

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixteenth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Shepherdstown (United States of America), 11-15 December 2000

Establishment of the Animals Committee's priorities

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Annex was prepared by the Chairman of the Animals Committee.

Working programme of the Animals Committee for 2000 to 2002 until the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, based on items developed in the Strategic Vision through 2005 for CITES adopted at CoP11, in the order in which they appear and some additional issues (addressed to the members of the Animals Committee)

I suggest that we adopt the following working programme (with comments) at the 16th meeting of Animals Committee in the line of what the Plants Committee did at its last meeting. Keep in mind that this is a gross list that contains everything that could be taken out of the COP 11 documentation and that we cannot endeavour to deal with all of these points at the same time. They should be part of a continuous process, and we should prioritize among them. Some are very general and more the expression of an intention, while others are very practical and require work. Others still have in fact been completed already (as indicated below). The following elements (but not exclusively so) should be part of the working programme (with comments from the Chariman added in *italics*):

1. Implement the actions directed to the Animals Committee in the Action Plan adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting.
2. Clearly separate and indicate scientific issues on animals from implementation issues that concern animals and, in collaboration with the Standing Committee, try to have implementation issues referred to either the Standing Committee or a new committee to be established by CoP12.
3. Assist Parties and the Secretariat in ensuring adequate review and adoption of policies and legislation that may have a significant impact on the conservation status of species or the implementation of the Convention. *This seems to be an issue that does not clearly involve biological properties of animal species and therefore should be referred to a more appropriate (new?) committee.*
4. Develop, in coordination with the Parties and the Secretariat, further regulations to prevent unnecessary loss during catching, storage and transportation of live animals. *This issue is, in my opinion, a borderline case. It mainly concerns implementation and knowledge of rules and regulations, but knowledge of biological properties is necessary.*
5. Continue the process of reviewing the Appendices regularly, applying the criteria included in Resolution Conf. 9.24. *The Committee should make appropriate recommendations relevant to the findings of those reviews such as recommended proposals to amend the Appendices, species to evaluate in the Review of Significant Trade, referrals of enforcement concerns to the Secretariat, etc. A number of taxa were selected during AC15 on the basis of differing natural history characters, size, habitat (terrestrial versus aquatic) and distribution (cosmopolitan versus endemic).*
6. Assist the Secretariat in developing and enhancing databases that include information related to species in trade, CITES Decisions and procedures.
7. Assist the Secretariat in developing a manual specifying the obligations and procedures of the Scientific Authorities in order to encourage the development of specific training courses for them. *This issue of capacity building is addressed in several other points as well. The European Union has produced a useful document on this issue and it might be appropriate to ask it to distribute the document to other Parties as well.*
8. Develop regional directories that list the zoologists in each region who are experts in CITES-listed species. *This seems to be a specific task for regional representatives together with their alternates. The point could be expanded by also including institutes (e.g. museums, zoological gardens, etc.) where an*

*accumulation of several specialists might be expected. The idea is to create a network of specialists that can be consulted by Scientific and Management Authorities, independent of national borders.*

9. Participate in the process of the revision of the criteria for the inclusion of species in the Appendices (Resolution Conf. 9.24), as adopted by the Parties at CoP11.
10. Continue the Review of Significant Trade as initiated by the Parties in Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.).
11. Assist the Secretariat in developing a simple guide to the Review of Significant Trade. *This work has already been started by a consultant under contract to the Secretariat and at the request of the Animals Committee in its former composition and a summary of it was presented to CoP11 as Inf.11.2. Possibly some more work on this issue is required.*
12. Where possible, evaluate trade and biological information on currently unlisted species subject to significant international trade to determine whether they would qualify for and benefit from CITES listing. *The trade in land tortoises and freshwater turtles and that in seahorses and other syngnathids falls in this category and was dealt with at CoP11. However, it should be kept in mind that the Committee's priorities, because of budgetary constraints, first and foremost have to be with species already listed in CITES.*
13. Encourage Parties to consult with the Animals Committee to assist in the preparations of proposals to amend the Appendices. *This should not be interpreted as an invitation to Parties to ask Animals Committee to write these proposals. The Animals Committee can try to help by providing scientific information, guidance to the use of literature, and refer to specialists in the field, but that would depend on the expertise available among representatives and alternates. AC as a body cannot entertain this work, but could possibly review and evaluate 'pre-proposals' from a scientific perspective and make recommendations to improve such proposals.*
14. For identified commodities, develop standardized units of measure for permits, trade analysis and reporting. *The work of the Coral Working Group falls in this category.*
15. Support the Secretariat in its work on the development of a programme to assist Scientific Authorities in making non-detriment findings in accordance with the provisions of Article IV of the Convention. *This issue has been dealt with in the past and resulted in documentation distributed at CoP11 as Inf.11.3. Another publication by IUCN on this subject is still in the making. The Animals Committee may wish to consider how it may be able to assist the Secretariat.*
16. Support the Parties and the Secretariat in providing opportunities for Scientific Authorities to exchange information and data.
17. Assist the Secretariat and enforcement agencies to identify the needs for and the potential benefits of innovative technologies. *This subject seems to fall outside the realm of biological expertise of Committee members.*
18. Assist the Secretariat in identifying the available technologies relevant to assisting the better implementation of the Convention. *This subject seems to fall outside the realm of biological expertise of Committee members.*
19. Assist the Secretariat in developing with relevant institutions collaborative research projects for testing the appropriateness of new and forthcoming technologies. *This subject seems to fall outside the realm of biological expertise of Committee members.*
20. Assess progress on a regional basis.
21. Participate actively at scientific meetings and conferences, and encourage participation in CITES issues by the scientific community. *This seems to be a strictly individual action of members and alternates of Animals Committee to draw attention to CITES issues in other fora.*

22. Take responsibility for the scientific analysis of problems related to the international trade in animals, in order to provide scientifically based findings for the drafting proposals that could be presented to meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
23. Collaborate with the Nomenclature Committee, when requested.
24. Collaborate with the Secretariat in the preparation of material for the Identification Manual. *This could mean that the Secretariat is informed about useful material published that could be incorporated in the Identification Manual or be considered additional to it. The Secretariat could also ask the Animals Committee to review draft sections for the Manual. The example of the recent publication Molluscs in CITES, by Wen-Lung Wu (2000) seems to be a good example of such work. Other examples include the work on a CD-ROM on the corals of Indonesia that at the moment is being done in the Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum in Leiden, the Netherlands, as well as the development by the United States of America of a user-friendly guide to hard corals in trade.*
25. Promote the organization of regional meetings, and improve the coordination between regional representatives and alternates. *This is an issue new to Animals Committee, but the Plants Committee has already organized several successful regional meetings. It would be worthwhile to give this some thought and decide whether this is a feasible option. The production of regional reports falls under this point as well. As most regions have two representatives and two alternates, there should preferably be a collective effort within the region to produce reports. Regional reports are a relatively new issue in CITES and representatives still have to become accustomed to producing them. Hopefully the process will be a fast one.*
26. Finally, I propose that the Animals Committee adopt a mission statement that would summarize its role and priorities, such as:

*The mission of CITES Animals Committee is to provide the Conference of Parties, Parties, other Committees and working groups and the Secretariat, with reliable scientific information and advice on biological matters (including criteria and their application) concerning international trade in animal species included in the Appendices, as well as animal species proposed for listing.*