presented the Working Group’s report (SC66 Doc. 44.2), highlighting that, despite best efforts, the Group did not reach agreement on several issues. He suggested the Group reconvene to address outstanding issues.

Viet Nam reported national initiatives, including on monitoring tigers in captive breeding, demand reduction

campaigns, capacity building, and legislative measures. SC Chair Størkersen suggested, and the SC agreed, to adopt the Secretariat's report's recommendations to: encourage parties to ensure that measures are in place to secure the Asian big cats specimen stockpile; to take note of India's legislative measures on the disposal of big cat carcasses and body parts as good practices; encourage China, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam to continue and strengthen their engagement in operational enforcement activities within the framework of the INTERPOL Project Predator Tiger Crime Initiative, and any similar future initiatives; and welcome Operation Protection of Asian Wildlife Species II (Operation PAWS II).

The Working Group was tasked with addressing the remaining recommendations contained in documents SC66 Doc. 44.1 and 44.2 and met on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

On Friday, China introduced the draft decisions (SC66 Com. 11). The EU, supported by the Wildlife Protection Society of India, on behalf of many NGOs, called on implementing Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) on Asian Big Cats.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the following decisions, calling on:

- the Secretariat to continue the review of implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) and associated decisions and prepare a report providing its findings and recommendations for SC69 and SC70 in consideration of legislative and regulatory measures; national law enforcement; demand reduction, education and awareness; prevention of illegal trade in parts and derivatives from Asian big cat captive facilities; and management of national and privately-held stocks of parts and derivatives;
- parties with Asian big cat captive facilities to review national management practices and controls that are in place for Asian big cat captive facilities, to ensure that these management practices and controls are adequate to prevent Asian big cat specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities; and ensure strict application of all management practices and controls implemented to regulate the activities of Asian big cat captive facilities, including with regard to the disposal of specimens from Asian big cats that die in captivity; and
- parties to welcome a mission by the Secretariat to Asian big cat captive facilities of concern with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the operations and activities undertaken by them.

CHEETAHS

ILLEGAL TRADE IN CHEETAHS: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP: On Thursday, Kuwait introduced the relevant document on *Acinonyx jubatus* (Cheetah) (SC66 Doc. 32.5), highlighting the work done intersessionally, including the workshop organized to review the challenges in addressing illegal trade in cheetahs and the set of recommendations the workshop endorsed.

The EU, Indonesia, South Africa, Botswana, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, Kenya, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and others supported the recommendations. IFAW highlighted the risks posed by e-commerce in furthering illegal trade and asked that

the Captive Breeding Working Group take note of wild cheetahs traded as captive bred.

Outcome: The SC noted the report and endorsed the recommendations in the document with minor amendments. In the recommendations, range states of cheetahs and countries involved in the illegal trade chain are encouraged to:

- further strengthen national and regional enforcement actions concerning the illegal trade in cheetahs involving all relevant enforcement agencies, and take them into account when developing work programmes and undertaking law enforcement operations;
- make use of existing systems for exchange of information provided by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, or, as appropriate, establish mechanisms to ensure regular, timely and effective communication between these countries regarding illegal trade in cheetahs;
- immediately bring information on poaching and illegal trade in cheetahs, including parts and derivatives, to the attention of relevant authorities in source, transit and destination countries for appropriate enforcement actions and follow-up; and
- request support from ICCWC partners and subject to available funding, conduct joint operations between East Africa and the Middle East, targeting known or suspected smuggling routes.

ELEPHANTS

ELEPHANT CONSERVATION, ILLEGAL KILLING AND IVORY TRADE: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC65 Doc. 47.1 on the status of implementation of decisions pertaining to: reports on elephant conservation status, the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP), Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) and Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS); CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force; ivory identification techniques; an anti-money-laundering and asset recovery manual; collaboration with UNODC; large-scale ivory seizures; illegal trade in live Asian elephants; and ivory stockpiles.

Kenya, Chair of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee, reported that 21 projects have been approved across four subregions amounting to approximately US\$1 million, and the Fund has received pledges for funding from Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. He concluded that the African Elephant Fund is fully operational and called on donor countries to join the African Elephant Fund and support implementation of the AEAP.

Uganda, the EU, the US, Norway, Botswana and South Africa supported the recommendations put forward in document SC66 Doc. 47.1.

The IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group reported they are compiling the African Elephant Status Report and will publish it in time for CoP17, adding it is the first update of this information since 2006. She noted that even if poaching is brought within sustainable levels, the impacts of climate change and land-use change will continue to be a problem, adding that IUCN is seeking resources to initiate research on the areas of conflict between people and elephants and case studies of positive interactions. IUCN further urged SC66 to note the long-standing problem of Asian range states not reporting Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE) data.

The EU urged priority be given to illegal trade in wild African elephants and requested the Secretariat prepare a decision for CoP17 to provide guidance on ivory stockpiles. The US underscored the importance of promoting long-term collaboration among enforcement authorities. Niger encouraged developing ivory stockpile management systems to ensure stockpiles are destroyed after conducting necessary inventories, audits and forensic analysis. South Africa noted the need to address significant immediate and long-term threats to elephant populations due to habitat loss from landscape changes. Kenya underscored the importance of providing data for MIKE, having clear standards for reporting, and supported convening a meeting from parties concerned with developing national ivory action plans (NIAPs). Sri Lanka announced it will be holding an event to publically destroy all stockpiled ivory. Zimbabwe outlined efforts contained within their National Elephant Management Plan, including conducting aerial surveys of core range areas, joint law enforcement activities, ranger training and deployment of rapid response teams in hotspot areas.

The Center for Conservation Biology endorsed stockpile destruction but cautioned against doing it without prior forensic analysis. Noting a discrepancy in the number of trophies reported by exporters and importers, Durham University asked for standardized reporting of hunting trophies.

Outcome: SC66 urged all parties to report comprehensive and accurate data as required by the MIKE and ETIS monitoring systems by 31 January 2016, and to conduct and release the results of elephant population surveys according to MIKE standards in a timely manner; and requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to this effect, noting Kenya's request to issue a separate Notification to the Parties on large ivory seizures.

The SC also requested the Secretariat to prepare a proposal to incorporate Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16) in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) for consideration at CoP17. SC66 agreed to submit to CoP17 a draft decision, which calls for:

- convening a meeting of representatives from parties concerned with the development and implementation of NIAPs, in cooperation with ICCWC partner organizations;
- identify opportunities for cross-border collaboration and regional cooperation, joint actions, and resource mobilization; and
- discuss shared challenges and technical assistance needs.

The SC also agreed to propose a decision, for consideration at CoP17, to request the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide guidance on "best practices" for the management of legal and illegal ivory stockpiles.

REPORT OF THE MIKE AND ETIS SUBGROUP: On Tuesday, Uganda informed participants that the subgroup would meet at the margins of SC66 and report back later in the week.

On Friday, Uganda presented the report (SC66 Com. 9), highlighting that the component of the ETIS report to CoP17 that assesses the involvement of countries in the illicit ivory trade (i.e. the cluster analysis), will be based on bias-adjusted seizure data for the period 2012-2014 and that it will be difficult to measure the impact of NIAP implementation in the ETIS results

to CoP17 since implementation in most cases only started in 2014. He added this may only be possible when ETIS has the data to assess the years 2014-2016.

SC66 took note of the report.

DISPOSAL OF IVORY STOCKS: THE GROWTH OF IVORY DESTRUCTIONS: On Tuesday, Kenya presented document SC66 Doc. 47.3 submitted by Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Kenya, highlighting an increase in ivory destructions, with an average of one event per month in 2015, and recommending SC66 endorse the action taken by several countries in destroying ivory stockpiles.

Malaysia stated its intention to destroy ivory stockpiles. The US reported it destroyed six tons of confiscated ivory in 2015 and noted different views exist on whether the destruction should refer to illegal stockpiles or stockpiles acquired by natural causes. Uganda supported the recommendation for illegally obtained ivory. Niger, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo supported the recommendation in the document.

Botswana, with South Africa, did not support destruction of legitimate stockpiles. South Africa stated the SC can at most "take note of the action" and not "endorse" and cautioned against unintentional consequences of the destructions of stockpiles, including a rise in ivory prices due to increased scarcity.

Norway, joined by the US and Safari Club International, suggested the SC should "take note" rather than "endorse" the action taken for destroying the stockpiles.

New Zealand clarified that it has not made any decision regarding holding an ivory destruction event as mentioned in the document. Israel noted the need to collect DNA before destroying the ivory. Humane Society International, with Species Survival Network (SSN), contested that the destruction of ivory stockpiles leads to increased ivory prices.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the action taken since SC65 by China, Ethiopia, Hong Kong SAR, India, Kenya, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo, Thailand, UAE and the US, in destroying ivory stockpiles in response to the upsurge in elephant poaching and illegal trade.

UPDATE ON THE ELEPHANT PROTECTION INITIATIVE (EPI): On Tuesday, Botswana presented document SC66 Doc. 47.6 welcoming The Gambia, Uganda, Malawi and Kenya as new members of the EPI and the Republic of Congo as a prospective member, and the joint statement of 25 September 2015 by the US and China on their commitments to restrict import and export of ivory and halt domestic commercial trade in ivory.

South Africa stated the SC does not have the mandate to support the recommendations and that the EPI could divert funds from the AEAP. Kenya stressed that the EPI and the African Elephant Fund are looking at how to complement each other and that the EPI has contributed to activities of the AEAP. Niger emphasized the importance of action in consumer countries to reduce demand for ivory and congratulated the US and China for their initiatives in this direction.

Ethiopia noted the contribution of both EPI and the African Elephant Fund. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) supported the EPI and expressed its interest in becoming a member.

SC Chair Størkersen proposed, and the SC agreed, to amend the recommendations for the SC to take note of the action delivered through the EPI, and that EPI members encourage other range states to join.

SC66 took note of the document.

NATIONAL IVORY ACTION PLANS PROCESS: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 29 (Rev.1), highlighting that NIAPs are a tool to enhance the national implementation of CITES provisions regarding control of trade in ivory. He noted that six of the countries of “primary concern” have substantially achieved NIAP actions and that several countries of “secondary concern” and of “importance to watch” have had mixed compliance results.

The EU expressed concern about poaching and illegal ivory trade and supported the continuation of this process until new MIKE and ETIS data are available, as recommended by the Secretariat. He also urged to intensify the process by identifying new countries of concern. He suggested that a working group meet to discuss NIAPs. Uganda supported addressing gaps and weaknesses in the NIAPs. Thailand reaffirmed its commitment in addressing illegal ivory trade. He also offered to report voluntarily on NIAP implementation at SC67. The US expressed concern for the ongoing poaching and highlighted the actions taken at the national level, including prohibiting the import of ivory for commercial purposes. She also called on identifying new countries of concern when the MIKE and ETIS data become available, and on the existing countries of “concern” to continue implementing their NIAPs and reporting on them. Niger encouraged countries with domestic trade in ivory to close it. The UAE requested to be removed from the list of the countries of “importance to watch,” given its compliance with the implementation of CITES provisions concerning control of trade in elephant ivory and ivory markets.

TRAFFIC praised the clear reduction in trade of ivory in Thailand but underscored it does require continued attention. However, he expressed concern for some countries that have not reached this stage, including Mozambique, and thus they should be subjected to deadlines for addressing legislation gaps and loopholes.

In light of the SC Chair’s decision not to establish a working group, the EU proposed several changes to the recommendations in the document, including to: invite China to provide more information on timelines and actions, changes in regulations on imports of ivory; invite Hong Kong SAR to provide more information on registration of ivory stockpiles; invite Thailand to provide information on verification of registration of ivory traders; and urge Tanzania to report on CITES regulations in Zanzibar.

On Friday, the EU presented its proposal on paragraph 49 of SC66 Doc. 29 (Rev.1) (SC66 Com. 1), orally noting some changes to the section on encouraging China (including Hong Kong SAR), Kenya, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam to report to the Secretariat on further measures taken to implement their NIAPs.

Thailand suggested: recommending that CoP17 identify countries that have made commendable progress, adding that it may be too soon at CoP17 to identify the impacts of NIAP

implementation as noted in the report of the MIKE and ETIS subgroup (SC66. Com. 9); and that the ETIS will be based on bias-adjusted seizure data covering the period 2012-2014.

The SC agreed to the changes proposed as well as to minor editorial changes suggested by the Secretariat.

Outcome: SC66:

- commended China (including Hong Kong SAR), Kenya, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam for substantially achieving their NIAPs, and encouraged these countries to report to the Secretariat by 30 June 2016 on any further measures taken to implement their NIAPs and, if appropriate, any other initiative or policy development to combat elephant poaching and illegal ivory trade;
- requested the Secretariat to identify parties of “primary concern,” “secondary concern” and “importance to watch,” based on an analysis of the MIKE and ETIS reports that will be prepared for CoP17, and to make recommendations for consideration by CoP17;
- noting that Nigeria, as a party of “secondary concern,” and Angola and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, as parties of “importance to watch” did not submit reports on progress with NIAP implementation that allowed for their progress to be reflected in document SC66 Doc. 29 (Rev.1), recommended that parties suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with Nigeria, Angola and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic until such time as these parties submit a progress report on NIAP implementation confirming that some progress has been made towards NIAP actions;
- requested Malaysia, Uganda and Tanzania, as parties of “primary concern,” Cameroon, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Nigeria, as parties of “secondary concern,” and Angola, Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, as parties of “importance to watch,” to: report on the further measures taken to implement their NIAPs to the Secretariat by 30 June 2016 so that the Secretariat can make the reports available to SC67 and convey any recommendations it may have. In that respect, SC66 particularly encourages: Mozambique to provide information on further measures taken to progress actions rated as “challenging” or “unclear” in Annex 1 of document SC66 Doc. 29 (Rev. 1), including a clear timeframe for the completion of these actions; and Tanzania to provide further information on any prosecutions of offenders involved in the poaching of elephants and/or ivory trafficking, any forensic samples collected from ivory seizures, and on the amendment of legislation including CITES regulations for Zanzibar.

DECISION-MAKING MECHANISM FOR AUTHORIZING IVORY TRADE: Report of the Secretariat:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 47.4.1), which included a UNEP background document for the Decision-Making Mechanism Working Group.

Proposal by Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Kenya:

On Tuesday, Burkina Faso introduced document SC66 Doc. 47.4.2 that recommends that the SC use its authority to suspend the Working Group on the Decision-Making Mechanism for a

Process of Trade in Ivory, and recommend that CoP17 does not extend the mandate provided under Decision 16.55, and formerly Decision 14.77.

Uganda, Niger, Kenya, Israel and DRC supported the recommendations. Japan opposed, noting that poaching cannot be controlled without some financial incentives and therefore ivory trade could be a measure to control poaching.

Botswana, supported by South Africa and Zimbabwe, underscored that the SC should fulfill the mandate set under Decision 16.55. The US recognized the need for a decision-making mechanism but underscored that very little progress has been made and very little time is left before CoP17. He supported the views of Benin, Burkina Faso and others that the status of elephants has deteriorated and, therefore, discussion on a decision-making mechanism can send a wrong message to poachers and ivory traders. He recommended suspending discussions on this issue and asking CoP17 whether to extend the mandate of the working group.

The EU noted that it did not see a need for a decision-making mechanism at this stage. Wildlife Conservation Society, on behalf of many NGOs, said that the decision-making mechanism is no longer relevant and supported the recommendations.

Outcome: The SC noted the report of the Secretariat and that the Working Group was unable to complete the work; and asked CoP17 to seek guidance on whether the Working Group's mandate should be extended.

CONF. 10.9 ON CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR THE TRANSFER OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT POPULATIONS FROM APPENDIX I TO APPENDIX II: On Tuesday, Botswana, as Chair of the Working Group, summarized progress made on the Review of Resolution Conf. 10.9. Pointing to resource constraints, he lamented the Working Group was not able to carry out its mandate and requested SC66 propose that CoP17 extend its mandate to CoP18, in order to provide an opportunity for all affected range states to interact.

Outcome: SC66 supported a proposal at CoP17 to extend the Working Group's mandate to CoP18.

PANGOLINS

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP AND THE FIRST PANGOLIN RANGE STATES MEETING: On Tuesday, the EU, Chair of the Working Group on pangolins, presented document SC66 Doc. 50.1.

The US presented the report on the First Pangolin Range States Meeting (SC66 Doc. 50.2), which it co-hosted with Viet Nam, saying it represents a pangolin conservation action plan and provides a suite of recommendations to address conservation, management and enforcement to protect against over-exploitation from illegal and unsustainable legal trade.

Botswana, the EU, Niger, US and Zimbabwe supported the recommendations in both documents. Niger stressed priority be given to demand reduction and urged consumer states to implement appropriate measures. Noting the illegal trade and slow reproduction rate of pangolins, India supported breeding pangolins for conservation and scientific research purposes. China urged caution on recommending transferring pangolin species to Appendix I, explaining there is limited data on wild populations.

IUCN said that according to their revised Red List assessment, all eight pangolin species are threatened with extinction.

IFAW, on behalf of many, stressed captive breeding is not an appropriate or feasible tool for conservation and should not be looked at as an answer to the pangolin crisis, explaining there were no known instances of successful captive breeding and instances of keeping pangolins alive in captivity were also rare.

The Zoological Society of London endorsed strengthening enforcement efforts, reducing consumer demand, and monitoring and reporting. Save Viet Nam Wildlife recommended transferring all pangolin species to Appendix I.

On Friday, the EU introduced document SC66 Com. 4, outlining their proposed draft resolution and decision for consideration at CoP17. She explained changes to the content of the resolution included urging all parties to: adopt and implement legislation to ensure strict enforcement controls to address illegal trade; strengthening inter-agency and international cooperation; carry out capacity-building activities; and promote the development of techniques, including the application of forensic science, for identifying parts and derivatives of pangolins in trade.

Outcome: SC66 agreed on the recommendations in the document, including changes to text in the resolution and decision. The resolution urges parties to:

- adopt and implement comprehensive national legislation or review existing legislation that makes provision for deterrent penalties to address illegal trade in native and non-native pangolin specimens;
- further strengthen national inter-agency cooperation and international cooperation and to enhance collective efforts as range, transit and destination states to deliver coordinated activities and law enforcement responses to combat illegal trade in pangolin specimens; and
- promote the development of techniques, including the application of forensic science, for identifying parts and derivatives of pangolins in trade.

The draft decision calls on the Secretariat to liaise with ICCWC, partner agencies and regional enforcement networks such as the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Wildlife Enforcement Network and other relevant enforcement networks to convey the concerns expressed in the draft resolution about the illegal trade in pangolins.

RHINOCEROSES

REPORTS OF THE SECRETARIAT AND WORKING GROUP: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 51.1 and the Chair of the Working Group on Rhinoceroses presented the Group's report (SC66 Doc. 51.2).

Niger stressed the need to focus on initiatives to reduce demand. The US emphasized the importance of robust recommendations from the SC and supported a meeting of the Working Group at SC66. South Africa reported on recent national initiatives on rhino protection and highlighted the costs of fighting rhino poaching. Norway supported the recommendations in the Secretariat's report. Zimbabwe reported 484 black and 327 white rhinoceros in the country as of July 2015.

The EU supported targeting recommendations at Mozambique and Viet Nam and noted that failure to comply should result in sanctions. India reported a decline in rhino poaching and supported a study on reducing demand. Viet Nam reported the signing of an MoU with China on CITES implementation, work with NGOs on demand reduction, and a ban on imports of rhino and elephant specimens from Africa.

Born Free stressed the need for an assessment of stockpiles of rhino horn and derivatives and efforts to collate information on demand reduction for rhino horn.

On Friday, the UK presented the consolidated recommendations (SC66 Com. 7), noting some further changes were made to the document after it was circulated.

He highlighted that the Working Group suggested deleting the recommendations to request: range states and all parties having stocks of rhino horns and derivatives to declare the status of the stock; the Secretariat to review the rhino horn stock declarations; and the IUCN/Species Survival Commission African and Asian Rhino Specialist Group and TRAFFIC to include an analysis of the above information provided by parties for consideration at CoP17. He noted the recommendation that the SC proposes an amendment to Resolution Conf.9.14 (Rev. CoP15) for consideration at CoP17 to the effect that the CoP: urges all parties that have stocks of rhinoceros horn to identify, mark, register and secure such stocks and declare these to the Secretariat each year before 28 February in a format to be defined by the Secretariat; and directs the Secretariat to: make an aggregated summary of the rhino horn stock declarations of parties available to the IUCN Species Survival Commission African and Asian Specialist Group and TRAFFIC for analysis and inclusion in their reporting to the Secretariat pursuant to the resolution.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the recommendations in SC66 Com. 7 as orally amended. The recommendations encourage parties to, *inter alia*:

- make every effort to effectively implement Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) and the strategies and proposed actions developed by the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force;
- ensure that national level measures are in place for the management of imported rhinoceros horn trophies, including addressing the issue of alteration and transfer of such trophies, to ensure that rhinoceros horns acquired as legal hunting trophies remain in lawful possession; and
- consider South Africa's National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, under which a permit is required to possess rhinoceros horn in South Africa, whether it is an individual horn or a number of horns, or any part, product or derivative of a rhinoceros horn, as a possible model that could be drawn upon by parties to develop national level measures for the management of rhinoceros horn.

SNAKES

SNAKE TRADE AND CONSERVATION

MANAGEMENT: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 54.1, noting it refers to the implementation of CoP16 decisions directed to the Secretariat and the AC. The Chair of the Working Group on Snake Trade and Conservation

Management presented the report (SC66 Doc. 54.2) on implementation of CoP16 decisions directed to the SC and requested the Working Group meet during SC66.

The EU regretted the lack of response from Asian parties regarding the implementation of Decision 16.106 on illegal and unreported trade in snakes. The EU, China and Malaysia supported the recommendations contained in the documents.

Indonesia asked for clarification on the recommendations regarding stockpiles and noted it will report to the next SC on improvements in law enforcement and regulation. Mexico, with the US, suggested considering SC66 Doc. 34.2 on the socio-economic considerations under this agenda item in the development of a global traceability information system for reptile skins. India noted the need for capacity building.

The SC referred the draft decision, draft resolution and the issue of traceability to the Working Group.

On Friday, Switzerland presented document SC66 Com. 6 prepared by the Working Group. He invited the SC to: consider the revised draft resolution on the conservation, sustainable use of and trade in snakes; the draft decisions contained in Annex 2; and, concerning SC66 Doc. 34.2, note the report by Mexico, and in particular its contribution to the discussions of the implementation of Decision 16.105 on the socio-economic implications of the traceability system.

The US suggested deleting reference to snake NDF guidance, as specific snake NDF guidance does not exist. China, opposed by Switzerland and the US, suggested to use "encourage" rather than "recommends" in the draft resolution.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the draft resolution, which, *inter alia*, encourages parties to share experiences in the use of traceability systems for specimens of CITES listed snakes, including the use of identification technologies and draft decisions, which:

- recommend that Southeast Asian parties engaged in the snake trade verify the origin of animals trade between countries in the region and ensure the appropriate use of source codes; and
- encourage range states to submit listing proposals for the four species categorized as "likely to be threatened by trade" and for the three species categorized as "may be threatened by trade" and have an IUCN status.

STURGEONS AND PADDLEFISH

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP AND THE

ANIMALS COMMITTEE: On Tuesday, Germany, Chair of the Working Group on Sturgeon and Paddlefish, introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 55.1), noting that for aquaculture plants, in addition to their registration number providing the list of species held by each respective plant and which are specifically used for caviar processing, was a contentious issue. She also offered the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) on the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish that reflect this.

The AC Chair introduced its report (SC66 Doc. 55.2), noting that the funds had not yet been made available to support the study requested in Decision 16.136.

The Russian Federation expressed concern with regard to references to the stock in the Caspian Sea and asked that they be deleted, including the table on the stocks shared by range states

and the respective species. She also lamented that the Working Group's report does not reflect the views of the other Caspian Sea countries.

The EU and the US supported the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7. The US did not support revisiting the personal effects exemption for caviar and the definition of country of origin.

On Friday, Germany introduced the working group's proposed amendments to SC66 Doc. 55.1 Annex, and a new definition for "country of origin" (SC66 Com. 8). The US objected to the definition, explaining it is contrary to the common definition and would make it difficult to trace product origins.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed, with some amendments, the recommendations of the Working Group with the exception of the new definition of "country of origin." On this, SC66 agreed to bracket the new definition text, and requested the Secretariat review it intersessionally and revert back at SC67.

EBONIES (DIOSPYROS SPP.) AND ROSEWOODS AND PALISANDERS (DALBERGIA SPP.) FROM MADAGASCAR

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 46.1), summarizing, *inter alia*: regarding confiscation of specimens exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention, and disposal of confiscated and accumulated specimens (Resolution Conf. 9.9 and Resolution Conf. 9.10, respectively), the Secretariat recommends acknowledging progress Madagascar has made with science-based precautionary export quotas, establishing a process to identify the main species to be exported, and preparing identification material and tests for use in CITES enforcement to identify main taxa traded. She lamented that despite support provided by the Secretariat to Madagascar, there are serious concerns about illegal logging and exports, noting that while on paper an embargo exists it has not been effectively implemented on the ground. She concluded it was premature to approve selling timber stockpiles until Madagascar has made concrete progress with the embargo on stock export and suggested SC66 consider also suspending trade in specimens of the species *Dalbergia* and *Diospyros* from Madagascar.

Madagascar summarized their report (SC66 Doc. 46.2), explaining major advances of their scientific authority with reference to technology for identification of mixed woods, requesting support to ensure the entire Action Plan is implemented, and underscoring the importance of working with importing and transit countries. He noted Sri Lanka's announcement to auction seized Madagascar wood.

The EU, supported by the US, Switzerland and Norway, provided additional recommendations to be incorporated into SC66 Doc. 46.1, including requiring Madagascar to submit their report demonstrating significant increases in enforcement at the national level, particularly about seizures, sanctions and response procedures by 30 April 2016 rather than SC67. He expressed concern about the Singapore court ruling to release rosewood from Madagascar. CITES Secretary-General Scanlon reported he had received a briefing from the Singapore Management Authority regarding this but was unable to share findings because the case is under appeal.

Lamenting Madagascar is the target of traffickers, Niger and Egypt urged the Secretariat to assist and support them in their efforts. Egypt and Colombia encouraged maintaining the original SC67 deadline for Madagascar to submit their report.

WWF supported recommendations provided by the Secretariat and the EU. He expressed concern that traffickers are not seriously discommoded by the current zero quota, urging actions be taken on this. He requested clarification from the Secretariat whether importing countries should accept shipments from Singapore. World Resources Institute supported the Secretariat's recommendations and stressed the importance of transparency and security on the ground for NGOs and civil society members. He stressed Sri Lanka has no business in auctioning "stolen goods." SSN expressed concern about the failure to implement key points of the Action Plan, noting stockpile audits have only just started and have focused almost entirely on seized stockpiles, representing only 10% of all stockpiles.

Explaining the deadline for submission of reports for SC67 is 25 July 2016, Chair Størkersen suggested, and the EU agreed, that this be the deadline for Madagascar. He further suggested consolidating the recommendations from the EU with those in the existing document.

On Friday, the Secretariat introduced SC66 Com. 13, outlining the proposed recommendations.

Outcome: SC66 recommended that all parties suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Dalbergia* spp. and *Diospyros* spp. from Madagascar until:

- Madagascar submits a report to the Secretariat by 25 July 2016, demonstrating that the country has significantly increased enforcement actions at the national level;
- the Secretariat assesses the report by Madagascar and evaluate in particular how the actions implemented by Madagascar fulfil the requirements presented under the action plan; and
- the Secretariat shares its assessment of Madagascar's report with SC67.

BUSHMEAT

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP: On Thursday, AC Chair Caceres, Chair of the Bushmeat Working Group, discussed document SC66 Doc. 45 and outlined outstanding issues on differences around whether to use of the term "bushmeat" or "wild meat," and whether to include a definition of bushmeat in the preambular text and, if so, what definition to use. She requested SC66 consider these issues and endorse the revised Resolution Conf. 13.11 and consider the draft decision directing the Secretariat to work with partners to assist parties in the implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.11.

The US said they do not support changing reference to wild meat, including a definition of bushmeat and supported the draft decision on Resolution Conf. 13.11 with amendments. Canada expressed the wish to use the term "wild meat," explaining the term "bushmeat" has little context in the Arctic region. The EU supported the Working Group's proposals.

The Zoological Society of London and WCS suggested a paragraph in the preamble to clarify linkages and coordination between CITES and CBD regarding monitoring and management.

SC Chair Størkersen said the term “bushmeat” will continue to be used without a definition and supported Canada should they decide to raise the issue again.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the report. The draft decision encourages parties to:

- raise awareness of customs officials on the international trade in wild meat;
- increase scientific knowledge and understanding of the impacts of commercial and subsistence use of CITES-listed species as bushmeat on the survival and regeneration of these species, in the context of growing human populations and pressures on wildlife resources and ecosystems; and
- provide adequate financial, technical and capacity support to ensure that the harvest of and international trade in CITES-listed species for bushmeat is legal and sustainable.

GREAT APES

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Friday, the Secretariat presented its report (SC66 Doc. 48.1) informing participants that no external funding was received to conduct the study on the status of great apes, but that the IUCN Primate Specialist Group and the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Secretariat have agreed to collaborate with the Secretariat to commission a report to be presented at CoP17. She also noted that data compiled by UNODC on the basis of the reports received, similar to what was reported at SC65, reflect that illegal international trade in great ape specimens is currently limited.

The EU welcomed the report and the collaboration with INTERPOL, UNODC and ICCWC on this issue. TRAFFIC emphasized the need for the study on the great apes status to consider issues hampering actions by concerned parties, including legislative and regulatory loopholes that facilitate illegal trade and administrative and financial burdens related to confiscated specimens.

Global Eye cautioned against the notion that a low number of seizure equates to little trade.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the document and recommended the Secretariat report on the status of great apes to CoP17.

REVISION OF RESOLUTION CONF. 13.4 (REV. COP16) ON CONSERVATION OF AND TRADE IN GREAT APES: On Friday, Uganda withdrew document SC66 Doc. 48.2, in view of holding further consultation among range states and considering presenting this issue at CoP17.

SC66 noted the withdrawal of the document.

HUMHPEAD WRASSE

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Friday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 49 on *Cheilinus undulatus* (humphead wrasse), summarizing: reports had been submitted by China and Greece on actions taken to ensure effective implementation of the Convention regarding trade; the Small-Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with IUCN to support key range states achieving sustainable fishing of humphead wrasse but expressed regret that international implementation of Umoja had significantly delayed SSFA implementation; and the outcomes of a recent workshop on humphead wrasse in Jakarta, Indonesia, to address and provide training on making NDFs

for trade in species. He concluded by recommending extending current implementation of decisions in the report to SC69.

The EU invited China to provide additional information about their activities for breeding and exhibition of humphead wrasse in aquariums. Noting reports of illegal trade, he invited the Secretariat to further report the matter at SC67. Malaysia supported the implementation of Decision 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and described efforts made in Malaysia for conservation and management of humphead wrasse.

Outcome: SC66 noted the report and endorsed the decisions within it, calling, *inter alia*, on parties to investigate reported violations of the Convention and of related national laws in relation to trade in the humphead wrasse, and take appropriate enforcement actions in accordance with their national legislation. SC66 requested the report be updated following CoP17 and reported at SC69.

SAIGA ANTELOPE

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Friday, the Secretariat summarized document SC66 Doc. 52, mentioning among other things: the Technical Workshop for the saiga antelope experts and the Third Meeting of Signatories of the MoU concerning conservation, restoration and sustainable use of the saiga antelope; the constructive relationship between CITES and CMS and their Joint Work Programme 2016-2020; Kazakhstan’s die-off estimated at more than 150,000 animals in 2015 due to disease outbreak; actions of range and consumer states to uphold export suspensions and reduce consumption, respectively. He recommended current decisions on the saiga antelope be revised and extended to address challenges of illicit trade, encourage responsible use, ensure monitoring, and reporting.

The EU expressed support for the new work programme and a draft decision for CoP17. The US recommended the CITES Secretariat work with the CMS Secretariat to determine a best reporting strategy that avoids replication. He recommended preparing reports for SC69 and SC70 and redrafting decisions accordingly. CMS outlined existing complementarities between CMS and CITES. Russia said two saiga antelope populations meet the criteria for Appendix I listing but lamented listing would not be possible because of the absence of methods for identification. China said priority should be given to captive breeding.

WCS, supported by Humane Society International, said the interaction between CMS and CITES is an excellent example of synergy and the highest priority is *in situ* conservation and not captive breeding. SSN said the concept of sustainable utilization is questionable because the predictive capacity to understand what will happen to the species will not work for species of this type. He supported transfer this species in its entirety to Appendix I.

Outcome: SC66 noted the report and adopted the draft decision, which calls on range states to fully implement the measures directed to them in the Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope (2016-2020) developed in support of the MoU concerning the Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope and its Saiga Action

Plan; and provide information to the Secretariat on the measures and activities they undertook to implement the actions directed to them in the Work Programme.

SHARKS AND RAYS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT AND OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE AND REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP:

On Friday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant reports (SC66 Doc. 53.1 and 2), highlighting the two studies conducted on traceability systems.

Japan highlighted its concerns, including the need to recognize the role of fisheries management through regional fisheries management organizations, which are necessary for achieving conservation and sustainable use of sharks. China expressed appreciation for the work done on shark species but cautioned against adding new shark species to the CITES appendices without a scientific basis.

TRAFFIC, on behalf of different NGOs, supported the recommendations in the report, especially those relevant to traceability.

Outcome: The SC adopted the documents and endorsed the finalization of the recommendations at CoP17. In the recommendations, adopted at AC28, the AC, *inter alia*:

- urges parties to share knowledge of the techniques for DNA testing of shark species to allow rapid and cost-effective identification of shark products; and
- recommends that the SC recognize problems of species identification, look-alike issues, and traceability raised by parties at the AC, including for: i) Manta rays and closely related Mobula rays, and reminds parties that these species may not normally be exported by CMS parties because they are all listed in Appendix I of CMS; and ii) hammerhead sharks, and urges parties to endeavor to identify hammerhead sharks to species level in fisheries and landings data.

TIBETAN ANTELOPE

On Friday, the Secretariat presented the document on *Pantholops hodgsonii* (Tibetan antelope) (SC66 Doc.56), highlighting Switzerland's reports on illegal trade in shawls containing wool from Tibetan antelopes (shahtoosh), and efforts to strengthen collaboration with source, transit, processing and consumer countries. He invited the SC to adopt the recommendations contained in the document.

Switzerland noted the trade in Tibetan antelope products is still a concern as showed by recent investigations, and encouraged other concerned parties to contribute to a joint strategy to address this issue.

China highlighted national efforts to strengthen conservation and enforcement activities and reported the population of Tibetan antelope has increased in China. The EU supported the recommendations.

India informed the SC that it will present a detailed report by 1 March 2016 to the Secretariat on follow-up investigations to the report from Switzerland.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendations contained in document SC66 Doc. 56. The SC:

- requests India, as the primary country of origin of shahtoosh shawls, to report to the Secretariat by 1 March 2016 on

the results of any follow-up investigations that have been conducted based on information received from Switzerland;

- encourages Germany, India and Italy to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13), taking into consideration the newly identified trends identified by Switzerland; and
- recommends to CoP17 that paragraph b), under "DIRECTS," of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) be maintained and Decision 16.93 be included in the resolution.

TOTOABA

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION WITHIN THE CITES FRAMEWORK:

On Friday, Mexico presented document SC66 Doc. 58, explaining totoaba have been listed on Appendix I since 1975 but lamented illegal trade for the totoaba swimbladder persists. He outlined efforts made by Mexico to protect the totoaba and collaboration between Mexico, the US and China.

Acknowledging illegal trade exists, China described efforts including special inspections and publicity campaigns and said they will continue efforts and collaboration.

SSN pointed out this is a new situation for CITES, explaining trafficking of one Appendix I species is having an adverse effect on the Vaquita porpoise, another Appendix I species listed as endangered.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the document and urged Mexico to foster implementation of CITES provisions that are applicable to totoaba and made recommendations to the parties to cooperate with Mexico in sharing any relevant information about illegal trade in totoaba.

TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Friday, the Secretariat presented its report (SC66 Doc. 57.1), highlighting the IUCN reports on legal and illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, and on identification and capacity-building materials for specimens of tortoises and freshwater turtles, and noting these will feed into the work of the CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force meeting in March 2016. He recommended that the SC agree that the Secretariat report at CoP17 on the results of the studies.

AC Chair Caceres presented document SC66 Doc. 57.2 and suggested that the guide for CITES Scientific and Management Authorities prepared by the IUCN/Species Survival Commission Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group on NDFs and trade management for tortoises and freshwater turtles (AC28 Doc. 15) be shared with parties at CoP17.

The EU supported the recommendations by the Secretariat and the AC Chair. Noting that Decisions 16.109 to 16.124 seem to duplicate existing provisions in Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) on conservation and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, he recommended CoP17 revise them.

India emphasized challenges related to recent increased illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles and recommended listing the star tortoise in Appendix I. The US noted its funding support to the study by IUCN and emphasized that illegal trade is a serious threat and much needs to be done to reduce it

and reduce demand in consumer countries. Malaysia reported collaboration with INTERPOL on smuggling and supported the recommendations.

The SC Chair noted support for not postponing this issue beyond CoP17.

Outcome: SC66 noted the documents (SC66 Doc. 57.1 and Doc. 57.2) and endorsed their recommendations, including the call to parties, particularly those of the Asian region, to collect data on seizures of CITES-listed live tortoises and freshwater turtles, and report these data annually to the Secretariat, along with the disposition of the specimens.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 22.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the non-substantive errors corrected and endorsed the proposal to number the operative paragraphs (and not the preamble) of all valid resolutions after CoP17 in order to simplify references made to specific paragraphs in a resolution.

AMENDMENT OF THE APPENDICES

EXTINCT OR POSSIBLY EXTINCT SPECIES: On Wednesday, AC Chair Caceres introduced the relevant document (SC66 Doc. 23), noting it was not clear if higher taxon listings on the Appendices included species known to be extinct at the time of listing; and that extinct species already listed on the Appendices should not be removed from the Appendices if they meet relevant precautionary criteria for retention.

The US supported that the SC provide advice on the issue of higher taxon listings in the Appendices and their status and suggested deleting the paragraph calling for extinct species to be retained in either Appendix I or II if their removal might unduly complicate the interpretation of the Appendices. Australia supported the need to use the precautionary approach since sometimes species listed in the Appendices thought to be extinct may not be.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the document with the deletion suggested by the US.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES: On Wednesday, the AC and the PC representatives introduced document SC66 Doc. 24, with the AC representative noting that the periodic review of the African lion (*Panthera leo*) has not been received. Kenya expressed their commitment to finalize the review of the African lion together with Namibia. IUCN highlighted that all lion populations are declining.

SC66 noted the report.

ANNOTATIONS: On Wednesday, the US, Chair of the SC Working Group on Annotations presented document SC66 Doc. 25, highlighting as priorities before CoP17: to determine whether definitions of terms in annotations should be permanently located in resolutions or in the interpretation section of the Appendices; and provide guidance for crafting and interpreting annotations.

Several interventions endorsed the recommendations made by the Working Group. Canada suggested changes to the draft revised resolutions. The SC noted the wide support for the inclusion of the definitions in the interpretation section of the Appendices.

The Working Group met at the margin of SC66 to further discuss outstanding issues.

On Friday, the US introduced the report of the Working Group (SC66 Com. 12)

Outcome: SC66 agreed to adopt, *inter alia*, a revision to Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP16), according to which an annotation may not be necessary in cases where there is a risk to wild populations of the species from many types of specimens in trade or where the types of specimens in trade are easily transformed, likely to change frequently, or likely to change over time.

NATIONAL LAWS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT AND DECISIONS

TO BE TAKEN BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 26.1, highlighting that 88 countries need to strengthen their legislative framework particularly for illegal trade in wildlife. He said decisions adopted by CoP16 and SC65 recommendations have not been fully implemented and called on SC66 to review progress of parties in adopting appropriate measures, and recommend a suspension of commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with those parties affected by Decision 16.33 that have failed to adopt appropriate measures for the effective implementation of the Convention. He identified three countries qualify for such a suspension: Guinea Bissau, Venezuela and Liberia. He acknowledged progress made in Kenya and Israel.

The US, with Colombia, the EU and Ukraine, supported the recommendations and expressed concern about the suggestion to postpone the review of the legislative progress of all other parties and dependent territories concerned by Decision 16.33 that have not adopted appropriate measures for the effective implementation of the Convention to iSC67, noting it could lead to a cycle of perpetual delay.

The EU supported the proposal of trade suspensions and, with Norway and South Africa, supported the roundtable proposal. Niger stressed parties of the African region need technical support to update legislation and tasked the Secretariat with developing a draft decision for adoption at CoP17, proposing specific measures such as a group of experts to assist parties requesting assistance for drafting legislation. The Secretariat said the group of experts is not in a position to review resolutions.

TRAFFIC and WWF urged a review process to examine regulatory loopholes that facilitate trade of non-native species. WCS said reviews and roundtables should address legal measures specifically designed to implement CITES for marine species.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the document and agreed to the suspension of commercial trade in specimens of CITES listed species in Guinea Bissau, Venezuela and Liberia.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF CITES SPECIMENS SUBJECT TO NATIONAL DECISIONS

On Wednesday, the US presented document SC66 Doc. 27, suggesting an amendment to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16) regarding permits and certificates issued under court orders for

all CITES listed species, and recommending the SC request the Depository Government to present it to CoP17.

The EU and Norway supported the proposal. Norway suggested, and the US agreed, that the Secretariat rather than the Depository Government should present the amendment.

Outcome: SC66 requested the Secretariat to present to CoP17 a new section to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16) recommending that, regarding permits and certificates issued under court orders:

- exporting parties should not proceed with any export of specimens of any CITES-listed species without evidence of legal origin of specimens of the species, and for species listed in Appendix I or II, without evidence of an NDF;
- the importing party should contact the exporting party to seek confirmation that a NDF by the Scientific Authority and a legal acquisition finding by the Management Authority were made; and
- the Secretariat should contact the importing and exporting parties involved in the potential trade of specimens accompanied by court ordered permits and inform them of the relevant provisions of the Convention.

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XIII

On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 28, including the findings of a Secretariat mission to DRC in November 2015 and highlighted areas of concern such as: quota management and issuance of export permits; management of exports of grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*); illegal trade; challenges in CITES implementation in areas affected by conflict, for example for *Prunus africana* (African cherry); trade in African teak (*Pericopsis elata*), and collaboration among national CITES authorities. He presented recommendations to address the concerns above. He further proposed the SC recommend a technical mission by the Secretariat to the Lao People's Democratic Republic and neighboring countries under Article XIII to determine whether CITES provisions are not being implemented, and, subject to available resources, provide technical assistance to address compliance matters in both DRC and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

DRC stated it has taken note of the weaknesses identified in the report and the findings of the Secretariat mission, including the progress made in some areas. He requested the SC accord a moratorium on the export of grey parrot to allow the country to present a management report for the species by the end of the year. He also requested a special provision to allow trade in 2016 of the 1600 grey parrot specimens already collected and ready for export. On *P. elata*, he requested an extension to trade the timber in stock until 31 October 2016. On *P. africana*, he reported problems of insecurity in the range area and that no exploitation of *P. africana* occurs in protected areas, noting that a report will be submitted to the EU on this species.

The EU, supported by Norway and the US, welcomed the report by the Secretariat and supported the recommendations, but suggested that African teak be discussed under the agenda item on African teak.

Niger congratulated DRC for the efforts and stressed that range states cannot resolve the problems alone and need support.

South Africa did not support trade in the backloads of grey parrots unless its legality is ascertained by the Secretariat.

The SC Chair thanked DRC for the positive attitude and suggested a sentence be added to the recommendation to make provision for the trade in 2016 of the 1600 birds already collected. The EU, with the US, expressed concern about supporting the export of 1600 grey parrots, noting it would contradict the trade suspension recommended in the same recommendation. Following further clarification by the SC Chair, this issue was resolved.

Outcome: SC66 noted the report and adopted the recommendations which address: collaboration among CITES national authorities; quota management and issuance of export permits; trade suspension of *P. erithacus*, except an export in 2016 of 1600 specimens already collected; and illegal trade.

AFRICAN TEAK

On Thursday, DRC, referring to the relevant documents on African teak (*Pericopsis elata*) (SC66 Doc. 43 and Doc. 28), noted its agreement with the information reported by the Secretariat on the 2015 quota and requested an export extension until 31 October. He further explained that the 2014 quota was exhausted but the timber operators have cut 19,000 cubic meters in excess, due to a communication problem. He stressed this difference creates problems for timber operators to maintain commitments with local communities and requested the SC authorize exporting the excess volume as this would allow the country to regularize the situation by 2017.

The Secretariat noted the request by DRC to extend the deadline and that the SC has to decide whether to authorize the inclusion of timber felled in 2014 in the 2016 export quota, with the latter to be reduced consequently.

The EU and the US commended DRC for its efforts and progress in establishing the 2015 quota based on management and inventory, but, with Center for Environmental Law, Environmental Investigation Agency and SSN, did not support the request to allow the export of the excess volume felled in 2014.

The International Wood Products Association emphasized the need for clarity in the rules on quotas to avoid impacts on operators. Forest Resources Management noted the proposal would not affect the volume exported in 2016.

The Secretariat further clarified that the proposal makes a difference between harvest quota and export quota and that Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15) allows for exceptional authorization of export in one year of specimens that were obtained in a previous year. He suggested language for the recommendation to the effect that DRC has until 31 October 2016 to export the stocks harvested in 2014 and 2015 and duly communicated to the Secretariat before 31 January 2016 within the limits established in export quota for 2015-2016, and that no additional or transitional quota will be authorized.

On Friday, DRC presented the report of the working group that met to further discuss this issue (SC66 Com. 14).

The US suggested clarifying whether the recommendation to parties not to accept CITES permits or certificates issues by DRC refer solely to *P. elata*.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendations of the working group as orally amended. The document states that:

- DRC has until 31 October 2016 to export the stocks of *P. elata* (African teak) corresponding to 19,000m³ (round wood equivalent) harvested in 2014 and 2015;
- as an exception to paragraphs 20 and 21 of Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), the export of these stocks is exceptionally authorized under the 2015 export quota (31,905m³ round wood equivalent) and no retroactive increase in this quota nor any transitional quota is authorized;
- parties should not accept any CITES export permit or certificate issued by the DRC unless its authenticity has been confirmed by the Secretariat;
- DRC should implement the measures presented in their NDF report (PC22 Doc. 12.1 and Annex). In particular, the SC encourages DRC to develop and make use of the database mentioned in the NDF report, which would allow for: the monitoring and management of volumes of *P. elata* harvested and exported by the country; and the systematic conversion of volumes of processed products into round wood equivalent volumes, based on an appropriate conversion rate.

The document further states that the recommendation above refers to the information system that DRC is encouraged to build in order to increase transparency of the operations, and that DRC shall report on progress to SC67.

NATIONAL REPORTS

SUBMISSION OF NATIONAL REPORTS: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 30.1, drawing attention to 14 parties (Bhutan, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Grenada, Guinea, Mali, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Panama, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, San Marino, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) that have failed to submit annual reports for three consecutive years and have not provided adequate justification for this failure. The Secretariat recommended SC66, pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP16), decide to issue a notification recommending parties not authorize any trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with those parties until they have provided the missing reports.

The US, EU and Norway supported recommendations for sending notifications and a subsequent suspension of trade.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the document and agreed to extend the report submission deadline by 60 days and to suspend trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with parties that fail to submit reports within this deadline.

SPECIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS: Report of the Working Group: On Monday, the UK, Chair of the SC Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 30.2).

Japan highlighted that the template offered for reporting on illegal trade is useful and called for its consideration. The EU opposed the proposed establishment of an overview group to review and approve draft questionnaires before they are sent out.

Australia and the US supported the revised implementation report as drafted. Australia did not support submitting reporting requirements for compliance procedures. The US supported the adoption of a new annual illegal trade report as long as it focused on a limited set of species of concern.

The Working Group met during the week to review the report and its recommendations.

On Thursday, the UK introduced the report (SC66 Com.3) and said extending existing compliance measures within the annual trade report to include illegal trade should not take place, explaining the illegal trade report should be a parallel report to the annual trade report and follow the draft sample illegal trade report format provided in the document's annex. He advised returning to a review of reporting compliance in light of experiences implementing the guidelines within the report.

The US clarified that not all data elements in the illegal trade report are required and parties should complete as much of the report as possible, providing explanations if certain fields cannot be completed.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed paragraphs 51-57 and 16-17 in SC66 Doc. 30.2 with minor amendments. Recommendations include the call to working groups to critically review if all of the questions are needed, and if any are not needed they should be removed for a particular questionnaire, including resisting the "temptation" to request information that would be "nice to have."

REPORTING ON TRADE IN ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED PLANTS AND HARMONIZATION OF REPORTING:

On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 30.3, explaining the recommendation from PC22 was for parties to continue to report trade in artificially propagated Appendix-II plants at the species level consistent with the Guidelines for the Preparation and Submission of CITES Annual Reports, and invited SC66 to report on its findings at CoP17 and submit draft wording to amend resolutions concerned, where appropriate.

The EU supported the recommendations in the document.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendations in the document.

REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF APPENDIX II SPECIES

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS COMMITTEES:

On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant report (SC66 Doc. 31.1), noting, *inter alia*, that for 2016, Cameroon intends to establish an offtake quota of 25 specimens of hippo (*Hippopotamus amphibious*), equivalent to 1.55% of the population located within hunting areas. He also highlighted information indicating that Tajikistan since 2008 no longer exports tortoise (*Testudo horsfieldii*) warranting excluding Tajikistan from the Review. On Thailand's seahorses (*Hippocampus kelloggi*, *H. kuda* and *H. spinosissimus*), the Secretariat noted that the SC should recommend that all parties suspend trade until Thailand shows compliance. He finally noted that several countries have failed to submit information on the species under review.

The EU, the US and Israel supported keeping Cameroon in the Review. Thailand highlighted ongoing activities on the conservation and management of seahorse trade and asked for more time to complete the Review. IUCN noted that based on its ongoing IUCN Red List assessment, an offtake of 10 hippo would be the sustainable quota.

Outcome: SC66 endorsed the recommendations in the report.

REVIEW OF STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUSPEND TRADE MADE MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO:

On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the report (SC66 Doc. 31.2), recommending, *inter alia*, removing the Beluga sturgeon (*Huso huso*) from the Review. UNEP-WCMC highlighted its report (SC66 Doc. 31.2 Annex) providing updated accounts for taxa that have been subject to trade suspensions established through the RST for more than two years. She noted Madagascar's zero quota for several chameleon species.

The US, supported by WWF, disagreed with the Secretariat's proposal to remove Beluga sturgeon from the Review and suggested that Madagascar publish information related to the zero quota for chameleon.

The Russian Federation asked that the suspension of trade for Beluga sturgeon be removed since all Caspian range states have established quotas for 2015 and 2016 and later.

Outcome: SC66 noted the UNEP-WCMC report and agreed to remove the trade suspension for most of the taxa/range state combinations contained in Table 1 in Annex 1, and the maintenance of the trade suspensions for most of the taxa/range state combinations in Table 2 of Annex 1.

EVALUATION OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE: REPORT OF THE ANIMALS AND PLANTS COMMITTEES:

On Thursday, AC Chair Caceres presented the report (SC66 Doc. 31.3), drawing the SC's attention to the proposed modifications to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on RST in specimens of Appendix II species (Annex 3) and four draft decisions in Annex 5 of the document to be transmitted for adoption to CoP17 and associated terms of reference for an evaluation of the RST.

The EU supported the revision of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13).

SC66 noted the document.

TRADE CONTROL AND TRACEABILITY

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA: CHARTERING: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced document SC66 Doc. 33, on parties experiences in implementing provisions on chartering.

Outcome: SC66 adopted the document.

TRACEABILITY: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced its overview (SC66 Doc. 34.1 (Rev.1)) and the draft decision on traceability recommended by AC28 contained in Annex 2 to the document. Switzerland supported the recommendations in the document. Japan expressed concern over generalizing traceability systems. TRAFFIC supported the recommendations to ensure sustainability and legality.

Outcome: SC66 noted the report and endorsed the draft decisions, including that:

- the SC establish a working group on traceability systems in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat to, *inter alia*, recommend a working definition of traceability systems to assist parties in work related to the implementation of such systems;
- parties support the working group in its work on traceability; and
- the Secretariat develop a portal on the CITES website on traceability.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GLOBAL TRACEABILITY INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR REPTILE SKINS: On Tuesday, Mexico, as Chair of the Working Group on this matter, presented on socio-economic considerations in the development of a global traceability information system for reptile skins (SC66 Doc. 34.2).

Outcome: SC66 noted the document and discussed it under SC66 Com. 6.

ELECTRONIC PERMITTING: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP: On Thursday, Switzerland, Chair of the SC Working Group on Information Technologies and Electronic Systems, presented the report (SC66 Doc. 35 (Rev. 1)), inviting the SC to take note of the information presented and to consider recommending CoP17 extend the mandate of the Working Group to, *inter alia*, further develop the Electronic Permit Information exchange (EPIX).

China, Republic of Korea, Colombia, Peru and the EU supported the extension of the working group.

Outcome: SC66 took note of the document and endorsed the recommendation to extend the mandate of the Working Group.

USE OF TAXONOMIC SERIAL NUMBERS: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc. 36, noting that no information had been received from parties on the use of taxonomic serial numbers, as requested by Decision 16.56.

The EU noted the impact of the use of the serial numbers could be better explored. The US, with Canada and Switzerland, suggested a Notification to Parties be issued inviting comments and that work on Decision 16.56 and 16.57 be continued.

Outcome: SC66 instructed the Secretariat to issue a Notification to Parties following SC66 and continue work on the two decisions and report to CoP17.

PURPOSE-OF-TRANSACTION CODES ON CITES PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES: REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP:

On Thursday, Canada, Chair of the Working Group on Purpose-of-transaction codes, presented the report (SC66 Doc. 37), noting the group has not progressed beyond agreeing on a new approach to resolve different interpretations of the purpose-of-transaction among Group members, and asked the SC to allow the Working Group to continue its discussions electronically with a view to presenting a report to CoP17.

Israel expressed interest in participating in the Working Group. The EU questioned the need for continuation of the working group, noting the workload on other issues.

Outcome: SC66 agreed to continue the Working Group and to forward a draft decision to CoP17 to re-establish the Working Group.

PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF TIMBER SHIPMENTS:

On Thursday, the Secretariat document SC66 Doc. 38 and informed the SC that the administrative problems related to the payment to the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) have been resolved and that ITTO should be able to deliver the study in July 2016.

The EU emphasized the need to ensure that the compilation of timber identification procedures can be used by enforcement authorities and encouraged contributions to the TRAFFIC

timber identification directory for CITES listed species. The US acknowledged the challenges for inspectors in identifying timber and the significance of initiatives such as the TRAFFIC study on forensic methods to verify the origin of wood and wished for an expeditious implementation of the decision on physical inspection of timber shipments by the Secretariat.

SC66 noted the document.

INCLUSION OF CITES LISTED SPECIES IN THE HARMONIZED COMMODITY DESCRIPTION AND CODING SYSTEM: The Secretariat explained there is no new information on the inclusion of CITES-listed species in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System Harmonized source codes (SC66 Doc. 39) and suggested closing the item.

SC66 noted the report.

QUOTAS FOR LEOPARD HUNTING TROPHIES AND SKINS FOR PERSONAL USE: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC66 Doc.40 on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP16) including a tagging system.

The US, South Africa and Zimbabwe reported they did not face any challenge in implementing the resolution. The EU welcomed the improvements in the tagging system reported in the document.

Outcome: SC66 noted the document and encouraged all parties to comply with Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP16).

REGIONAL MATTERS

On Friday, SC66 noted the regional reports (SC66 Doc.2-6).

CLOSING PLENARY

In his closing remarks on Friday afternoon, CITES Secretary-General Scanlon acknowledged there were challenging issues on the agenda but expressed appreciation for the collegial way parties interacted with each other and the Secretariat. He thanked staff members leaving the Secretariat and welcomed newcomers, noting working with CITES is not a job but a vocation. He concluded by welcoming the news that Tajikistan had acceded to the Convention, effective 30 March 2016.

Many countries expressed appreciation for the work done during the week. China said CoP17 will benefit from the close relations developed at SC66. Indonesia lauded the camaraderie and spirit of cooperation for enhancing common endeavors. SSN reflected positively that the mood at meeting had been “to get thing done” and this will stand CITES in good stead for CoP17.

SC Chair Størkersen drew the meeting to a close at 5:20 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF SC66

“All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.” J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Words from J.R.R. Tolkien resonated with the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which featured a long list of agenda items to address in just five short days.

Major conservation challenges were nevertheless successfully tackled during the week and the SC even sanctioned or threatened trade suspensions on all specimens of CITES-listed

species. Other challenges, like the plight of lions and leopards, also gained recognition.

This brief analysis looks at the journey of the SC: how it changed, the issues it addressed and the path it set between now and the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties later this year.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Many parties, and the Secretariat itself, recalled several times during SC66 how the SC has changed since the days when participants could fit into one small conference room and had more time available to discuss fewer agenda items. Today, with close to 500 participants, and an agenda spanning more than 100 items, many acknowledged that the room felt more like a mini-CoP than a Standing Committee meeting.

Some participants commented that the notable evolution of the Convention to maintain its relevance, from one primarily focused on regulating legal trade to one responding to impacts of illegal trade, with greater emphasis on partnerships to address such impacts, through the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and memoranda of collaboration, including with the FAO. The discussions on actions to reduce demand in consumer countries and actions to address corruption are examples of the new focus and challenges the Convention is taking up: the Standing Committee requested Viet Nam to provide further progress report on measures implemented to reduce the demand for rhinoceroses horn in domestic markets; and it also agreed to forward a draft decision to CoP17 requesting ICWC to prepare guidelines on promoting adequate integrity policies and assist parties to mitigate the risks of corruption in the trade chain of CITES-listed specimens.

However, some parties also pointed out that there are limits to what the Convention and its Standing Committee can say and do and that filling the SC agenda with more issues to address and increasing the demand on the Secretariat, without also increasing its resources is not the right direction for the Convention. Many on both sides argued for the need to go back to the original mandate of the Convention to hold the Conference of the Parties, the real decision making body of the Convention, every two years, pointing out that CoP17 in particular, comes three and a half years after CoP16. Some argue it is potentially detrimental to conservation as it leaves too long an interval between opportunities for the parties to take decisions on critical implementation and species conservation issues; and creates a gap between Scientific and Standing Committee meetings, with potentially negative consequences for decisions on compliance measures. A shorter gap, they say, would allow the SC to maintain oversight over countries’ compliance and request parties to follow up on recommended actions in a timely manner with the hope that this would lead to a swifter resolution of a growing number of issues and then enable the SC to move on to the most pressing issues.

RE-THINKING IVORY

In the case of elephants, the SC agreed not to discuss a decision-making mechanism for trade in ivory, an issue that parties consider to be contentious, long recognizing that discussing the possibility of trade in ivory would send the wrong

message to poachers—inviting them to poach more. Some parties viewed the decision not to discuss and ask CoP17 to revoke the mandate of the working group on this topic as positive. However, a number of parties also pointed out that this would have no influence on poaching, in light of the fact that ivory poaching happens mostly in countries where elephants would never be listed under Appendix II in the first place because of high levels of poaching—a criterion for the possible trade in their ivory.

Parties expressed satisfaction with the National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs) process. NIAPs are a practical tool that is being used by the Convention to strengthen the control of countries “of concern” over the trade in ivory and ivory markets, and help combat the illegal trade in ivory. Each plan outlines the urgent measures that a CITES party commits to deliver—including legislative, enforcement and public awareness actions as required—along with specified timeframes and milestones for implementation. Parties emphasized the need to keep the pressure on countries “of concern” (China, including Hong Kong SAR, Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Uganda, Tanzania, and Viet Nam). Commending this process, some parties observed that NIAPs could offer a model for monitoring national implementation for other species as well.

VANISHING SPECIES – SEEKING SOLUTIONS

At a side event organized by the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, which brought the threats facing leopards to the attention of the SC, a Powerpoint slide of towers of steel snares confiscated by rangers reminded many participants of the plights of the many species, from Asian big cats to pangolins that CITES seeks to address.

Parties were also satisfied with the draft resolution on pangolins that will be tabled at CoP17 and, which some acknowledge, will complement proposals to list all pangolin species under Appendix I. Parties’ awareness of the status of pangolins has been increasing since the Secretariat presented them with a report on enforcement and drew attention to the ever-increasing number of seizures.

With delegates pointing to the inability of the intersessional working group on Asian Big Cats to reach consensus on some of the issues they were tasked with dealing with, some specifically lamented that the SC does not want to look into the impact of captive breeding facilities of tigers and possible trade in tiger products from these facilities on tigers in the wild. Many stressed that captive breeding of tigers creates the demand for tiger products.

However, the SC took an important step by examining captive breeding more deeply, with the recognition that there is growing evidence of cases of illegal trade in wild-caught specimens of CITES-listed species, through fraudulent claims that wild caught specimens are captive bred.

“BETWEEN HERE AND THERE IS A JOURNEY”

Discussions at SC hinted at what is to come in Johannesburg, South Africa, where CoP17 will convene in late September 2016. By the end of April 2016, parties will submit their proposals, for example species proposals, resolutions, decisions or other agenda items. While some proposals are clearly expected—uplisting of the African lion, all pangolin species, polar bears, and more

shark species, others are still rumored: like a proposal to list all of the rosewood species, a proposal to allow trade in rhino horn; and, with Tajikistan’s accession to CITES announced during the meeting, the possibility of tabling a resolution establishing quotas for markhor hunting trophies from Tajikistan.

Another up-and-coming issue came from one of the recommendations in a consultant’s report commissioned by the Animals Committee that the SC Working Group on Asian Big Cats considered: if a detailed study of the leopard trade should be conducted since leopard seizures are comparable with those of tigers in many Asian range states. Following the side event at the SC, Switzerland offered to fund another side event on leopards at CoP17 and several participants believe that going forward there is a possibility, especially once the IUCN completes its Red List assessment of the species, that CITES may take a closer look at leopards.

As delegates left the venue on Friday, the shared sentiment was that major conservation challenges were successfully tackled this week and pointing to the “collegial” atmosphere of SC66, many expressed hope that the same spirit would carry through CoP17.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

22nd Annual ISTF Conference: Tropical Forests for Sustainable Development: The International Society of Tropical Foresters (ISTF) Conference will focus on the theme “Shaping our Post-2015 Future with Knowledge from the Field.” The conference aims to provide an opportunity for field researchers and practitioners to discuss with policymakers the role tropical forests will play in the post-2015 development agenda and in enhancing our ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **dates:** 28-30 January 2016 **location:** Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, New Haven, Connecticut, US **www:** <http://istf.yale.edu/node/54>

Second Meeting of the UNEP Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives: The Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives will prepare for the next meeting of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP **dates:** 15-19 February 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **email:** unep.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb>

2nd Meeting of Signatories to the Migratory Sharks MOU: The Meeting of Signatories (MOS2) to the Migratory Sharks Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) will review proposals to amend the MOU, the programme of work, partnerships and national reporting, among other issues. Two additional meetings will be held at the same venue on the margins of MOS2. From 12-13 February, the first meeting of the Advisory Committee to the MOU will be held. On 14 February, an informal, open-ended meeting of the Intersessional Working Group of the MOU, to advance discussions on the draft Rules of Procedure (open to all MOU Signatories) will be held. **dates:** 15-19 February 2016 **location:** San Jose, Costa Rica **contact:** CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2401 **fax:** +49-228-815-

2449 **email:** secretariat@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/en/news/2015029-2nd-meeting-signatories-mos2-migratory-sharks-mou-confirmation-venue-san-josé-costa>

IPBES-4: The fourth session of the plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-4) will, *inter alia*, review progress on its work programme. **dates:** 22-28 February 2016 **location:** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia **contact:** IPBES Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-0570 **email:** secretariat@ipbes.net **www:** <http://www.ipbes.net/index.php/plenary/ipbes-4>

World Wildlife Day: This year's theme is "The future of wildlife is in our hands" with the sub-theme "The future of elephants is in our hands." **date:** 3 March 2016 **location:** worldwide **contact:** Liu Yuan, CITES Secretariat **email:** Yuan.Liu@cites.org **www:** <http://www.wildlifeday.org/>

First Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council: The first meeting of the Sessional Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Scientific Council will meet in Bonn, Germany. **dates:** 18-21 April 2016 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2401 **fax:** +49-228-815-2449 **email:** marco.barbieri@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/en/news/2015031-dates-and-venue-1st-meeting-sessional-committee-cms-scientific-council>

CBD 20th Meeting of SBSTTA and First Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation: The 20th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the first meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation will be held back to back. **dates:** 25 April – 7 May 2016 **location:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.org **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBSTTA-20> and <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SBI-01>

Second Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly: The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) will convene for the second time in 2016. The UNEA of the UNEP represents the highest level of governance of international environmental affairs in the UN system. **dates:** 23-27 May 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies **phone:** +254-20-7623431 **email:** unep.sgb@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/>

World Environment Day 2016: This year's the theme is "Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care" and will be dedicated to illegal trade in wildlife. **date:** 6 June 2016 **location:** worldwide **contact:** UNEP **email:** worldenvironmentday@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/wed/>

FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) 32nd Session: The 32nd session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries is scheduled to take place at FAO Headquarters in Rome in July 2016. **dates:** 11-15 July 2016 **location:** Rome, Italy **contact:** COFI Secretariat **email:** FAO-COFI@fao.org **www:** <http://www.fao.org/unfao/govbodies/gsbhome/committee-fi/en/>

2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress: The IUCN World Congress meets every four years to discuss and decide on solutions to environment and development challenges worldwide. **dates:** 1-10 September 2016 **location:** Honolulu, Hawaii, US **contact:** IUCN **phone:** +41-22-999-0368 **fax:** +41-22-999-0002 **email:** congress@iucn.org **www:** <http://www.iucnworldconservationcongress.org/>

CITES CoP17: The Conference of the Parties on the Convention in Trade in Endangered Flora and Fauna will convene for its seventeenth session. **dates:** 24 September – 5 October 2016 **location:** Johannesburg, South Africa **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

GLOSSARY

AC	Animals Committee
AEAP	African Elephant Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CoP	Conference of the Parties
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ETIS	Elephant Trade Information System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IFAW	International Fund for Animal Welfare
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MIKE	Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDF	Non-detriment finding
NIAP	National Ivory Action Plan
PC	Plants Committee
RST	Review of Significant Trade
SC	Standing Committee
SSN	Species Survival Network
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society