

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

Thirtieth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 16-21 July 2018

Regional matters

Regional reports

NORTH AMERICA

1. This report, covering the period from August 2017 to May 2018, was prepared by Rosemarie Gnam, Regional Representative for North America, in collaboration with the CITES authorities of Canada, Mexico, and the United States*.

Overview of major developments

a) Review of Significant Trade

b) Periodic Review

2. At the last meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29; Geneva 2017), the United States agreed to take the lead in preparation of periodic reviews for Aleutian Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis leucopareia*) and Short-tailed Albatross (*Phoebastria albatrus*) as part of the Periodic Review process. Both species are currently included in CITES Appendix II. We have consulted with range states and the review process is underway (although it will not be completed by AC30).
3. Canada and Mexico contributed information toward the reviews for Aleutian Canada Goose and Short-tailed Albatross to the Periodic Review of these species that is being led by the United States.
4. At AC29, Mexico volunteered to undertake the periodic review of a total of four species. Three of these species are currently listed under Appendix I: (i) the Guadalupe Fur Seal (*Arctocephalus townsendi*), possibly in collaboration with the U.S.A; (ii) the Mexican Prairie Dog (*Cynomys mexicanus*); (iii) the Coahuilan box turtle (*Terrapene coahuila*); and the remaining species listed under Appendix II, (iv) the tarantula *Aphonopelma pallidum*. Thus far, Mexico has secured funding for at least two of these species and is under conversations with potential consultants from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) for their development. Mexico is likely to provide a progress report on these revisions at the next meeting of the Animals Committee (AC31).

c) Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes

5. In compliance with Res. Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15), on April 5th (2018) the Management Authority of Mexico (DGVS-SEMARNAT) requested CITES Secretariat to register the UMA "Earth Ocean Farms, S. de

* The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

R.L.” as an operation that breeds *Totoaba macdonaldi* in captivity for commercial purposes (SGPA/DGVS/002997/18).

d) Non-detriment findings

6. The United States of America has issued 283 individual Non-Detriments Findings (NDFs) since May 2017 in addition, to the NDFs we make in the form of General Advices.
7. Canada maintains Standing NDF Reports for frequently traded species. A review of these reports is conducted after every Conference of the Parties or when new substantive information becomes available. The Standing NDF Reports for terrestrial species and the science advice used as a basis for the NDFs for marine species are available on the Environment Canada website at: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=2942DC30-1>. The Standing NDF report for polar bear was updated in August 2017 in light of new positive information for the Baffin Bay management unit on population sizes, trends and harvest quotas. The update modified an export restriction for this management unit in place since March 2010. More details are available in the Standing NDF report.
8. Canadian network of CITES scientific authorities keep in regular contact to discuss Canada’s interests and challenges regarding national implementation of the scientific aspects of CITES, to provide advice and comments on Canada’s international activities, and to develop and revise species-specific Standing NDF Reports.
9. In compliance with Art. IV of the Text of the Convention, as well as Res. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on NDFs, during the reporting period, the Mexican Scientific Authority (CONABIO) has formulated a total of 198 NDFs for species of fauna, covering a total of 16 species: 4 species of Appendix-I listed animals: *Oreophasis derbianus* (code C), *Pharomachus mocinno* (code C), *Panthera onca* (negative), *Phocoena sinus* (scientific purposes); and 12 species of Appendix II: *Ovis canadensis*, *Carcharhinus falciformis*, *Sphyrna zygaena*, *S. lewini*, *Alopias pelagicus*, *Puma concolor*, *Crocodylus moreletii*, *Lynx rufus*, *S. mokarran*, *A. superciliosus*, *A. vulpinus*, *Gopherus berlandieri*. Of these, the majority of NDFs correspond to *O. canadensis*. Similarly, CONABIO has formulated a total of 14 technical opinions to the management plans related to 8 CITES-listed species: *Ovis canadensis*, *Puma concolor*, *Grus vipio*, *Isostichopus fuscus*, *Lynx rufus*, *Totoaba macdonaldi*, *Catagonus wagneri*, *Spheniscus humboldti*.

e) Capacity-Building

10. Through two partnerships, one with Atecma Asesores Tecnicos de Medio Ambiente (ATECMA) and another with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) with funding from USAID is supporting 16 professionals from 12 countries in Central America (6), South America (1), the Caribbean (4), and Central Africa (1), to participate in the Master’s Degree Program on the Management and Conservation of Species in Trade: the International Framework (aka CITES Master’s Course) from April 2017 – March 2018) in Spain. The partnership with WCS further aims to strengthen country and regional-level capacity for CITES in Central America and the Caribbean by supporting the development of non-detriment findings (NDFs), improving availability of data on illegal trade in CITES-listed species, and increasing knowledge of emerging regional illegal wildlife trade threats and rapidly developing markets.
11. In partnership with Wildlife Impact and in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Angola (MINAMB), the USFWS is supporting efforts to strengthen CITES capacity and enhance enforcement of wildlife crime law in Angola with a specific focus to counter wildlife trafficking in Maiombe National Park and surrounding areas of Cabinda Province.
12. In September of 2017 and March 2018, the USFWS’ Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) hosted the International Conservation Chief’s Academy at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The OLE, along with the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chief’s (NACLEC) provided instruction and training for the program, which was funded by the Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs. In total, eighty (80) leaders from global conservation law enforcement agencies, wildlife conservation law enforcement leaders from seventeen (17) African nations and six (6) Southeast Asia nations, met in an effort to build capacity and collaborate to combat wildlife trafficking.
13. The USFWS OLE produced an unprecedented number of wildlife investigation courses at the International Law Enforcement Academies (ILEA) during this reporting period. In total, there were three (3) training missions at the ILEA in Bangkok, Thailand; five (5) training missions at ILEA in Gaborone, Botswana; one (1) training mission at ILEA in Budapest, Hungary; and one (1) training mission at ILEA in San Salvador, El

Salvador. The wildlife investigation course is focused on wildlife Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) and investigative techniques specific to wildlife trafficking investigations.

14. The USFWS OLE began two (2) additional wildlife programs to increase capacity and skills to combat wildlife trafficking at the ILEAs. The Wildlife Border Inspection Training Program (WBITP) was conducted at the West Africa Regional Training Center in Ghana. The WBITP brought together wildlife inspectors from West African nations to collaborate on counter wildlife trafficking techniques at ports of entry. In conjunction with the WBITP, OLE partnered with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to conduct two (2) International Wildlife Port Assessments in Benin. The assessments identify proper procedures to combat wildlife trafficking at sea, land, and air ports of entry
15. The USFWS OLE produced nine (9) additional courses outside of the ILEAs. These attaché training programs are designed to support OLE attachés stationed at U.S. Embassies in seven (7) separate regions of the world. The trainings were conducted in Canada, Kenya, Malaysia, Namibia, the Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Courses included training in forensic science, wildlife crime scene investigation, marine crime scene investigation, shark fin identification, buy bust techniques, and law enforcement case management.
16. USFWS OLE, in partnership with host country governments and NGO's, provided over 100 customized, CSI Kits to national police, game rangers, and other enforcement authorities during four separate training missions organized in Uganda, Botswana, and Namibia. The CSI kits contained appropriate evidence collection materials such as evidence bags, tape, tags, crime scene tape, digital cameras, and chain of custody forms. Course instructors were comprised of USFWS OLE scientists from the National Forensics Laboratory; skilled information technology special agents from the Digital Evidence Recovery and Technical Services Unit (DERTSU), and experienced senior special agents from the field.

DOI-ITAP

17. With funding from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (DOS-OSE), unless otherwise indicated, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of International Affairs via their International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) engaged in the following activities:
18. Belize Scarlet Macaw Conservation in the Chiquibul Forest (March – April 2018). DOI-ITAP in-country partner, Friends for Conservation and Development (FCD), will search and document active nests of scarlet macaws (*Ara macao*, CITES Appendix I) at the Chalillo Lake in the Mountain Pine Ridge/Chiquibul ecosystem, using many techniques learned from cross-border partner Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)/Guatemala. Once nesting sites are identified, FCD will implement a program to protect them against poachers. Funding Source: USAID
19. Honduras CAFTA-DR Environmental Affairs Council Points of Contact Meeting (March 21-22, 2018). DOI-ITAP, as an implementer of CAFTA-DR environmental cooperation projects in the region, presented its 2017-2018 activities, which included results of the 7th annual Central American and Dominican Republic Wildlife Enforcement Network (CAWEN/ROAVIS) meeting and CITES capacity-building efforts in the region.
20. Honduras Regional CITES Coordination Meeting (February 19, 2018). DOI and the Regional CITES Representative (Guatemala) organized a meeting for CITES officials from Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama to share information and ideas re: CITES issues of mutual interest or concern. These officials then attended the 7th annual CAWEN/ROAVIS meeting 20-21 February 2018 (see below).
21. Honduras 7th Annual CAWEN/ROAVIS Meeting (February 20-21, 2018). DOI-ITAP, the Public Ministry of Honduras, and the Secretary of CAWEN/ROAVIS hosted the 7th annual CAWEN meeting, which focused on gathering and reporting wildlife crime data (both flora and fauna) from all relevant agencies with CITES offices taking the lead to compile and report this information. Participants included the CAWEN Points of Contact (environmental prosecutors/solicitors), 1 CITES official, and 1 police commander from Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua (POC only), and Panama, in addition to the FWS Office of Law Enforcement Attaches from Mexico and Peru.
22. Honduras Workshop to Strengthen Capacity of Prosecutors re: Wildlife and Forest Crimes (August 29-30, 2017). DOI-ITAP, in coordination with the Prosecutor's School of Honduras and the CAWEN/ROAVIS Secretary (Prosecutor) Ms. Lorena Fernandez, hosted a 2-day national workshop in Tegucigalpa, Honduras to review and discuss wildlife and forestry laws including CITES and best practices in preparing cases for

court and identifying and utilizing expert witnesses. Participants included prosecutors, national experts, investigators, and the CAWEN/ROAVIS Secretary.

23. Costa Rica CITES Training Workshop (January 21-25, 2018). At the request of the Costa Rican government, DOI-ITAP in coordination with the CITES Authority of Costa Rica, CAWEN/ROAVIS, and the CITES Secretariat organized a 4-day CITES training workshop for new and established CITES officials in Costa Rica as well as designated wildlife inspectors. DOI-ITAP staff, regional CITES experts, and the CITES Secretariat provided in-depth instruction on CITES, including the context and goals of the Convention, implementation and enforcement considerations, and CITES Appendices.
24. Costa Rica Wildlife Law and Best Practices Workshop (August 16-18, 2017). DOI-ITAP hosted a 2-day workshop in Costa Rica for prosecutors, judges, and judicial investigators to review national wildlife laws including CITES and to model best practices in preparing and presenting wildlife cases in court.
25. Chile Developing a National Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking (November 28-29, 2017). The Government of Chile began exploring development of a national strategy to combat wildlife trafficking in Chile. In support of this effort, DOI-ITAP organized a workshop where representatives from countries with national strategies shared lessons learned and insights with their Chilean counterparts, including the importance of full CITES implementation and enforcement.
26. Chile 2nd Our Oceans Marine Science Camp (September 5-8, 2017). DOI-ITAP in coordination with Chilean Government entities including the Navy, Army, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as additional non-government and academic partners organized this camp for 100 students and teachers from the La Serena region in Chile. Students and teachers participated in hands-on scientific research and activities, learned about the importance of CITES in supporting sustainable use of terrestrial and marine species, and how children can be active partners in marine conservation.
27. Chile 2nd CITES and Counter-Wildlife Trafficking Training Workshop (May 30-31, 2017). DOI-ITAP, the National CITES Committee of Chile, the National Customs Service of Chile, and the Specialized Unit in Money Laundering, Economic Crimes and Organized Crime (ULDDECO) of the Public Ministry of Chile held a 2-day workshop in Valparaiso, Chile for over 40 Customs officials. As the relatively newly designated CITES enforcement authority under Chile's national CITES legislation, DOI-ITAP proposed this workshop to support adding CITES implementation and enforcement to the Customs skill set.
28. El Salvador Wildlife and Forestry Law Workshop for Judicial Officials (November 14-16, 2017). DOI-ITAP and the CAWEN/ROAVIS representative for El Salvador along with the Judicial College of the Public Ministry of El Salvador organized a 2-day workshop to provide prosecutors and investigators with an overview of national wildlife and forestry laws including CITES requirements and laws, to discuss best practices in preparing and prosecuting cases, and to note challenges and identify solutions to strengthen coordination between prosecutors and investigators in wildlife cases.
29. Panama Workshop on Wildlife Laws and Enforcement (August 2-3, 2017). DOI-ITAP coordinated a 2-day workshop with Panamanian prosecutors and investigators from the Public Ministry, technical experts from the Ministry of Environment, and regional experts regarding national wildlife laws including CITES and best practices in preparing and presenting cases.
30. Guatemala Regional Capacity Building Workshop on CITES Risk Assessment Methodologies (June 27-28, 2017). DOI-ITAP in coordination with the National Council of Protected Areas of Guatemala (CONAP- CITES Authority) and OSPESCA organized a risk assessment workshop to provide officials with a tool for the developing CITES Non-detriment Findings and other government decisions. CITES and Fisheries authorities from Central America, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and a representative of the U.S. CITES Scientific Authority participated. It is intended that participants know about the methodology of ecological risk assessment. Countries brought relevant information re: fisheries and new legislation.
31. Oman Inspector Training (February 10-22, 2018). DOI-ITAP supported a team of 3 FWS employees to conduct training on port of entry inspection and enforcement under CITES for the government inspection unit at Oman's primary seaport in Sohar. The team worked with a unit vetted and trained by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to supplement UNODC training with wildlife-specific issues and inspection practices.
32. Washington, DC CAFTA-DR Points of Contact Meeting + Vida Silvestre Mobile App Launch October (26-27, 2017). DOI-ITAP provided an overview of accomplishments over the past year within the framework of

CAFTA-DR Environmental Cooperation. DOI-ITAP Washington and regional staff highlighted training (including CITES) and coordination activities and focused on the operational successes of the CAWEN/ROAVIS in the past year. DOI-ITAP launched the mobile app Vida Silvestre (Wildlife) developed with CITES officials in Central America and the Caribbean as a tool for frontline and other officials to identify wildlife species and for the public to provide “tips” to officials regarding potential wildlife trafficking or poaching violations. App web site: www.vidasilvestre.net . Download: Google Play Store - <http://bit.ly/vida-silvestre> or Apple App Store - <http://bit.ly/vida-silvestre-ios>.

f) Other

33. Operation Thunderstorm: During the period of May 1 – May 31, 2018, the United States participated a global wildlife enforcement operation, organized through the auspice of the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime (ICCWC). The operation, facilitated by the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group (WCWG), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the CITES Secretariat aimed to counter wildlife trafficking in a global effort and establish a platform for information sharing between CITES and WCWG partner nations to initiate joint investigative efforts to combat transnational wildlife crime. The operation involved the participation of CITES law enforcement authorities from over 60 countries including Canada, China, the European Union, India, Mexico, Mozambique, the Russian Federation, South Africa, the United States, and Zambia. This operation is a continuation of the success experienced during Operation Thunderbird, the global enforcement operation initiated in February of 2017. During Operation Thunderbird, USFWS OLE interdicted an impressive seizure of CITES protected wildlife and plant products including tortoises and reptiles, live birds, shark fins, sturgeon caviar and sturgeon extract cosmetics, dried orchids, wild American ginseng, and elephant ivory.
34. Operation Mother Earth II (October 1st to November 30th, 2018): Also facilitated by INTERPOL, where the Mexican Enforcement Authority (PROFEPA) developed precautionary seizures of timber from rosewood, pine, and other species; as well as birds, mammals, reptiles, orchids, and big cats (lions and tigers). Furthermore, PROFEPA did a total of 725 verifications of wild fauna, and 64 of wild flora in Ports, Airports, and Frontiers of the country. The information obtained was conveyed to INTERPOL, with the purpose to combat future illegal wildlife trafficking activities.
35. International Operations Unit: The USFWS OLE has deployed special agent attachés to serve at U.S. embassies in strategic regions throughout the world. USFWS special agent attachés are experienced criminal investigators specialized in wildlife and natural resource investigations. The attaché’s mission is primarily to support wildlife investigations within the host country and region, to provide training and capacity building, and to advise on the leverage of U.S. assets in the host region to combat wildlife trafficking (CWT). With additional attachés assigned to new posts, the USFWS has posted special agent attachés at U.S. embassies located in: Bangkok, Thailand (Southeast Asia Region); Beijing, China (Asia Region); Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Eastern Africa Region); Gaborone, Botswana (Southern Africa Region); Libreville, Gabon (West/Central Africa Region); Lima, Peru (South America Region); and Mexico City, Mexico (Mexico, Caribbean, Central America Region).

Activities of Regional Representatives

36. No activities to report from the alternative representative, Carolina Caceres
37. Dr. Rosemarie Gnam, the Regional Representative attended the “International Expert Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings for Hunting Trophies of Certain African Species Included in CITES Appendixes I and II” that was held from 26-29 April 2018 in Seville Spain.
38. Regional cooperation and priorities
39. The members of the North America Region communicate regularly as part of our ongoing commitment to meet and discuss regional CITES issues including CITES implementation, preparations for CITES meetings, and other CITES issues of interest to our region. In this reporting period, one meeting was held in Montreal Canada, on September 28, 2017. In between meetings, the North America Region maintains communication through conference calls and emails.
40. A two- year project on “*Supporting Sustainable Trade of CITES Species*” funded by the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) was initiated in 2017. CITES authorities from Canada, Mexico and the United States are involved in this project. This CEC-CITES project promotes priority actions to support sustainable CITES trade for key priority species groups (sharks, tarantulas, turtles and timber). A tri-national

meeting on tarantula trade and enforcement was held in Guadalajara, Mexico from 27 February to 2 March 2018. The objectives of the workshop were to support legal, sustainable and traceable trade of tarantulas. As part of this work, the CEC supported the development of IUCN Red List Assessments for 16 CITES-listed species of tarantulas; is developing an identification guide for tarantulas in trade; and, released a video to invite the public to become informed about the species that they might be interested in buying or selling, using tarantula pet trade as an example (<http://www.cec.org/news-and-outreach/press-releases/cec-celebrates-world-wildlife-day-video-promote-sustainable-trade-north-american-tarantulas>). A website has been developed to explain to the public, experts and stakeholders, including local people involved in trade, the goals of the project and to report on implementation of priority actions (<http://www3.cec.org/cites/>). In a similar manner, regarding the additional 3 priority species groups (sharks, turtles and timber) a set of consultancies and workshops are programmed to take place throughout 2018. Among these, the “Training workshop on shark fin identification and the transnational illegal trade in shark fin” stands out, and is to be held in Vancouver (Canada) in the second week of July.

41. The outcomes and publications from this CEC project that might be available by the time of the present meeting of the Animals Committee, are likely to be presented by the North American Region through separate Information Documents.
42. Updates on Mexican. *Abronia* spp.: The translation into CITES three official languages of the identification guide for the genus *Abronia* has been completed, where the translation in French was a result of a collaboration with Canadian CITES Authorities. The most updated version can be consulted at: <http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/abronias.html>. Furthermore, Mexico will present the guide in a Tablet-friendly format (.pdf) at the 8th edition of the “Week of biological diversity” (May 22-26, 2018; Mexico City), which is organized by CONABIO.

Meetings and Workshops

Within the Region:

43. Within the framework of the XXII Annual Meeting of the Canada/U.S.A./Mexico Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and ecosystem Conservation and Management (held from April 9 to 12, 2018; Shepherdstown, U.S.A), Mexico presented a progress report on the actions taken within CITES framework, where the following stand out: (i) Progress in the implementation of Totoaba Decisions (17.145-17.151), highlighting achievements on combating illegal trafficking and demand reduction; (ii) the outcomes of the trilateral China/USA/Mexico meeting on totoaba held in August 2017, where an agreement on establishing a trilateral working group to combat totoaba’s illegal trade was agreed, as well as the formalization of trilateral collaboration through a collaboration instrument, the development of capacity building and education strategies; (iii) regarding the sea cucumber *Isostichopus fuscus*, Mexico highlighted its participation in an audit held on February 2018 related to the illegal trafficking of six thousand specimens, the audit was held within the framework of the close collaboration of enforcement implementation at the regional level; (iv) the Mexican Enforcement Authority (PROFEPA) confirmed its participation of the Operation Thunderstorm (to be held in May, 2018).
44. Project “Legal and illegal trade of wildlife between the European Union and Mexico” (2017-2018). This one-year project stems from the outcomes of the “2015 High Level Dialogue between Mexico and the European Union” and formally begun through a consultancy on February 2017. Its purpose was to: (i) analyze wildlife trade between Mexico and the EU (whether legal or illegal) during the last 10 years; (ii) identify opportunities to strengthen legal, sustainable, and traceable trade; (iii) provide benefits to the main stakeholders of the supply chain (from local communities in Mexico to the European Industry); and, (iv) contribute to tackle illegal wildlife trade. The recommendations derived from the project cover around 300 species, which for the benefit of decision making purposes, these have been clumped in five thematic groups: (i) terrestrial and semi-terrestrial species; (ii) aquatic species; (iii) flying species; (iv) timber; and (v) non-timber species. The consolidated report of the project is expected to be achieved by the end of May 2018.

Other Meetings and Workshops (Outside the Region):

45. From 4 to 6 April 2018, representatives from the USFWS and about 50 other participants from nine other range States, including Canada, of the American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*), came together to discuss the status, conservation, and management of the highly migratory American eel. The three-day workshop was convened by the Sargasso Sea Commission, hosted by the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources of the Dominican Republic in Santo Domingo, and supported by the USFWS and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to respond to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) [Decision 17.187](#). The purpose of the workshop was to exchange information on

science, management, trade and enforcement topics while also fostering regional collaboration opportunities and new regional information networks. Participating range states included the Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the United States. Participants discussed how to fill information gaps and ensure long-term sustainability in the face of increasing demand for all eel species, particularly their highly valuable glass eel life stage for international trade. Key outcomes include a Workshop Report with recommendations to this CITES Animals Committee to be submitted by the United States, Canada and the Dominican Republic. For more information about the eel workshop, including the meeting documents, please follow this [link](#).

46. In February 2018, USFWS DMA and OLE representatives conducted a CITES Implementation and Enforcement workshop in Oman. The workshop provided training on CITES implementation and enforcement with an emphasis on port inspections and identification of CITES wildlife. The training was accompanied with a permanent donation from the USFWS National Wildlife Property Repository of various CITES wildlife trade items, including numerous species of shark fins, for use by customs officials to assist in the identification of illicit wildlife specimens in the trade and law enforcement training exercises.

Other Regional Information

CANADA

47. No information

MEXICO

48. CONABIO, in its capacity as Mexico's Scientific Authority, coordinated the development of the "Ranching protocol for Morelet's Crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*) in Mexico" (Barrios & Cremieux, 2018). This publication represents the culmination of a thorough peer review process that began in 2016, with the expertise of national experts such as the Specialist Group of Crocodylians in Mexico (GEC), as well as international experts such as the Crocodile Specialist Group of the IUCN (CSG). The protocol is likely to be formally presented by Mexico under a separate agenda item at AC30, and its latest version is available at: http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cocodrilos_m/pdf/Prot_Ranch_v4_Web.pdf
49. During the reporting period at hand, PROFEPA developed a total of 5,113 verification operations of wildlife transboundary movements; of these 3,618 represented imports, and the remaining 1,495 represented exports.

UNITED STATES

50. In 2017, NOAA provided grant funds to the CITES Secretariat for a project titled, *Strengthening CITES implementation for selected marine species*, which consists of activities that implement three sets of Decisions adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, namely: *Precious coral* (Dec.17.191); *Marine turtles* (Dec. 17.222); and *Banggai cardinalfish* (Dec. 17.260).
51. USFWS continues to collaborate with the CITES Representatives of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) on the legal and sustainable use of native species, including furbearers, alligators, and freshwater turtles and tortoises. We meet at least, two times a year.

U.S. Law Enforcement Activities:

52. As a result of an OLE investigation that was conducted with the United States Postal Inspection Service and Environment and Climate Change Canada, a Chinese national was sentenced for smuggling seven ball pythons through the U.S. mail to Shanghai, China. The snakes were declared as "belts, candy, and chocolate." The defendant was stopped by Canadian border officials as he attempted to enter Canada. Canadian officers discovered three live albino western hog-nosed snakes hidden in his socks that he was wearing. On October 30, 2017, he was sentenced to time served, fined \$5,000, and ordered to pay \$3,519 in restitution.
53. An OLE-led investigation into African elephant ivory resulted in an auctioneer being sentenced for knowingly selling ivory. Initially, German customs authorities seized 14 carved African elephant ivory figurines for lack of required CITES documents. The OLE investigation revealed that the defendant had exported elephant ivory to customers in Canada, Russia, Thailand, and the United Kingdom and one

shipment was stopped before being exported to China. The defendant, who was sentenced on January 23, 2018, received a \$12,000 fine.

54. On January 17, 2018, a marine-life dealer was sentenced to five years of probation and fined \$35,000 for his role in the illegal harvest and sale of wild live rock collected from federally protected waters in the Gulf of Mexico. USFWS OLE and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission conducted the investigation that discovered the defendant had falsely reported the amount of harvested live rock and from where the live rock was taken. Over a seven month period, he reported harvesting 3,610 pounds of legally acquired aquaculture live rock, when actually he had taken over 15,000 pounds of wild live rock from protected federal waters.
55. A Canadian national was sentenced to 62 months in prison for 10 money-laundering offenses after being charged with conspiracy, smuggling, and money laundering for smuggling hundreds of narwhal tusks into the United States from Canada. Based on a request from the U.S., the defendant was arrested in Canada. He pleaded guilty to a related wildlife smuggling crime and was extradited to the U.S. to face 10 money-laundering offenses. The case was investigated by USFWS-OLE, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Environment and Climate Change Canada.
56. Two defendants were sentenced for smuggling a live tiger cub into the United States from Mexico. They stated they had purchased the cub in Tijuana, Mexico for \$300 from an individual who was walking a full-sized tiger on a leash. The tiger cub was discovered on the floor of the vehicle as the two men attempted to enter the United States. One man was sentenced to six months in prison. The other was sentenced to six months in prison, three years of supervised release, and fined \$1,000.
57. USFWS OLE executed an eight-day inspection blitz at the Alaskan Port of Alcan on the border of the U.S. and Canada. OLE used the operation as an opportunity to enforce federal, state, and international wildlife laws and to provide educational outreach to the general public. Wildlife violations were discovered in 24% of the vehicles and included those against the Endangered Species Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Lacey Act, and CITES.
58. In April of 2018, one company and two owners pleaded guilty for importing commercial quantities of sea cucumbers in violation of foreign law and contrary to U.S. law. The company and one owner pleaded guilty to felony counts and the second owner pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor counts. In the plea agreement, the company and owners were ordered to pay \$717,700 in fines to the USFWS Lacey Act Reward Account, \$237,879 to Asset Forfeitures, \$4,000 to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and \$40,000 in restitution to Mexico.
59. In September of 2017, a federal grand jury returned three separate indictments charging a total of three individuals and two companies with engaging in the unlawful trading of live CITES protected coral. USFWS OLE investigated this complex scheme where live coral were illegally taken from coral reefs, hidden in air cargo shipments, and imported during non-business hours in an attempt to smuggle them in the United States. One defendant was charged with unlawfully attempting to export 20 varieties of live CITES protected coral to Mexico. At the Los Angeles International Airport, another defendant was found to have CITES protected corals hidden in potato chip cans. These cans were discovered inside of his luggage as he was leaving the U.S. for Mexico.
60. Since its inception in 2013, the Wildlife Detector Dog program has been very successful. Currently, USFWS OLE has seven wildlife detector dog teams working in major cargo ports across the United States. These wildlife inspector and K-9 teams have successfully interdicted an array of CITES protected wildlife products including but not limited to live reptiles and birds, walrus ivory, giant clam meat, sea turtle, ginseng, shark, python, and sea cucumber.