

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



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 3 – 8 February 2025

SUMMARY RECORD

Opening remarks of the Chair *No document*

The Chair welcomed the participants and opened the meeting.

Opening remarks of the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General gave opening remarks and reflected on the increasing workload for CITES Parties, Committees and the Secretariat, and increasing costs.

1. Agenda..... SC78 Doc. 1

The Chair introduced document SC78 Doc. 1, noting that an annotated agenda, containing all recommendations to the Standing Committee, had been made available as Information document SC78 Inf. 16.

The Committee adopted its provisional agenda as set out in document SC78 Doc. 1.

There were no interventions.

2. Adoption of the working programme..... SC78 Doc. 2

The Chair introduced document SC78 Doc. 2.

The Committee adopted its working programme as set out in document SC78 Doc. 2.

There were no interventions.

3. Rules of Procedure..... SC78 Doc. 3

The Chair introduced document SC78 Doc. 3.

The Committee noted that its Rules of Procedure as set out in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 3 remain valid for this meeting. The Committee noted that, whenever Georgia is absent, Israel will be acting Member for the European region.

There were no interventions.

4. Credentials..... *No document*

The Secretariat informed the Committee that letters of credentials or nomination letters had been received for all regional representatives of the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee noted that all Members and acting Members of the Standing Committee had provided credentials.

There were no interventions.

5. Admission of observers SC78 Doc. 5

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 5.

The Committee noted the list of observer organizations that had been invited to attend the meeting as set out in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 5.

There were no interventions.

6. Report of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees SC78 Doc. 6

The Chairs of the Plants and Animals Committees introduced document SC78 Doc. 6, outlining the activities carried out since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee and summarizing the outcomes of the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee, as relevant to the Standing Committee.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, proposed textual amendments to recommendation b) of the document.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported recommendation c), concurring that there were areas of further clarification regarding the footnote in paragraph 1 of Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'*. The region also supported recommendation g). As a general observation, the United States, speaking on behalf of the North American region, queried if the Secretariat had explored alternative ways to fund the work under Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II*; the Secretariat clarified that the process remained subject to external resources, and welcomed suggestions from Parties on funding options.

The Committee:

- a) noted the recommendations adopted by the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee on the items discussed in document SC78 Doc. 6 as contained in the summary records of the meetings ([PC27 SR](#) and [AC33 SR](#));
- b) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the draft revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.5 on *Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation* agreed by the Plants Committee and contained in Section A) in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 6 as amended by the North American region, Brazil and Poland (see the Annex to the present executive summary for the edits);
- c) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the renewal of Decisions 19.164 to 19.166 on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'* and requested the Secretariat to consider the matters in paragraph 46 of document SC78 Doc. 6 in its report to the next meeting of the Animals Committee;
- d) noted the report of the workshop on *Aquatic species listed in the CITES Appendices* in information document AC33 Inf. 13 and the recommendations in paragraph 51 a) and b) of document SC78 Doc. 6 and agreed that Decisions 19.189 to 19.191 have been implemented and can be deleted;
- e) noted the draft decisions and amendments to resolutions that the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee agreed to submit for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties contained in Annexes 1 and 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6:

Item under consideration	
Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)] (Decision 19.245)	i. new draft decisions in section D) of Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 6;

<i>Conservation of amphibians (Amphibia spp.) (Decision 19.199)</i>	ii. new draft decisions in section D) of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>Queen conch (Strombus gigas) (Decision 19.236)</i>	iii. renewal of Decisions 19.233 to 19.236 on <i>Queen conch (Strombus gigas)</i> ;
<i>Periodic review of the Appendices (Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19)) – flora and fauna</i>	iv. deletion of criterion D in paragraph 3 b) ii) of Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on <i>Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II</i> ; and
<i>Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs) (Decision 19.133)</i>	v. new draft decisions in Section B) of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6.

- f) agreed to submit the draft decisions and amendments to resolutions proposed by the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee, referred to in the table below and contained in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to document SC78 Doc. 6, for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

Item under consideration	Proposed recommendation to the Standing Committee
<i>Identification of timber and other wood products (Decision 19.148)</i>	i. new and revised draft decisions in section B) of Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>Agarwood-producing taxa (Aquilaria spp. and Gyrinops spp.) (Decision 19.240)</i>	ii. proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.10 on <i>Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa</i> in Section C) of Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (Decision 19.25)</i>	iii. proposed amendment to paragraph 1 b) of Resolution Conf. 13.3 on <i>Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)</i> in Section A) i. of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6; iv. new draft decisions in Section A) ii. of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>African lions (Panthera leo) (Decision 19.207)</i>	v. draft revised decisions in Section B) of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations' (Decision 19.166)</i>	vi. renewal of Decisions 19.164 to 19.166 on <i>Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'</i> ;
<i>West African vultures (Accipitridae spp.) (Decision 19.196)</i>	vii. draft revised decisions in Section C) of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6;
<i>Review of Resolution Conf. 8.13 (Rev. CoP17) on Use of coded-microchip implants for marking live animals in trade</i>	viii. new draft decisions in section E) of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 6; and
<i>Countrywide Significant Trade Reviews (Decision 19.48)</i>	ix. new draft decisions in Section A) of Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 6;

- g) agreed that the following Decisions directed to the Standing Committee relating to the items in document SC78 Doc. 6 have been implemented and can be deleted:
- i) Decision 19.240 on *Agarwood-producing taxa (Aquilaria spp. and Gyrinops spp.)*;
 - ii) Decision 19.245 on *Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]*
 - iii) Decision 19.256 on *African tree species*
 - iv) Decision 19.260 on *Neotropical tree species*
 - v) Decision 18.258 (Rev.CoP19) on *Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes spp.)*; and

- h) noted the comment by the North American region on funding to conduct periodic reviews in accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II*.

7. Financial matters (Resolutions Conf. 19.1 and 18.2)..... SC78 Doc. 7

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 7, which outlines the financial performance of the Secretariat since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC77; Geneva, November 2023) and provides information on income and expenditure from 1 January 2023 to 30 September 2024 for both Convention trust funds. The Secretariat noted as a matter of concern the level of unpaid annual contributions, which amounted to USD 1.3 million by 2023. The Secretariat expressed its intention to approach Parties with outstanding contributions for 3 years or more, to discuss setting up payment plans.

The Central African Republic informed the Standing Committee that its outstanding contributions mentioned in the report had been paid in full as of December 2024.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 7 and agreed that further discussion on these matters would be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC).

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the FBSC, introduced document SC78 Com. 7, containing, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Standing Committee for agenda item 7 on *Financial matters*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee in in-session document SC78 Com. 7 with the deletion of paragraph 9 b) as follows:

The Committee:

- a) approved the reports on the costed programme of work for the full year of 2023 and for the period up to 30 September 2024;
- b) approved the request to transfer the amount of USD 40,500 budgeted for year 2024 (under Standing Committee – conference staff-interpretation) to year 2025 to cover the actual 78th meeting of the Standing Committee meeting in February 2025; and
- c) noted other information provided in the report.

8. Report on proposed budget scenarios for 2026-2028 SC78 Doc. 8

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 8, which proposes three alternative budget scenarios for 2026-2028 to be presented at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP): one scenario with zero nominal growth (maintaining the current level of staffing and operational costs), a second one with zero real growth (maintaining the level of staffing but increasing the operational costs) and a third one with incremental growth (building on the zero real growth scenario, with additional resources for CoP logistics, communication and outreach activities, maintenance of the CITES Illegal trade database and an additional three posts).

Recalling the substantial and increasing amount of work to be undertaken on a limited budget, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) requested clarification from the Secretariat as to whether it anticipated that there would be any work or posts that could not continue under any of the scenarios. The Secretary-General recalled that discussions had taken place in previous meetings of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC) on cost-cutting, but that no avenues had been identified, as the largest part of the core budget funded Secretariat staff and committee meetings. The Secretary-General stressed that the Secretariat could not consider cutting staff given current workloads. Canada called for discussions at the CoP on the consequences of the budgets, with deliberate discussions on the priorities if not all work could be funded.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking on behalf of the Central and South America and the Caribbean region, requested a linear representation of the zero real growth and incremental growth budgets. Brazil, echoed by the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Canada and the Russian Federation, also requested further information regarding the need for the posts proposed in the incremental growth budget. The Secretariat agreed to prepare an explanation of the work to be undertaken by the requested posts.

Stating that Parties were facing budgetary constraints, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), speaking as a Party, expressed support for the zero nominal growth scenario.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 8 and agreed that further discussion on these matters would be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC).

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the FBSC, introduced document SC78 Com. 7, containing, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Standing Committee for agenda item 8 on *Report on proposed budget scenarios for 2026-2028*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee in in-session document SC78 Com. 7 with the deletion of paragraph 9 b) as follows:

The Committee:

- a) requested the Secretariat to brief the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC) virtually by end of March 2025 on the draft budget scenarios and opportunities for cost savings (e.g. streamlining agenda items, document volume and translated pages) and revenue and, if the FBSC requests, again when reports for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties have been finalized;
- b) requested the Secretariat to prepare a budget scenario for true zero nominal growth, in which any increases in salary costs would be offset by decreases in the budget elsewhere, resulting in a flat budget;
- c) noted that the FBSC has advised the Secretariat on desired information to facilitate the discussion on the budget scenarios at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- d) encouraged Parties to consider the number of decisions and their associated costs when submitting or referring decisions to the Conference of the Parties, taking into account the impact on the limited resources of the Secretariat.

9. Administrative matters

9.1 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 9.1 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 9.1 (Rev.1), providing an update on the administrative performance of the Secretariat since the last meeting of the Standing Committee (SC77; Geneva, November 2023), specifically on its staff changes and ongoing recruitment, and on the implementation of the recommendations of the audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, eight of which had been fully implemented and closed while the remaining recommendation was expected to be closed during 2025.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking on behalf of the Central and South America and the Caribbean region, requested that a long-term plan be formulated at the next Conference of the Parties to ensure that recruitment addressed the over-representation of nationalities from Western Europe and Other Groups in Secretariat staff, as per the UN Secretary General's policy on geographic diversity in recruitment. The Secretariat clarified that it had been increasing diversity in Secretariat staff over time and suggested, that amongst other recruitment outreach taking place, it could reach out to Parties when posts became available to encourage applications from all regions.

Canada noted that the Secretariat had raised concerns about the added burden posed by administrative changes introduced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and hoped to see mitigation measures by UNEP to limit this burden.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 9.1 (Rev. 1) and agreed that further discussion on these matters would be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC).

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the FBSC, introduced document SC78 Com. 7, containing, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Standing Committee for agenda item 9.1 on *Administrative matters – Report of the Secretariat*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee in in-session document SC78 Com. 7 with the deletion of paragraph 9 b) as follows:

The Committee noted the report.

9.2 Report of the United Nations Environment Programme on administrative matters..... SC78 Doc. 9.2

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) introduced document SC78 Doc. 9.2 on the administrative and financial management support provided by UNEP to the Convention. UNEP highlighted important updates since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC77, Geneva, November 2023), including, *inter alia*, a Partnership Policy, an increase in the After Service Health Insurance rate which has implications for the CITES budget, and support provided by several units in the Corporate Services Division.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, requested that the report be discussed in the Finance and Budget Subcommittee for clarifications on some items.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 9.2 and agreed that further discussion on relevant matters would be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC).

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the FBSC, introduced document SC78 Com. 7, containing, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Standing Committee for agenda item 9.2 on *Administrative matters – Report of the United Nations Environment Programme*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee in in-session document SC78 Com. 7 with the deletion of paragraph 9 b) as follows:

The Committee noted the report and requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to make available the UNEP Partnership Policy to Parties.

10. Emerging operational matters of the committees (Decision 19.3)..... SC78 Doc. 10

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 10 on options for organizing committee meetings in exceptional circumstances, including proposed guidance based on recommendations from the Animals and Plants Committees. Emerging operational issues, including the possibility of expanding online Committee meetings and consideration of remote participation of Parties directly concerned by an agenda item, were also highlighted.

Japan (Committee Member for Asia), with support from Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), did not support recommendation b) on the organization of online Committee meetings. While acknowledging that online meetings were helpful for reducing costs, Japan stressed the need to consider time zone differences and countries with poor internet connections. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) was of the view that recommendation b) should be amended to specify that the measures pertained to exceptional circumstances only, such as those experienced during the COVID pandemic. Brazil further remarked that regular online meetings for intersessional decision-making would exacerbate workloads and be challenging for developing countries to participate. However, Brazil noted it could support online participation if requested by a country during an in-person meeting. The Russian Federation did not support the organization of online or hybrid meetings for the exceptional circumstances set out in paragraph 3 a) and b) of the document, as it considered that in-person meetings allowed for productive exchange of views that were vital for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) broadly supported the recommendations in the document, but with various amendments. Regarding recommendation c), New Zealand requested that the modalities for hybrid meetings be included in the guidance document in Annex 2. Regarding recommendation d), New Zealand suggested to amend the new paragraph 9 a) of Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees* to extend the timeframe for finding an alternative host location from two months to three months, citing the difficulty some Parties face in securing government approval within a short time frame. The United Kingdom sought to clarify if the option to connect to an online Committee meeting under exceptional circumstances was open to all Parties regardless of circumstances, or only Parties directly affected by the circumstances

in question. The Secretariat clarified that the option would be open to affected Parties only. Georgia wished to emphasize that its understanding was that new paragraph 9 b) of Resolution Conf. 18.2 would only apply in situations where neither the Standing Committee regional representative nor its alternative members could travel to the meeting and should not become standard practice.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported recommendations a), b) and c) of the document with minor editorial edits to recommendation c) i) to allow discretion on meeting length. Regarding the remaining recommendations, the North American region noted that diplomatic representatives may not always be able to provide robust representation necessary to actively engage in CITES discussions, and therefore proposed the deletion of related text in paragraph 9 b) in Annex 3. On recommendation f), the region sought clarification on whether the proposed intersessional decision-making procedure aimed to formalize existing informal procedures or introduce new processes beyond those already in place for CITES committees. The Secretariat clarified that any proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure would only aim at formalizing existing informal procedures.

The Russian Federation opposed the possible introduction of a shorter process of decision-making in the intersessional period, expressing concerns with how exchanges would be tracked; it therefore opposed recommendations c) and f) of the document.

The Committee:

- a) requested the Secretariat to continue using the risk matrix for convening CITES meetings contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 10;
- b) agreed that, under exceptional circumstances such as those during the COVID-19 pandemic, online Committee meetings be organized based on the following modalities:
 - i) The length of the meeting may be two to three times longer than an in-person meeting, i.e., over two to three weeks, with one three-hour session every day. The Secretariat will aim to ensure that the timing of any online or hybrid meeting be equitable for all regions.
 - ii) The plenary would break for two to three weeks in order to organize, hold and conclude the work of possible in-session working groups.
- c) requested the Secretariat to include the two modalities above in the *Guidance on the application of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee in an online or hybrid meeting* in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 10;
- d) agreed to use the *Guidance on the application of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee in an online or hybrid meeting* as amended in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 10 when exceptional circumstances warrant the organization of an online or hybrid meeting and requested the Secretariat to publish it on the CITES website;
- e) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of Committees* as collated in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 10 and as amended by New Zealand and the United States of America on behalf of the North American region;
- f) agreed that Decisions 19.1 to 19.3 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion; and
- g) requested the Secretariat to submit a proposal for amending Rule 20 of its Rules of procedure taking into account the comments made at SC78 in order to formalize a practice of establishing intersessional working groups and organizing the programme of work through a simplified intersessional decision-making procedure for its consideration at its 81st meeting.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 18.2 ON *ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES*
(new text is underlined; additional text following SC77 is shown as double underline)

Regarding exceptional circumstances

9. DECIDES that:

- a) should a meeting of a Committee be postponed due to circumstances that are either global or at the location of the meeting preventing its organization, the postponed meeting should take place no later than six months after its original date. If no alternative location is found within ~~two three~~ months of its original date, the meeting is to be organized fully online (possibly with an adapted agenda and working programme and ensuring an equitable timing for all regions);
- b) should exceptional circumstances prevent Committee Members from several regions from being present in person at a meeting and thereby affecting the quorum, the meeting of that Committee should be held in a hybrid format. The scientific committees' Members who are unable to travel to the location of the meeting would be connected online. The Standing Committee Members who are unable to travel to the location of the meeting ~~and who do not have a diplomatic representation available at the location of the meeting~~ would be connected online; and

Annex 1 Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties

13. During meetings of the Committee, if so requested by the Management Authority of a Party of its region not present at the meeting, a regional Member may read a short statement presenting concise information on their behalf when a specific agenda item directly affects the absent Party. In exceptional circumstances, when an observer Party directly affected by compliance procedures cannot ensure in-person participation, ~~its remote participation could be considered~~ **the observer Party can request the Secretariat to arrange for their remote participation** when the agenda item is discussed as an opportunity to present additional information and answer questions from the Committee. However, decision-making by the Committee should not be delayed due to technical problems preventing affected Parties from making online statements.

Annex 2 Terms of Reference of the Animals and Plants Committees of the Conference of the Parties

Functions

2. The Animals and Plants Committee shall, in accordance with instructions from and authority delegated by the Conference of the Parties in its resolutions and decisions:

[...]

- h) during meetings of the Committee, if so requested by the Management or Scientific Authority of a Party of its region not present at the meeting, the Member may read a short statement presenting concise information on their behalf when a specific agenda item directly affects the absent Party; In exceptional circumstances, when an observer Party directly affected by compliance procedures cannot ensure in-person participation, ~~its remote participation could be considered~~ **the observer Party can request the Secretariat to arrange for their remote participation** when the agenda item is discussed as an opportunity to present additional information and answer questions from the Committee. However, decision-making by the Committee should not be delayed due to technical problems preventing affected Parties from making online statements.

11. Access to funding (Decision 19.9) SC78 Doc. 11

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 11, drawing attention to the proposal to incorporate Decisions 18.4 and 19.4 to 19.7 into Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium*, to make the actions contained therein part of the regular long-term work of the Secretariat.

Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia) reported on several in-country initiatives, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), on species conservation and landscape management and on wildlife trade.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking as a Party, did not support the inclusion of the Decisions into Resolution Conf. 19.1, arguing that they were broader in scope than just directed to the Secretariat, and that elements aimed at resource mobilization for Parties, key in particular for developing countries, might be lost. This was supported by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), speaking as a Party, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Argentina, Central African Republic, Ecuador, Iran, and Senegal. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan stated that developing countries needed more resources to achieve implementation of the Convention, particularly in terms of capacity-building. The Democratic

Republic of the Congo highlighted its need for funding for an inventory and management plan for *Psittacus erithacus*.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) supported the inclusion of the Decisions into Resolution Conf. 19.1 with minor textual edits, suggesting that the matter be referred to the Finance and Budgetary Subcommittee (FBSC). Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), Canada, speaking also on behalf of Mexico, and Malaysia also supported the inclusion of the Decisions into the Resolution. Canada requested that additional details on the resource mobilization strategy, on anticipated timelines for completion, and on the actors consulted, be shared with Parties for input, as Parties played a key role in fundraising.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, did not oppose the inclusion of the Decisions into the Resolution, but could also support retaining the Decisions.

The Committee established a drafting group composed of the following Standing Committee Members [Belgium, Brazil, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, New Zealand (Chair) and the United States of America] with the mandate to incorporate those elements of Decisions 18.4 and 19.4 through 19.7 relevant to the Secretariat's work into Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium* and to keep those elements of Decisions 18.4 and 19.4 through 19.7 relevant to Parties in a new set of draft decisions on *Access to funding*.

The Committee agreed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as acting Member for the African region, could be added to the drafting group on *Access to funding*.

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the drafting group, introduced document SC78 Com. 11, containing revised Decisions and proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 19.1; New Zealand informed the Committee that Decisions 19.8 and 19.9 had been deemed relevant to the discussion and had therefore also been considered by the drafting group. New Zealand drew attention to a typo in revised Decision 19.4 that should refer to GEF-9 and to the option of [ensuring]/[supporting] in revised Decision 19.5, for which no consensus had been reached.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), and the United States (Committee Member for North America) preferred the use of 'supporting', considering that providing assistance could not ensure effective implementation but only support it. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) preferred to retain the word 'ensuring', to avoid changing agreed language which may result in weakened efforts to provide financial assistance to developing countries.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 11 as amended by New Zealand and the United States of America as follows:

The Committee:

- a) noted the update provided by the Secretariat on access to funding;
- b) agreed on the revisions of Decisions 19.4 and 19.5. and agreed to renew Decision 19.6 as contained in Annex 1, for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting (CoP20).
- c) agreed to propose to incorporate Decisions 18.4, 19.5, 19.6 and 19.7 in Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium* for consideration by the Conference of Parties at CoP20; and
- d) agreed that, with the amendments to Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium*, Decisions 19.8 and 19.9 can be proposed for deletion.

Directed to the Parties

18.4 ~~Parties are invited to provide non-reimbursable loan of personnel services to the CITES Secretariat noting that the salary and administrative fee of non-reimbursable loan personnel shall be covered by the Party, with such personnel remaining under the administrative authority~~

~~of the sending Party. Non-reimbursable loan personnel shall carry out their duties and act in the interest of the mandate of the CITES Secretariat.~~

19.4 Parties are encouraged to:

- a) engage with their Global Environment Facility (GEF) national focal points in order to take part in the national GEF processes and facilitate use of allocated GEF funding through the Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Program;
- b) contribute to the development and implementation of GEF projects, in line with existing GEF procedures and guidelines, that may have components related to the implementation of CITES, by communicating with their national GEF counterparts and informing them of relevant CITES requirements and processes; and
- c) ~~monitor~~ maintain awareness of the progress of the GEF Global Wildlife Program and the discussion on the implementation establishment of the Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Program under the ~~eight~~ ninth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-89) and ensure that national projects, where applicable, can enhance the beneficiary Parties' ability to meet their obligations under CITES.

Directed to the Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities

19.5 All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are invited to provide financial or technical assistance for ~~ensuring~~ supporting the effective implementation of the Decisions and Resolutions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

19.6 In providing financial assistance, Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are encouraged to take into consideration the administrative and financial management support needed to ensure that the funded activities are managed in an efficient, effective and accountable manner, and that they do not affect the Secretariat's core administrative tasks.

Directed to the Secretariat

~~19.7~~ The Secretariat shall:

- ~~a) continue to participate in the Program Steering Committee of the GEF Global Wildlife Program, Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Program, or other GEF mechanisms as appropriate, to ensure that GEF projects under the program are, as far as possible, aligned with CITES Decisions and Resolutions and contribute to the enhanced implementation of the Convention; and~~
- ~~b) provide technical advice and in-kind support to Parties in the development and implementation of their GEF projects under the Global Wildlife Program, Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Program, or other GEF mechanisms as appropriate.~~

Directed to the Parties

~~19.8~~ The Secretariat shall report on the progress on the implementation of Decisions 19.5 and 19.7 and make any recommendations, as necessary, to the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

~~19.9~~ The Standing Committee shall review the Secretariat's report and make recommendations, as necessary, to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 19.1 ON
FINANCING AND THE COSTED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SECRETARIAT
FOR THE TRIENNIUM 2023-2025

(new text is underlined)

After paragraph 18, insert the following new paragraphs:

- X. INVITES Parties to provide non-reimbursable loan of personnel services to the CITES Secretariat, noting that the salary and administrative fee of non-reimbursable loan personnel should be covered by the Party, with such personnel remaining under the administrative authority of the sending Party. Non-reimbursable loan personnel should carry out their duties and act in the interest of the mandate of the CITES Secretariat;

After paragraph 28, insert the following new paragraph:

- X. ENCOURAGES Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities to provide financial or technical assistance for ensuring/supporting the effective implementation of the Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties. In providing financial assistance, consideration should be made for the administrative and financial management support needed to ensure that the funded activities are managed in an efficient, effective and accountable manner, and that they complement and do not affect the Secretariat's core administrative tasks;

After paragraph 37, insert the following new paragraphs:

- X. REQUESTS the Secretariat to:

- a) continue to participate in the Program Steering Committee of the Global Environment Fund (GEF) Global Wildlife Program, Wildlife Conservation for Development Integrated Programme and other GEF mechanisms as appropriate, and to support the alignment of GEF projects under the program, as far as possible, with CITES Resolutions and Decisions and contribute to the enhanced implementation of the Convention; and
- b) provide technical advice and in-kind support to Parties in the development and implementation of their GEF projects under the Global Wildlife Program as appropriate;

12. Arrangements for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Resolution Conf. 19.1)

12.1 Preparations for CoP20 *No document*

The Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change from the Republic of Uzbekistan, His Excellency Aziz Abdukhakimov, as representative of the Next Host Country, gave an oral report on ongoing preparations for CoP20, complemented by a short video on the country and venue. The Minister highlighted that 2025 had been declared as a year of environmental protection and green economy in Uzbekistan and referred to a number of initiatives undertaken by the country, as well as a new hub in Tashkent hosting an office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and university which could serve as a capacity-building platform for the Central Asian region.

Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), China, India, Mali, IUCN and the Wildlife Conservation Society all thanked Uzbekistan for offering to host CoP20. Kenya, supported by Mali and Senegal, requested that adequate arrangements be made to facilitate the obtaining of visas for countries which did not have embassies in-country. Uzbekistan clarified that it had an electronic visa process and asked that the Secretariat provide a list of participants in advance so that visas could be provided on arrival of the delegates.

The Committee thanked His Excellency Mr. Aziz Abdukhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection, and Climate Change of Uzbekistan for his presentation and noted the progress made by Uzbekistan in the preparations for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

12.2 Draft provisional agenda.....SC78 Doc. 12.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 12.2.

The Committee approved the draft provisional agenda for CoP20 annexed to document SC78 Doc. 12.2.

There were no interventions.

12.3 Draft provisional working programme.....SC78 Doc. 12.3

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 12.3, highlighting that the two-day break was scheduled after six days of the meeting instead of five, in order to consider more items in the first week and thus have more scope for working groups if relevant.

Israel, stressing that with the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee the day before the start of CoP20, this would represent a protracted period of work without a break for some delegates, suggested the break be moved back. Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) and Australia supported the placement of the break after six days, feeling that it would provide more time and opportunity for Parties to consult and advance opened items.

The Committee approved the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 12.3 as the basis for the preparation of a provisional working programme for CoP20, noting that the two-day break should be on Sunday 30 November and Monday 1 December 2025 and the comments made in plenary.

12.4 Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties
[*Decision 18.1 (Rev. CoP19)*]..... SC78 Doc. 12.4

The Chair, as Chair of the intersessional working group on *Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties*, introduced document SC78 Doc. 12.4, containing an update on the deliberations of the working group on Rule 25.6 on *Procedure for deciding on proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II that relate to the same taxon but are different in substance*. The Chair emphasized that the stepwise approach to consider all proposals from the least restrictive to the most restrictive was still subject of discussion within the working group. The Chair referred the Committee to Information document SC78 Inf. 15, incorporating a proposed amendment by China, stating that “if the adoption of one proposal necessarily implied the rejection of another proposal, the latter proposal shall not be submitted to decision unless it contains non-overlapping taxon”.

There was consensus among Parties that took the floor that all amendment proposals should be introduced before any of them are submitted for discussion and decision. Parties expressed diverging opinions about the order of the proposals (from least restrictive to most restrictive or from most to least) and about the stepwise approach.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), echoed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) and Israel, supported the proposed amendments from the working group in document SC78 Doc. 12.4, considering that it would ensure that all proposals, and all taxa contained therein, had a chance to be discussed by the CoP. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, also supported the working group recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 12.4, but suggested that the amendments be considered more fully at the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties rather than the upcoming meeting.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), echoed by Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Benin, Niger and Senegal, as well as the Center for Biological Diversity (also on behalf of David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, ProWildlife and Fondation Franz Weber), did not support the proposed amendment highlighted in blue in information document SC78 Inf. 15. These Parties also felt that the footnote (highlighted in pink in information document SC78 Inf. 15) was confusing.

Senegal stated that the stepwise process should consider the most restrictive proposal first, given the objective of the Convention to conserve species. Mexico supported the retention of considering proposals from least to most restrictive.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) and Israel did not support the proposed amendment by China in information document SC78 Inf. 15, considering that it prevented the stepwise approach altogether. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking as a Party, supported the proposed amendment by China, and suggested that, to reach a compromise, an interpretative non-binding document be created as a guide to help the decision-making on proposals, but the CoP would retain the discretion to decide on a case-by-case basis. Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Botswana, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania also supported the proposal by China, with South Africa considering that it would clarify the Rules of Procedure and remove potential complexities and conflicting decisions. China explained that the rationale behind its proposal was to make the procedure at the CoPs more efficient, given the growing agendas.

Canada supported the amendments proposed in document SC78 Doc. 12.4 but could support the text proposed by China if it provided greater clarity to Parties. India requested that detailed examples be produced so that Parties could fully appreciate the intent of the amendments proposed.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position at SC78, noting that this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee agreed to propose to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties amendments to Rule 25.6 as follows:

If two or more proposals including proposals amended in accordance with Rule 24, paragraph 2 or in accordance with paragraph 5 of this Rule, relate to the same taxon, but are different in substance, the Chair shall so advise the Conference, clearly indicating the implications of the adoption of one proposal for the other(s), and allow each of the proposals to be introduced prior to submitting any of them for discussion and decision. The Conference shall first decide on the proposal that will have the least restrictive effect on the trade and then on the proposal with the next least restrictive effect on the trade, and so on until all proposals have been submitted to decision. When however, If, in relation to the same taxon, the adoption of one proposal necessarily implies the rejection of another proposal, the latter proposal shall nevertheless not be submitted to decision in relation to any other taxon remaining in the latter proposal. Nothing in the procedure stipulated in this paragraph is intended to affect the procedure in the other paragraphs of Rule 25.

The Committee agreed that its Chair would include in the Standing Committee's report to the Conference of the Parties a draft decision to continue consideration of the possible inclusion of a stepwise approach in Rule 25.6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties to replace Decision 18.1 (Rev. CoP19).

The Committee welcomed the examples of a stepwise approach in paragraph 23 of document SC78 Doc. 12.4 and information document SC78 Inf. 15.

12.5 Selection of nominees for Committee Chairs No document

The Secretariat provided an oral update on the selection of nominees. On 12 September 2024, the Standing Committee agreed by correspondence on a procedure for the selection of nominees to serve at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; the details relating to the selection panel, deadline for submission of proposals and procedures were shared via Notification No. 2024/119 of 28 October 2024. It was noted that Parties should make their proposals to the Panel through the CITES Secretary-General by 24 March 2025 at the latest, and nominations that reflected geographical balance, as well as women candidates, were encouraged.

The Committee noted the oral update by the Secretariat.

12.6 Sponsored delegates project and CoP20 sponsored delegates (Decision 18.12).....SC78 Doc. 12.6

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 12.6, which proposed clear selection criteria for the Sponsored Delegates Project and financial support for developing country Parties that are subject to an Article-XIII process, and to incorporate Decision 18.12 paragraph a) and Decision 19.10 a) into Resolution Conf. 17.3 (Rev. CoP19). The Secretariat acknowledged that since the publication of the

document, Germany had provided new funding, complementing contributions from the European Union and Slovakia. Potential donors were requested to transfer funds as soon as possible, no later than five months before the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), the Central African Republic and Senegal stressed the importance of the Sponsored Delegates Project and supported the amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.3 (Rev. CoP19) proposed in the document.

The Committee:

- a) noted the update provided by the Secretariat on the Sponsored Delegates Project;
- b) agreed to propose to the CoP20 to incorporate Decision 18.12, paragraph a) and Decision 19.10, paragraph a) in Resolution Conf. 17.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Sponsored Delegates Project* as contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 12.6; and
- c) agreed that, with the amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.3 (Rev. CoP19), Decisions 18.12 and Decision 19.10 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion to the CoP20.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 17.3 (REV. COP19) ON
SPONSORED DELEGATES PROJECT**

- a) Insert the following paragraph after the sixth preambular paragraph:

NOTING that the Secretariat prioritizes its support for developing country Parties based on the following criteria:

- the Human Development Index (HDI) ranking of a Party for the given year,
- the status as a Least Developed Country (LDC) and/or Small Island Developing States (SIDS),
- the number of delegates present at the previous Conference of the Parties (CoP),
- the Standing Committee membership,
- Parties that are subject to compliance processes,
- Parties that submitted working documents or (co-) proposals for amendments for the upcoming CoP,
- Parties that recently joined the Convention, and
- categories determined by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD DAC), if specified by donor Parties as a condition.

- b) Insert the following paragraph after the eighth operative paragraph, as follows:

8bis. ENCOURAGES Parties from developing countries that are subject to an Article-XIII process to request financial support for the participation of a maximum of two delegates in meetings of the Standing Committee and of the Conference of the Parties;

- c) Insert the following paragraph after the tenth operative paragraph, as follows:

10bis REQUESTS the Secretariat to apply clear selection criteria, taking into account the various possible options for the selection criteria and additional ways to prioritize beneficiary Parties, including the guidelines of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) and the prioritization of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries;

- 13. Arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties
(Resolution Conf. 19.1).....SC78 Doc. 13

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 13, providing an overview of the financial and logistical challenges associated with hosting meetings of the Conference of the Parties, particularly in cases where no host country is identified. Various funding options and strategies to ensure better preparedness for future meetings that had been suggested by the Finance and Budget Subcommittee were presented. The Secretariat informed the Committee that Panama had generously offered to host the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties and invited the Committee to acknowledge Panama's offer; consider a new budget line in the CITES core Trust Fund for CoP organization; and to review the new draft decisions on arrangements for future CoP meetings contained in the Annex.

Panama expressed its pleasure to offer to host the CoP once again, and emphasized its commitment to hosting a secure meeting that would allow the attendance of participants from all countries.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, supported the inclusion of a new budget line in the CITES core Trust Fund, with Belgium and Georgia cautioning that voluntary contributions from countries should continue to be encouraged and the impact of the new budget line on voluntary contributions should be considered. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), supported by Japan and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), requested that discussion on inclusion of a new budget line in the CITES core Trust Fund be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee. Senegal, while supportive of referring the matter to the FBSC, stressed the need to tackle the growing workload related to CoP preparations.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, supported the submission of draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC in the document to CoP20.

Regarding suggestions made on reducing the cost of the CoP meetings in the document, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, stated that the timing of online meetings should be equitable for all regions, as many small Oceania Parties faced challenges attending meetings outside of office hours. New Zealand emphasized that any changes to reduce the cost of the CoP should provide for fulsome participation of Parties and observer organizations. Finally, as a region of several small Parties, the Oceania region did not support the rotation of responsibility for hosting the CoP between regions as suggested in paragraph 13 a) of the document.

The Committee:

- a) acknowledged with appreciation Panama's offer to host CoP21;
- b) agreed that further discussion on the recommendation in paragraph 17 b) of document SC78 Doc. 13 would be referred to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC); and
- c) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC on *Arrangements for meetings of the Conference of the Parties* contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 13 as follows:

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are encouraged to consider hosting future meetings of the Conference of the Parties, as well as in providing financial and in-kind support to the logistical organization of the meeting hosted by other Parties.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall:

- a) request its Finance and Budget Subcommittee to continue the consideration of improved financial preparedness for the future meetings of the Conference of the Parties; and
- b) provide inputs to the Secretariat on the guidance and additional information and tools described in Decision 20.CC, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.CC With inputs from the Standing Committee, the Secretariat shall:

- a) prepare a guidance on raising funds in support of the logistical organization of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties and on reducing costs of the organization of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in cases when an offer from a potential host country is not forthcoming;
- b) in implementing of paragraph a) above, take into consideration procedural elements including timelines and required documents for receiving proposals from potential host countries, as well as the roles of the Standing Committee Members in advising and assisting the interested Parties;
- c) prepare additional information and tools that would support the guidance to ensure preparedness and transparency in the process of the logistical organization of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) submit them for the consideration and approval of the Conference of the Parties.

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC), introduced document SC78 Com. 7, containing, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Standing Committee for agenda item 13. The Chair of the FBSC reported that the FBSC had not reached an agreement on paragraph 9 b) of document SC78 Com. 7.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, did not support including a new budget line in the operational budget under the CITES Core Trust Fund for arrangements for the Conference of the Parties as proposed in recommendation b) in paragraph 9 of document SC78 Com. 7. Honduras (Committee Member for South America), Japan (Committee Member for Asia), Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) echoed this opposition to a new budget line. Kenya and Morocco (Committee Members for Africa), while agreeing with this position at this time, stressed that the Standing Committee needed to think about arrangements for future meetings. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, and Switzerland (Depositary Government) expressed support for a new budget line to be included for future meetings. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), proposed that the decision should be referred to the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee in in-session document SC78 Com. 7 with the deletion of paragraph 9 b) as follows:

The Committee noted the Secretariat's request to include a new budget line for arrangements of meetings of the Conference of the Parties in the operational budget under the CITES Core Trust Fund (CTL) for the triennium 2026-2028.

14. *CITES Strategic Vision (Decisions 19.13 and 19.14)*..... SC78 Doc. 14

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 14, which summarizes comments received after the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee on the mapping of the CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030 objectives against the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and against the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and presents proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* and to Resolution Conf. 18.3 on *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030*, as well as work on possible indicators for objective 1.4 of the *CITES Strategic Vision*: "The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation status and needs of species."

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) requested that the amendments to the Resolutions specify the 'Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity at its 15th meeting'.

Regarding the development of a new indicator for objective 1.4, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), Canada, China, Mexico and Zimbabwe considered that no new indicators were required, so Decision 19.14 could be deleted. The European Union and its Member States concurred and considered it premature to propose indicators for adoption if it was unclear how to measure them.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), Canada, the European Union and its Member States, and Zimbabwe supported the other recommendations in the document.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 14, noting that, at the request of Brazil, the first time the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, it should be followed by the terminology “adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 15th meeting”;
- b) requested the Secretariat to publish the mapping of the areas of alignment between the *CITES Strategic Vision* and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework as contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 14 on the CITES website;
- c) requested the Secretariat to monitor the development of additional indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and bring to the attention of the Standing Committee any indicator that could be relevant for the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030*;
- d) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decision 19.14;
- e) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.3 on *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* contained in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 14; and
- f) agreed that Decisions 19.11 to 19.13 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 16.4 ON
COOPERATION OF CITES WITH OTHER BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS

RECOGNIZING the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ~~Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020~~, developed and adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 40th 15th meeting in ~~Nagoya, Japan~~ Montreal, Canada;

STRESSING that effective implementation of CITES is needed to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ~~and its monitoring framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020~~ and to achieve the Aichi targets;

UNDERLINING the commitment of the Convention CITES to demonstrate how the effective implementation of CITES contributes to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ~~and its monitoring framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020~~ and the relevant Aichi targets;

RECOGNIZING the already existing significant cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions;

COMMENDING the ongoing and important cooperation among the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions, such as thorough the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the Environmental Management Group, and in particular through its Issue Management Group on Biodiversity;

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity*, and Resolution Conf. 13.3 on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)*, and Resolution Conf. 18.5 on *Cooperation and synergy with the World Heritage Convention*, as well as ~~Decision 15.19 and~~ Resolution Conf. 18.3 on CITES Strategic Vision: 200821-20430;

WELCOMING the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on cooperation, coordination and synergies with CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions;

RECOGNIZING the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The Future We Want*, that recognizes the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental

agreements (MEAs) and encouraging the Parties to MEAs to consider further measures to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance cooperation and coordination amongst MEAs;

CONVINCED of the significant potential of increasing cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to enhance coherent national level implementation of each of the conventions, as appropriate;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ENCOURAGES Parties to consider further opportunities to strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions at all relevant levels; ~~and~~
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties further strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and other partners at the national level, as appropriate, to enhance coherent national-level implementation of the Convention;
3. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to contribute to the monitoring framework of the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* by providing to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) any relevant data it has collected on the indicators for the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030*, if so requested by the CBD Secretariat; and
4. ENCOURAGES Parties, through their CITES and CBD focal points, to take into account the information gathered for the development of non-detriment findings when reporting to CBD.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 18.3 ON *CITES STRATEGIC VISION: 2021-2030*

(new text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~)

~~NOTING that the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will be adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at their 15th Conference of the Parties in 2020;~~

RECOGNIZING that the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030* can make an important contribution to the ~~post 2020~~ Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 15th meeting;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the findings in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services 2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the 2022 Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species to the work of CITES; and

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of global cooperation to address the threats posed by illegal trade in wildlife as recognized in, among others, Resolution ~~69/344~~ 77/325 of the United Nations General Assembly on *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife* and the important role of the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime in this regard;

[...]

Annex

CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030

Introduction

[...]

With this new Strategic Vision, the Conference of the Parties to CITES outlines the Convention's direction for the 2021-2030 timeframe in fulfilment of its mandate. It is additionally recognized that Parties' efforts to implement the Convention may also provide benefit to, and draw strength from, efforts being undertaken in other fora, and in this sense highlights the linkages between CITES and, *inter alia*, the processes and actions listed below:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and targets relevant to CITES, including those for terrestrial and marine wildlife; – the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the post-2020 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework being developed <u>adopted</u> by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; – the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services 2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services <u>and the 2022 Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species</u>; and – relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. <p>[...]</p> <p>Objective 4.2 The importance of achieving CITES' aim as a contribution to achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the post-2020 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, is recognized.</p>
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15. Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade (Decision 19.17)..... SC78 Doc. 15

Singapore, as co-Chair of the intersessional working group on the role of CITES in reducing the risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade, introduced document SC78 Doc. 15. Singapore noted that the working group concluded there was no need for the establishment of a CITES advisory body and that no consensus was reached in the working group on the need for a Resolution on 'One Health'. Singapore indicated that the Standing Committee was invited to establish an in-session working group to review the recommendations of AC33 in Annex 1 of document SC78 Doc. 15. Israel, as co-Chair, reflected on the One Health approach and the aspects to be considered in this regard and informed the Standing Committee that the working group reviewed a zero draft of a possible One Health resolution that is contained in Annex 2 to the document and the comments received were shared in information document SC78 [Inf. 12 \(Rev. 1\)](#). Due to the work not being concluded, the Standing Committee is invited to propose the renewal of paragraphs c) and d) of Decision 19.17.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), the European Union and its Member States, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) agreed that an advisory body was not necessary at this stage.

Brazil, Mexico and WCS supported the creation of an in-session working group to review the recommendations from AC33 presented in Annex 1 of the report. While the European Union and its Member States supported many of the Animals Committee's suggestions, it raised concerns with several, including communications portal, capacity of the Animals Committee, and creation of guidelines.

Regarding the potential resolution on One Health in Annex 2, Brazil considered that the text of the draft resolution in Annex 1 would benefit from redrafting to be more concise and non-binding, which was supported by Cambodia, who additionally proposed revision of the draft resolution in accordance with new developments in global health security.

Mexico expressed support for the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 15 and highlighted the need to strengthen consideration of One Health within the Convention, emphasizing the need for international cooperation to prevent zoonotic disease, including alignment with other MEAs that have adopted resolutions acknowledging the relationship between human health and the environment.

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) commended CITES and the working group for their work in integrating the One Health approach, particularly in developing the draft resolution. FAO, noting its work as a member of the Quadripartite in supporting global governance of One Health, encouraged Parties to utilize the recently developed publication on zoonotic spillover by One Health High-Level Expert Panel, which was echoed by WOAH.

WOAH invited the Standing Committee to acknowledge the guidelines for the surveillance of diseases, pathogens, and toxic agents in free-ranging wildlife released by WOAH in September 2024. WCS further urged CITES Parties to implement the guidance produced by WOAH and the Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

WCS emphasized that the extensive scientific information and data now available are clear on what is needed to prevent the next pandemic of zoonotic origin. WCS recommended that the Committee not only acknowledge the WOAHA Guidelines and CBD Action Plan, but welcome both documents.

The Sustainable Use Coalition – Southern Africa (SUCo-SA) highlighted the need to focus on the core mandate of the Convention, recalling budget constraints discussed earlier at the meeting.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

a) welcomed and acknowledged the following:

- i) the [Memorandum of Understanding between the CITES Secretariat and WOAHA](#) signed in March 2024;
- ii) the [Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade](#) released by WOAHA in May 2024;
- iii) the [Global Action Plan for Biodiversity and Health](#) which was approved recently by the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 16th Conference of the Parties (Cali, Colombia; November 2024).

b) agreed that there is no need for the establishment of a CITES advisory body to provide guidance based on best available science to Parties, in their efforts to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains, including markets;

c) noted that no consensus was reached by the working group on the matter of a new Resolution on One Health;

d) agreed that paragraphs a) and b) of Decision 19.17 have been implemented by the Standing Committee and agreed to propose renewal of paragraphs c) and d) of the Decision by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

e) established an in-session working group to review the recommendations from AC33 presented in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 15 and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee, including, if appropriate, a draft decision for consideration by CoP20. Membership was agreed as follows: Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, European Union, Gabon, Germany, Israel (co-Chair), Kazakhstan, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Singapore (co-Chair), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme, World Organisation for Animal Health; International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation; Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Born Free Foundation, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, International Fur Federation, National Association for Biomedical Research, Pet Advocacy Network, Sustainable Use Coalition South Africa, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Wildlife Ranching South Africa NPC.

Later in the meeting, Singapore, as co-Chair of the working group, introduced document SC78 Com. 6 (Rev. 1), containing the revised draft decisions. Singapore also noted that Decisions 19.15, 19.16 and 19.19 could be deleted, while Decision 19.18 could be renewed to ensure that information from relevant work carried out under the Quadripartite Collaboration for One Health or other relevant initiatives was shared with the Parties.

The Committee agreed to propose the deletion of Decisions 19.15, 19.16 and 19.19 and the renewal of Decision 19.18 to the Conference of the Parties and agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 6 (Rev. 1) as follows:

The Committee welcomed the recommendations of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc 15 and agreed to submit the following draft decisions for consideration at CoP20:

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall, subject to external budgetary resources where necessary, and in collaboration with the Animals Committee:

- a) update the webpage on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international trade* so that Parties can readily access information on pathogens and wildlife trade from the Quadripartite and other relevant international organizations;
- b) through the CITES-WOAH and FAO partnerships, convey CITES' expertise on wildlife trade in the Quadripartite's work;
- c) making use of existing information, encourage Parties, as appropriate, to make use of the guidelines and best practices in international wildlife trade recommended by WOAH, FAO and the Quadripartite, such as the WOAH *Guidelines for Addressing Disease Risks in Wildlife Trade*, including collaboration with national veterinary services, and development of wildlife surveillance, to mitigate infectious disease transmission and zoonotic spillover risks; and
- d) as a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW), advise the CPW on how the work being conducted by CITES Parties and the Animals Committee can contribute to the CPW joint initiative focussed on embedding the sustainable use and management of wildlife through a One Health approach.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.BB The Animals Committee shall:

- a) through its Chair and as appropriate, participate in the processes of developing guidelines by relevant organizations with mandates in animal health; in particular WOAH, FAO as well as other One Health partners such as WHO, UNEP and other relevant partners, that could be used by Parties in developing or improving their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for prevention, detection and control of zoonosis risk and pathogen spillover;
- b) gather tangible good practices for prevention, detection and control of zoonosis risk and pathogen spillover, for at least one or two high-risk taxonomic groups included in the CITES Appendices, in the context of conducting international wildlife trade in CITES-listed species, and make this information available to the Parties through the Secretariat (possible taxonomic groups of focus could include old world monkeys (Cercopithecidae) or other non-human primates; bats (Pteropodidae); certain rodent groups, or others);
- c) continue to work with the International Air and Transport Association (IATA) and other relevant organizations on standards and protocols for transport of live animals and biological and veterinary samples as appropriate, in order to reduce zoonosis risk and pathogen spillover associated with wildlife trade; and
- d) report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decision 20.BB sub-paragraphs a) to c), as appropriate and on aspects relevant to the Standing Committee's mandate.

Directed to the Parties

20.CC Parties are encouraged to:

- a) take appropriate measures to implement relevant international standards and best practices in international wildlife trade for prevention, detection and control of pathogen spillover risks, including those of WOAH and FAO, as appropriate;
- b) promote collaboration between their CITES and wildlife authorities, their national Veterinary Services and animal health authorities, and their focal points to WOAH, WHO and CBD in order to ensure national implementation of international standards, guidelines and action plans relevant to risk management during wildlife trade, and to advocate through them for strengthening of existing international standards and tools; and to ensure the proper

implementation of all necessary measures in respect to the different existing relevant international agreements and mechanisms; and

- c) share their best practices and experiences with the Animals Committee and the Secretariat for consideration in the implementation of Decision 20.BB.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.DD The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Animals Committee referred to in paragraph d) of Decisions 20.BB and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting, as appropriate.

Revised decision agreed to be renewed by the Standing Committee:

Directed to the Standing Committee, ~~in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees~~

19.17 (Rev. CoP20) The Standing Committee shall:

- a) ~~review the report of the Secretariat under Decision 19.15, taking into account the recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees under Decision 19.16;~~
- b) ~~taking into account the information provided by the Secretariat and the Animals and Plants Committees, consider the establishment of a CITES advisory body to provide guidance based on best available science to Parties, in their efforts to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains, including markets;~~
- ae) taking into account proposals in document CoP19 Doc. 23.2 and in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees the documents considered and recommendations adopted by the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee (AC33 SR / PC27 SR) as well as the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78 SR), consider the need for and development of a Resolution on actions CITES Parties and others could take to advance a 'One Health' approach as it pertains to international wildlife trade; and
- be) ~~provide its guidance to the Secretariat and its recommendations, which may include a new draft Resolution, to the 20th~~ provide its guidance to the Secretariat and its recommendations, which may include a new draft Resolution, to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

16. Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international organizations [Decisions 19.21 and 17.56 (Rev. CoP19)].....SC78 Doc. 16 and Add.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 16 and presented a revised draft partnership strategy. The Committee was invited to propose the incorporation of Decision 17.55 (Rev. CoP19) into Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions*. The Secretariat also drew attention to addendum SC78 Doc. 16 Add., which proposed an additional recommendation on the preparation of a response to the letter received from the Chair of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF20).

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Benin, Mexico, Niger, and Senegal, did not support recommendation a) in the document to submit the draft partnership strategy for approval by CoP20, as these Parties considered the strategy needed further refinement. Kenya, Poland, and Brazil expressed concern that the draft strategy described potential partnerships with stakeholders such as industry but considered that the strategy should be focused on cooperation with other MEAs. Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) highlighted the need for synergies at the national level. Brazil proposed minor edits to the references to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in the draft strategy and requested that the Secretariat initiate a formal dialogue with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, opposed the suggested amendment to Resolution Conf. 16.4 in recommendation e), while Kenya and Georgia were supportive of the changes.

Regarding the preparation of a response to the letter received from the Chair of UNFF20, Brazil, with support from Canada, considered that a discussion on agenda item 19 on CITES and Forests was needed before preparing a response to UNFF, and noted it had several concerns regarding the topic.

Argentina emphasized that decisions on partnerships should not incorporate areas beyond the mandate of CITES. With regard to the references to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, Argentina reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of the individual rights of all human beings, without distinction, in accordance with the obligations expressly agreed upon in the international treaties to which it is a party, and recalled that the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, to which it has committed itself in good faith, are composed of legally non-binding aspirations that each State, in the exercise of its sovereignty, has the right to freely interpret and pursue.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) expressed appreciation for the leadership of the CITES Secretary General, who served as Vice-Chair of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) last year. FAO highlighted its role in the CITES and forests agenda and engagement in the CITES Tree Species Programme.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) highlighted engagements at the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) and the Bern III Conference on biodiversity-related conventions, and reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening synergies with CITES. UNEP invited Parties to UNEA-7 in December 2025, which will include an agenda item on MEA cooperation.

TRAFFIC, on behalf of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW), expressed appreciation for the leadership of the CITES Secretary-General as CPW Chair. TRAFFIC highlighted that the CPW enhances the implementation of intergovernmental commitments on sustainable wildlife management through its 2023–2025 workplan.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the renewal of Decisions 19.20 and 19.21;
- b) noted the update provided by the Secretariat in order to strengthen cooperation, collaboration and synergies with other Multilateral Environment Agreements and international organizations, taking into account the suggestion by Brazil to establish a formal dialogue with the Inter-American Sea Turtle Convention;
- c) agreed that, with the amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* proposed in document SC78 Doc. 14 on the *CITES Strategic Vision*, Decision 17.56 (Rev. CoP19) has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion to the CoP;
- d) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties to incorporate Decision 17.55 (Rev. CoP19) into Resolution Conf. 16.4 as shown below (new text is underlined and deleted text is shown in ~~strike through~~) and subsequently delete Decision 17.55 (Rev. CoP19):

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ENCOURAGES Parties to consider further opportunities to strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related agreements ~~conventions~~ at all relevant levels, including at the national level by, among others, improving coordination and cooperation between national focal points and strengthening capacity-building activities; [text from Decision 17.55 (Rev. CoP19)]

- e) agreed to consider the recommendation in addendum SC78 Doc. 16 Add. when it considers document SC78 Doc. 19 on *CITES and forests*.

17. Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services - IPBES Assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species (Decision 19.29)..... SC78 Doc. 17

Switzerland, as Chair of the working group on the review of the IPBES Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species, introduced document SC78 Doc. 17 and indicated that possible next steps could include the identification of Resolutions that may benefit from revision to address the findings of the IPBES thematic assessment, and, if the Committee saw merit in this approach, the Standing Committee could consider the submission of draft decisions for consideration by CoP20, as well as the deletion of Decisions 19.28 and 19.29.

IPBES highlighted the relevance of CITES resolutions and decisions to key aspects of the IPBES assessment, including the overexploitation of marine, aquatic, and terrestrial species and the importance of addressing the drivers of sustainable use. IPBES reaffirmed its readiness to continue supporting the work of the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) considered the item to be a low priority as it did not directly address the core issues of the Convention, however, was able to support the document provided that the term “drivers of sustainable use” was replaced with “assessment of sustainable use”. Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) and Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, did not support Brazil’s suggested amendment. The Secretariat indicated that the title of Chapter 4 the IPBES Assessment was “The drivers of sustainable use of wild species.”

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Canada, Mexico and Animal Alliance of Canada cautioned that document SC78 Doc. 17 proposed the review of a large number of Resolutions and Decisions that would impose a significant workload and suggested that a subset of Resolutions could be identified for review. Mexico and Canada proposed focusing solely on resolutions and deleting all decisions outlined in Annex 1 of document SC78 Doc. 17. This suggestion was supported by Poland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), and China. Several of these Parties and organizations highlighted the importance of continued engagement of CITES with IPBES to ensure evidence-based decision-making.

Argentina raised broader concerns related to international technical experts encroaching on national sovereignty. Argentina suggested replacing references to “transformative change” with “sustainable change” or “change towards sustainability”. With regard to the references to the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, Argentina reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of the individual rights of all human beings, without distinction, in accordance with the obligations expressly agreed upon in the international treaties to which it is a party, and recalled that the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, to which it has committed itself in good faith, are composed of legally non-binding aspirations that each State, in the exercise of its sovereignty, has the right to freely interpret and pursue.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

- a) noted the Annexes to document SC78 Doc. 17 with the amendments proposed to Annex 1 to delete Decisions and only focus on Resolutions;
- b) agreed to submit the draft decisions in paragraph 9 of document SC78 Doc. 17 as amended by the Chair of the Standing Committee and by including a new subparagraph b) proposed by Mexico and Canada for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- c) agreed that Decision 19.28 and 19.29 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion to the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) noted the opposition by Brazil of the use of the term “drivers” in the title of Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 17 and the statement made by Argentina that will be captured in the summary record of the meeting.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.XX The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the Resolutions ~~and specific aspects relating to drivers of sustainable use and knowledge gaps, challenges and research priorities~~ identified by the Animals and Plants Committees in document PC27 Doc. 10 / AC33 Doc. 11 and the Standing Committee in document SC78 Doc. 17 on the *IPBES Assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species* relevant to the implementation of the Convention;
- b) identify key Resolutions that may require amendments, taking into consideration the review outlined under paragraph a);
- ~~c~~b) propose amendments to these Resolutions, as appropriate, to incorporate aspects that will enhance the implementation of the Convention;
- ~~d~~e) submit the results of the review and proposed amendments as they relate to scientific aspects for consideration to the Animals and Plants Committee; and
- ~~e~~f) consider the inputs received from the Animals and Plants Committee and finalize proposed amendments to the Resolutions for consideration to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

20.YY The Animals and Plants Committees shall review the results of the review conducted by the Standing Committee and proposed amendments as they relate to scientific aspects and provide inputs to the Standing Committee to finalize the review.

18. World Wildlife Trade Report (Decision 19.31) SC78 Doc. 18 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 18 (Rev. 1), which summarized feedback from Parties and observers as well as from the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committee, on the production of a regular World Wildlife Trade report. The Secretariat noted that responses were diverse, with different views on the scope and frequency of production, but that the merit of such a report was generally recognized. The Secretariat invited Parties to review the comments received and consider the draft decisions, which proposed to alternate between the production of an overview report and a comprehensive report at regular intervals.

Several Standing Committee Members and observer Parties, including Japan and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, Mali, Peru, the Russian Federation, Senegal and Animal Alliance of Canada expressed concerns that a comprehensive report would draw on the limited financial and human resources of both the Secretariat and Parties. However, Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia) and China supported the recommendations in the document, including the production of a comprehensive World Wildlife Trade report, with Indonesia seeing the report as a valuable tool for CITES Parties to recognize the balance between conservation and sustainable use.

Concerning draft decision 20.AA in the Annex to the document, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and the Russian Federation did not support inviting Parties to compile national price data on a voluntary basis. These Parties variously noted that there were challenges in accessing such data; that price data may be sensitive; and that highlighting the value of species could have negative consequences. Additionally, the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region and supported by Japan and Kenya, did not support the collation of information on the socio-economic impacts of trade as proposed in draft decision 20.AA. Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), however, emphasized the need to gather such information given its importance to livelihoods.

The United States (Committee Member for North America) proposed to delete draft decision 20.AA but retain 20.BB and 20.CC, with an amendment to 20.CC a) to delete the reference to the initial outline of the

comprehensive report, which was supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania). While Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) preferred to not proceed with any of the three draft decisions, it was amenable to the draft decisions as amended in plenary.

TRAFFIC, also on behalf of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), welcomed the Secretariat's proposal in the document and strongly supported the preparation of a comprehensive report. As partners involved in the first World Wildlife Trade report, these organizations indicated they were prepared to contribute expertise and experience in the compilation of these reports, if appropriate.

The Committee:

- a) noted the comments from Parties, other stakeholders and the Animals and Plants Committees summarized in document SC78 Doc. 18 (Rev. 1);
- b) noted the discussion and views made in plenary;
- c) agreed to submit the draft decisions in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 18 (Rev. 1) as amended by the Chair of the Standing Committee to the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.30 and 19.31 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
WORLD WILDLIFE TRADE REPORT

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review and provide feedback on the outline of an Overview Report, ~~the initial outline of a comprehensive World Wildlife Trade report~~, submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 20.CC, paragraph a);
- b) review the report by the Secretariat prepared under Decision 20.CC, paragraph c); and¹
- c) make recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.CC Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) prepare an outline of the Overview Report based on feedback and views of Parties provided in document SC78 Doc. 18 (Rev. 1) and at the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee ~~and an initial outline of the comprehensive World Wildlife Trade Report for publication at CoP21 and CoP22 respectively~~ with explanations on the content, authorship and methodology to be used for the preparation of the reports for consideration by the Standing Committee; and
- b) taking into account the advice of the Standing Committee, prepare an Overview Report providing information on global trade in CITES-listed species, covering the trends and patterns of global trade in CITES-listed species as observed during the reporting period, and submit it as an information document to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP21); ~~and~~
- ~~c) compile Parties' inputs from Decision 20.AA and share the findings with the Standing Committee.~~

¹ The Secretariat notes that, with the deletion of Decision 20.CC, paragraph c), this paragraph should be deleted, but this was not explicitly agreed in plenary.

19. CITES and forests (Decision 19.34) SC78 Doc. 19

and

16. Cooperation with Multilateral Environment Agreements and other international organizations (Decision 19.34) SC78 Doc. 16 Add.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 19, reporting on a draft interdisciplinary study undertaken in collaboration with the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO; Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad) on CITES and forests, which highlights the role of CITES in forest conservation and sustainable trade and the alignment with the Global Forest Commitments framework. Document SC78 Doc. 19 also contains feedback from the Plants Committee following its 27th meeting. The Secretariat invited feedback from the Standing Committee.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America of the Caribbean), speaking also on behalf of Argentina and Peru, considered that the CITES and forests initiative went beyond the mandate of the Convention, and recalled that many delegations at the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee had expressed concerns on the resource mobilization strategy for the study. Brazil, speaking also on behalf of Argentina and Peru, stated that they could not endorse the definition of 'Global Forest Commitments' as contained in the interdisciplinary study, because it was not in the purview of CITES to offer a definition and this concept should be defined by a more relevant forum, such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Cambodia and the Russian Federation aligned themselves with the comments made by Brazil. Indonesia proposed the term 'Global Forest Goals', as this was used by UNFF. China requested that the Plants Committee have the opportunity for a second review before the report was finalized.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, welcomed the progress made on the study but could not endorse recommendations c) and d) in paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 19, because key sections were still under development and it was not known how the Secretariat would address the comments received from the Standing Committee. The United States considered that the review process should continue after CoP20 to provide sufficient time for input, and did not support another intersessional consultation before that meeting. The European Union and its Member States supported the completion of the study ahead of CoP20 to ensure that there was a solid basis for discussions at that meeting. The European Union and its Member States suggested that an additional opportunity be provided for experts to review the study before it went back to the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee for their consideration and stated that they could provide details of experts to the Secretariat, encouraging other Parties to do so as well. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) and Switzerland (Depositary Government) aligned themselves with comments made by the United States and the European Union.

In response to the concerns expressed about the term 'Global Forest Commitments', the Secretary General agreed that the term 'commitments' could be revisited in the next draft of the study, instead leaning on existing terminology and the concepts in other CITES Resolutions. Mexico, speaking as a representative of CONABIO, pointed out that 'Global Forest Commitments' was in the terms of reference adopted by the Plants Committee for the study, but agreed that an alternative could be found in light of the concerns.

Regarding the recommendation contained in the addendum to document SC78 Doc. 16, there were no interventions.

The Committee:

- a) in accordance with Decision 19.34 paragraph a), noted progress made in the implementation of Decisions 19.32 and 19.33 as reported in document SC78 Doc. 19;
- b) in accordance with Decision 19.34 paragraphs b) to d), noted the preliminary feedback provided in plenary on the draft of the *Report on the interdisciplinary study on CITES and forests* as of 5 December 2024 contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 19, noting the rejection of the use of the term 'global forest commitments' in the draft report by Brazil and other Parties that supported their intervention;
- c) requested the Secretariat to prepare a second draft *Report of the interdisciplinary study on CITES and forests* with all completed Chapters taking into account the comments made in plenary at SC78 for

consideration of progress in implementation of Decisions 19.32 to 19.34 by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

- d) requested the Secretariat to prepare an assessment of the implementation of Decisions 19.32 to 19.34, and recommendations relating to possible revised or new decisions on CITES and forests, outlining the CoP20-CoP21 intersessional consultation process with the Plants and Standing Committees, for consideration at CoP20; and
- e) requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee, to finalize a response to the letter received from the Chair of the 20th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF20) using as a basis addendum SC78 Doc. 16 Add., as well as feedback received at SC78.

20. Language strategy for the Convention (Decision 19.39) SC78 Doc. 20

For agenda items 20, 22, 30, 72 and 78, the Committee requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and other stakeholders for consideration by the Chair of the Standing Committee when these documents are submitted to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

21. Capacity-building framework (Decisions 19.41 and 19.43)..... SC78 Doc. 21

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 21, which summarizes the progress to date on an integrated CITES capacity-building framework. The Secretariat reported that it had been unable to make progress due to time and staffing constraints but aimed to continue work in 2025, with regional consultations to take place after CoP20. The Secretariat proposed the renewal of Decision 19.40 and revised Decisions 19.41 to 19.43 as presented in the Annex to the document.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) supported the renewal of the Decisions.

The Committee agreed to propose the renewal of Decision 19.40 and the revisions of Decisions 19.41 to 19.43 as contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 21 to the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS 19.40 AND 19.41 (REV. COP20) TO 19.43 (REV. COP20) ON
CAPACITY-BUILDING FRAMEWORK

(new text is underlined; deleted text is in ~~strike through~~)

Directed to Parties

- 19.40** Parties are invited to share ideas, experiences, and information related to the development of an integrated capacity-building framework aiming to guide Parties, the Secretariat and external partners, as appropriate, to identify capacity-building needs and to prioritize, plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and review the benefit of their capacity-building efforts for more effective implementation of the Convention.

Directed to the Standing Committee, with inputs from the Animals and Plants Committees, the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, and the Secretariat

- 19.41 (Rev. CoP20)** The Standing Committee shall establish an intersessional working group on the development of an integrated capacity-building framework to:

- a) continue the development of an integrated capacity-building framework, including a common language and clear definitions, to improve the implementation of the Convention, with inputs from the Animals and Plants Committees, the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, and the Secretariat;
- b) in doing so, ensure the representation of perspectives and contexts of different regions and stakeholders (including from Parties that fund and Parties that receive capacity-building support) and consider developing a mechanism for Parties to identify the specific needs that, if met, would allow them to achieve full capacity to implement CITES; and

- c) provide a draft integrated capacity-building framework (which may include conceptual models, tools and guidance), along with its recommendations, for consideration of the Standing Committee and onward submission to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th 21st meeting.

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

19.42 (Rev. CoP20) The Animals and Plants Committees shall engage in consultations with the Standing Committee, as called for in Decision 19.41 (Rev. CoP20); and with the Secretariat as called for in Decision 19.43 (Rev. CoP20).

Directed to the Secretariat, in consultation with the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees

19.43 (Rev. CoP20) The Secretariat shall provide input to the Standing Committee and, subject to the availability of external funding and in consultation with the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees, as well as the Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, organize technical workshops and regional consultations that would facilitate the implementation by the Standing Committee of Decision 19.41 (Rev. CoP20).

22. Implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.2 on Capacity-building..... SC78 Doc. 22

For agenda items 20, 22, 30, 72 and 78, the Committee requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and other stakeholders for consideration by the Chair of the Standing Committee when these documents are submitted to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

23. Compliance Assistance Programme (Decision 19.46) SC78 Doc. 23

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 23 on the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP), including updates on the eight beneficiary Parties. The Secretariat acknowledged the progress made by these Parties and invited the Committee to review the new set of draft decisions for the continued implementation of the CAP.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) requested that the total amount available in financial support under the CAP be included in the report.

Nigeria informed the Committee that it had successfully completed several activities related to the thematic activities under the CAP, but that some activities remained ongoing. Nigeria stated it remained committed to achieving the objectives of the CAP and confident that the timeline for completion of these would be met.

Viet Nam supported the recommendations in the document and highlighted that one of its main objectives under the CAP was the completion of the remaining activities under the National Ivory and Rhino Action Plan.

The European Union and its Member States and China agreed with the proposed draft decisions.

The Committee:

- a) acknowledged the commitment of Parties benefiting from the CAP to improve their compliance status, and welcome the results obtained through the CAP by the respective Parties;
- b) encouraged Parties facing multiple and long-term compliance issues to express interest in benefitting from the CAP;
- c) noted the overall findings of the Secretariat relating to the implementation of the CAP and invited the Secretariat and concerned Parties to take them into consideration in the design and implementation of future activities and further invited the Standing Committee to include in its report to the Conference of the Parties information on the total amount of funding available under the Compliance Assistance Programme;
- d) agreed to submit the draft decisions contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 23 for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and

- e) agreed that Decisions 19.44 to 19.46 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Directed to the Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to continue to provide financial or technical support to Parties subject to compliance mechanisms and other related compliance measures as specified in Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, including through the Compliance Assistance Programme to meet the needs of eligible Parties.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) continue assisting Parties through the Compliance Assistance Programme, and extend the CAP to other eligible Parties;
- b) support Parties' mainstreaming of gender in the development, implementation and monitoring of CAP activities, in line with the forthcoming CITES Gender Action Plan;
- c) in consultation with the International University of Andalucía which hosts the Master's Course in 'Management and Conservation of Species in Trade – The International Framework' and other relevant universities, encourage the participation of Management and Scientific Authorities of CAP beneficiary Parties in the Master's Course, and consider enriching it with a module on project management; and
- d) report to the Standing Committee on the progress made in the implementation of the CAP and submit for its consideration any proposal for its further development.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall monitor progress in the implementation of the CAP and report its findings and recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

24. CITES Tree Species Programme (Decision 19.50)..... SC78 Doc. 24

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 24; reported on the budget contributions by the European Union and Germany to support capacity-building efforts; and informed the Committee that, following a call for expressions of interest in May 2024, a formal call for concept notes from potential beneficiaries would take place in early 2025. The Secretariat stated that it would continue to update on the progress of the projects through Notifications and information on the CITES website, as well as reports to the meetings of the Plants Committee, Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking on behalf of the Central and South America and the Caribbean region, while welcoming the project funded by Germany, did not agree that CITES had the mandate to work on forest governance and requested that this aspect be removed from the project, and that the Members of the Standing Committee be involved in discussions on the direction of the project.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the European Union and its Member States and Senegal stressed how important the programme had been for helping countries to implement CITES listings for trees. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking on behalf of the Central and South America and the Caribbean region, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, and Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) reaffirmed their support for the CITES Tree Species Programme to become a permanent programme. Brazil requested clarification regarding from where the resources for such a programme would come. The Secretariat clarified that the programme, whether permanent or not, would rely on extrabudgetary resources.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, suggested that, if the CITES Tree Species Programme was made into a permanent programme, the Plants Committee and Standing Committee should have an advisory role on the governance of the programme, and the outcomes of the interdisciplinary study on CITES and forests (as discussed under agenda item SC78 Doc. 19) could inform the programme; they proposed amendments to the draft decision in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 24 to include these aspects.

Kenya informed the Committee of a tripartite project undertaken with Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania for the conservation and sustainable management of *Osyris lanceolata* with funding from the CITES Tree Species Programme, which had generated data and had built capacity, with regional training in taxonomy and the non-detriment finding process. The United Republic of Tanzania suggested that a future priority for the CITES Tree Species Programme could be to address species for which there are cases in the Review of Significant Trade.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit the draft decision contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 24 and amended by the United States of America, on behalf of the North American region, for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and
- b) agreed that Decisions 19.49 and 19.50 can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISION ON CITES TREE SPECIES PROGRAMME

Directed to the Secretariat, the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee

20.XX The Secretariat shall:

- a) report to the Plants and Standing Committees on the implementation of the CITES Tree Species Programme as appropriate, bringing to the attention relevant technical and scientific results;
- b) taking into account the outcomes of the interdisciplinary study on CITES and forests, when available, seek advice and guidance from the Plants and Standing Committees to assess the potential of for the CITES Tree Species Programme to be made a permanent programme;
- c) provide opportunities for the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee to be involved in the governance of the programme, including funding decisions; and
- ed) report on the implementation of this Decision at the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

25. CITES Global Youth Network..... SC78 Doc. 25

Denmark introduced document SC78 Doc. 25, which had been prepared by Bahrain, Denmark, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, the United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe, in consultation with the Secretariat. The document reported on the progress of the CITES Global Youth Network (CGYN), including the CITES Youth Leadership Programme (CYLP) hosted by Singapore 22 to 25 April 2024, which saw the attendance of 41 youths nominated by CITES Parties and observer organizations, representing 31 countries from all six CITES regions. Denmark reported on the success of the meeting and invited the Standing Committee to consider the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.5 (Rev. CoP18) on Youth engagement in Annex 2 to the document.

Singapore provided further details of the CYLP it hosted in April 2024, which it considered a crucial step in engaging future leaders and equipping them with the necessary expertise. Singapore remarked that future work required collective support from Parties and observer organizations and announced it had pledged a financial contribution of SGD 100,000 to the Secretariat in support of the CGYN.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Indonesia and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), Switzerland (Depositary Government), the United Arab Emirates, and the Sustainable Use Coalition – Southern Africa congratulated

Singapore and the Parties involved in the development and participation of the CGYN and expressed support for efforts to drive initiatives to encourage youth participation in CITES.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Dominican Republic (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Kenya and Madagascar (Committee Members for Africa), Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Benin, China, Ghana, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Qatar, Thailand, Zambia and Zimbabwe supported the recommendations in the document. Belgium, with support from South Africa, proposed minor textual amendments to paragraphs 2 and 5 of the draft resolution in Annex 2. Sustainable Use Coalition – Southern Africa suggested that the acknowledgment of the CGYN in the revised resolution could be strengthened.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

- a) supported the efforts of Singapore and participating Parties in the development of the CITES Global Youth Network (CGYN);
- b) noted the support to this initiative by Belgium, Benin, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Gabon, Ghana, India, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Qatar, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Zambia, Zimbabwe,
- c) encouraged Parties and observers to support the efforts and to nominate youths affiliated with their organization to attend the CITES Global Youth Summit in May 2025;
- d) requested the Secretariat to continue to provide advice and assist the development of the CITES Global Youth Network; and
- e) invited Singapore to take into account the feedback provided in plenary on the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.5 (Rev. CoP18) on *Youth engagement* in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 25 when it submits those amendments to the Conference of the Parties.

26. CITES gender action plan (*Decision 19.52*) SC78 Doc. 26

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 26, providing an update on the development of the CITES Gender Action Plan which had been updated based on consideration of gender-related policies from other MEAs and inputs from Parties and stakeholders in response to two Notifications to the Parties. The Secretariat remarked that progress had been slower than hoped due to limited financial and human resources. The Standing Committee was invited to review the draft revised outline of the action plan, recognizing it as a work in progress, and to propose the renewal of the current decisions to CoP20.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and Mexico, welcomed the updated CITES Gender Action Plan and supported the recommendations in the document, with proposed revisions to recommendation c) to replace the term “cultural relevance” with “culturally informed”. Belgium further requested clarification of the objective under the action plan to share information about gender-based violence in wild flora and fauna international trade chains, particularly regarding how this would be operationalized and to ensure it did not impose undue burden on Parties.

Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), supported by Russian Federation, remarked that the term “in all their diversity” was a concept that did not align with the sociocultural values of all Parties and proposed the removal of the term from the draft guidance and the draft decisions.

The Russian Federation expressed concern that the revised draft outline of the CITES Gender Action Plan and related draft decisions contained terms and concepts not universally agreed upon. It requested specific edits, which included replacing references to “the role of gender” with “the role of women and girls” or “the role of women and men” and removing references to “all genders”. The Russian Federation also called for removing terminology such as “gender-blind approaches” and “gender-aware strategies”. The Party emphasized the importance of maintaining the Convention’s core mandate and avoiding concepts outside

its scope that may lack consensus. Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Iran and Saudi Arabia supported the views expressed by the Russian Federation.

Gabon, echoed by the World Wide Fund for Nature and TRAFFIC, welcomed the initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat and encouraged all Parties to participate in initiatives related to the gender action plan.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

- a) requested the Secretariat to take into account the comments made in plenary on the revised outline contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 26 and invited those Parties that could not take the floor in plenary (Argentina, Australia, the United Arab Emirates, Zambia and Zimbabwe) to send their comments to the Secretariat; and
- b) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting to maintain Decisions 19.51 and 19.53, and revise Decision 19.52 as contained in Annex 4 to document SC78 Doc. 26.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON CITES GENDER ACTION PLAN

(new text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~)

Directed to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee

- 19.51** The Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, subject to available resources, shall draw on the available body of knowledge, lessons and experiences on gender and how it interacts with other identifying factors in matters related to legal and illegal international trade of wild flora and fauna, to develop a draft gender action plan for submission to the Standing Committee. The draft gender action plan should:
- a) consider the needs of indigenous and local peoples of all genders, especially women and girls, as well as how to incorporate their perspectives, skills and talents at all ages, and local and traditional knowledge;
 - b) aim to ensure that women and girls in all their diversity have equal access to, ownership and/or control over the use of wild flora and fauna, can fully and effectively engage in international trade of species of wild fauna and flora, and receive a fair and equitable share of benefits arising from the use and trade of such wildlife; thus reducing poverty and gender gaps through the promotion of economic and decision-making freedom;
 - c) aim to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in wild flora and fauna international trade chains;
 - d) promote gender equality and increase and strengthen the participation and leadership of women at all levels of decision-making and participation in processes related to international wild flora and fauna trade;
 - e) enhance the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of all genders, in particular women, in the implementation of the Convention, including through the engagement of civil society organizations, women's groups and women delegates, and provide opportunities for building their capacities; and
 - f) identify specific actions to advance the objectives above, across international trade chains for sustainable and legal wild flora and fauna, including parts and derivatives, as well as associated activities, including harvesting, law enforcement, and policy-making.

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.52 (Rev. CoP20) The Standing Committee shall consider any draft gender action plan received from the Secretariat under Decision 19.51 and, if considered appropriate, submit a final version of that action plan, as an annex to the Resolution on Gender and international trade in wild fauna and flora, for approval by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders

19.53 Parties and relevant stakeholders, are encouraged to:

- a) support the preparation of the “CITES Gender Action Plan” by sharing knowledge, case studies and other relevant experiences with the Secretariat;
- b) strengthen the evidence base and understanding of the gender-differentiated impacts of sustainable use and international trade in species of wild flora and fauna, and fair and equitable benefit-sharing; and
- c) provide financial support towards the development and implementation of the Gender Action Plan.

27. Engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities

[Decisions 17.57 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.31 (Rev. CoP19)] SC78 Doc. 27

Canada, as Chair of the working group on engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), introduced the document. The working group presented non-binding guidance on consulting IPLCs on proposals to amend the Appendices, included in the Annex to the document. The Chair noted that discussions explored engagement at national and international levels, with broader agreement on national engagement and more diverse views on engagement at the international level. The Standing Committee was invited to consider the recommendations in the document, which included, *inter alia*, to agree on the use of standardised terminology that refers to “Indigenous Peoples, and local communities”; to review the non-binding guidance and proposed draft decisions and consider their submission to CoP20.

On recommendation a) concerning standardized terminology, Canada and Mexico proposed standardizing the terminology as “Indigenous Peoples, as well as local communities” with capitalization and a comma, to uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, and Australia supported inserting a comma to differentiate between indigenous peoples and local communities.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking also on behalf of Peru, and Panama (Previous Host Country), expressed support for the non-binding guidance, but was not in favour of the proposed standardized terminology in the document, instead preferring the terminology “indigenous peoples and local communities”. Brazil considered that CITES was not the appropriate forum for broader discussions on IPLCs, which are more suitably addressed under the Convention on Biological Diversity. It stressed that in Brazil, indigenous peoples and local communities are vulnerable groups that should not be separated, even by a comma. Brazil’s intervention was supported by Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Kuwait and Japan (Committee Members for Asia), Madagascar (Committee Member for Africa), the Central African Republic, China, and Gabon. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, preferred to defer the decision to CoP20 on a standardized terminology.

Regarding the non-binding guidance, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) supported the guidance and the associated draft decisions. Canada and Mexico viewed the non-binding guidance as a key tool for meaningful engagement and supported its submission to CoP20. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) indicated it had minor textual amendments to the non-binding guidance to align with language from the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Argentina proposed amendments to the non-binding guidance to specify that traditional knowledge should inform decision-making with science and evidence-based approaches. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) drew attention to information document SC78 Inf. 41 submitted by Liberia

and Senegal proposing amendments to the non-binding guidance; these amendments were also supported by Gabon and Niger.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, emphasized that the most effective and meaningful engagement was best achieved at the national level and that the document provided a good basis for further discussion for engagement at the international level. It stressed that each Convention should consider its own mandate when improving engagement and that any alignment with the Convention on Biodiversity should reflect CITES' unique context.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), Canada and Mexico endorsed incorporating national engagement ideas into Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES and livelihoods*. Regarding international engagement, New Zealand supported decision 20.BB but proposed more descriptive language for greater clarity. Israel raised concerns with draft decision 20.BB with regards to workload for the Committee and the Secretariat and that this went beyond the mandate of the Convention.

South Africa, echoed by TRAFFIC, also on behalf of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, supported the recommendations in the document.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

Ngā Iwi o Taranaki Collective, on the invitation of New Zealand, addressed the Committee and highlighted concerns that CITES heavily restricts long-standing Māori and wider Oceanic traditions related to the creation, transport, and gifting of *taonga* (sacred cultural items). They strongly supported recommendation f) on simplifying procedures for the international movement of cultural items, noting the precedent set for musical instruments.

IWMC remarked that non-binding measures and reliance on voluntary funding were key for engagement with IPLCs, and highlighted that IPLCs should have an active role in shaping policy and practice.

The Committee established a drafting group chaired by Canada as Chair of the intersessional working group on Engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities and composed of Committee Members or their alternates with the mandate to consider the recommendations in paragraph 17 of document SC78 Doc. 27. Membership was agreed as follows: Brazil, Canada (Chair), China (as alternate), Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Poland, New Zealand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Committee agreed that Senegal, as acting Member for the African region, could be added to the drafting group on indigenous peoples and local communities.

Later in the meeting, Canada, as Chair of the drafting group, introduced document SC78 Com. 16, reporting that discussions on the terminology had not been conclusive and was best left to the Conference of the Parties, therefore the terminology used in document SC78 Com. 16 was what had been agreed at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as a default.

Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia) reiterated its position with regards to not including a comma in 'indigenous peoples and local communities'. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, reiterated that it was unable to take a position on this matter at the present meeting.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 16 as follows and noted the comment made by Indonesia.

The Committee:

- a) regarding Decision 17.57 (Rev. CoP19), recognized that there is a need for consistency in the terminology used in CITES and invited the Conference of the Parties to advise on the preferred terminology;

- b) regarding Decision 18.31, agreed to submit the non-binding *Guidance on consulting indigenous peoples and local communities* on proposals to amend the Appendices* found in the Annex to document SC78 Com. 16 for consideration to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) agreed to submit the following draft decisions to CoP20:

Directed to the Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) use the non-binding *Guidance on consulting with indigenous peoples and local communities* on proposals to amend the Appendices*, as appropriate to their national circumstances, when preparing for CITES CoP21;
- b) consider funding, facilitating or otherwise supporting the consultation taking place within the range State, including supporting the cost of translation and interpretation to local languages; and
- c) share their views and experiences in using the non-binding guidance on consulting indigenous peoples and local communities* on proposals to amend the Appendices.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB Taking into consideration document SC78 Doc. 27, the Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider approaches to seek and review Party experiences in using the *non-binding guidance on consulting indigenous peoples and local communities* on proposals to amend the Appendices* in their preparations for CoP 21 in order to adjust the nonbinding guidance, as appropriate;
- b) consider whether and how to incorporate the ideas on engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities* at the national level proposed in document SC78 Doc. 27 into Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES and livelihoods* in a manner that avoids duplication;
- c) identify opportunities and limitations of the ideas on engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities* in CITES processes at the international level presented in document SC78 Doc. 27; and
- d) make recommendations regarding Decision 20.BB, paragraphs a), b) and c) to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

- d) agreed that Decisions 17.57 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.31 (Rev. CoP19) have been completed and can be proposed for deletion.

**CONSULTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES*
ON PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE APPENDICES**

Objective

The objective of this guidance is to support Parties in meaningfully engaging with indigenous peoples and local communities* during the development and submission of proposals to amend the Appendices. The guidance is aimed at supporting range State consultations in the consideration of proposals to amend the Appendices. The guidance could also be used for consultations prior to including species in Appendix III.

* For the purpose of these Decisions, "indigenous peoples and local communities" is understood to include rural communities

* For the purpose of this guidance, "indigenous peoples and local communities" is understood to include rural communities

Guiding Principles of Consultation

To be meaningful, consultation is most effective when it is:

- Bi-directional and reciprocal: consultation should be two-way, with feedback provided to the consultees on how their views were addressed;
- When engaging with Indigenous Peoples, consultations should be undertaken to obtain free, prior and informed consent as stated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP)
- Timely and predictable: engagement should begin early and follow a clear timeline, allowing sufficient time for meaningful feedback and input
- Accessible: consultation should be undertaken in clear jargon-free language, ideally in the language of the consultee
- Honest, transparent, respectful and gender responsive: the process should be unbiased and conducted with integrity and sensitivity to cultural norms
- Inclusive: the consultation process should reflect the diversity of indigenous peoples and local communities* and involve a diverse range of communities and community members

Identifying audience

National CITES Authorities are best placed to undertake the relevant consultations. These Authorities are able to identify relevant indigenous peoples and local communities* for consultations, including established national representative networks that may exist or other unique cultural context. Additionally, Parties may have provisions in national laws, regulations or policies that govern when and how to undertake consultations with indigenous peoples and local communities* within their borders.

Timing of consultation

Parties are encouraged to initiate engagement (if they are a range State) or contact the national CITES Authorities of the range State(s) as soon as they begin considering preparing a proposal to amend the CITES Appendix I or II. Early consultation with indigenous peoples and local communities* at the proposal development stage will better allow for meaningful, substantive, relevant and timely consultation. Building on the guidance provided in Resolution Conf. 8.21 (Rev CoP16) on *Consultation with range States on proposals to amend Appendices I and II*, Parties should aim to begin consultations 182 – 250 days before the next scheduled Conference of the Parties.

Structure of a consultation

Each consultation process should be tailored to and respect the distinct characteristics of the indigenous peoples and local communities* being consulted. Some key elements of a consultation would include:

- Informed – the consultation clearly explains the CITES context and the relevance, implications and consequences of the proposal(s), including both its benefits and potential impacts, in a language and format that allows it to be understood in sufficient detail
- Deliberate – the consultation process provides indigenous peoples and local communities* relevant information with sufficient time for their review and for their holding independent discussion
- Respectful – the consultation acknowledges, honours, and respects any traditional knowledge being shared, and enables that knowledge to inform decision-making with science- and evidence-based approaches;
- Documented – a detailed record of the consultation process, including participants, discussions and outcomes, is made available in the language of the consultee
- Feedback – the consultees are provided with clear and timely communication on how the information and views shared were used in the proposal development

Documentation

Proponent Parties should include comprehensive details of the consultation process, such as whether consultations with indigenous peoples or with local communities took place, who was consulted, and the feedback received, including any views, concerns, or support expressed on the proposal. This information should be included in Section 10 of the supporting statement, in line with Annex 6 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) on *Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II*.

28. Livelihoods [Decision 18.34 (Rev. CoP19)] SC78 Doc. 28

Zambia, speaking as co-Chair of the working group on livelihoods alongside Peru, introduced document SC78 Doc. 28, reporting on progress of the working group in reviewing draft guidance on maximizing benefits to indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) from trade in CITES-listed species and exploring the use of product certification and other traceability mechanisms. The working group co-Chair noted that, while consensus had been reached on the six strategies at an in-person meeting in Peru in 2023, subsequent intersessional discussions by e-mail had revealed divergent views. The proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES and livelihoods* in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 28 were noted to represent a middle ground, with minimum recognition of the six non-legally binding strategies. Peru, as co-Chair, echoed the remarks of Zambia and underscored the importance of this agenda item for many developing countries in maximizing benefits for IPLCs.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) and Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) agreed with the recommendations in the document.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, acknowledged that IPLCs rely on a wide range of animal and plant species for their livelihoods, but opposed the draft amendment to paragraph 11 of Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) referencing the six strategies, stating that neither the guidance nor the strategies should be included in the Resolution, as they went beyond the scope of the Convention and promoted the expansion of trade in endangered species. China proposed revisions to two paragraphs in the resolution and adding the six strategies as an Annex to the resolution to align with the consensus reached in the working group. The amendments proposed by China aimed at recognizing (instead of noting) the six strategies and inviting Parties to follow the six strategies. China highlighted that the six strategies are an agreed outcome of the Peru meeting of the intersessional working group. Canada and Mexico further proposed to annex the strategies for maximizing the benefits to indigenous peoples and local communities to Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18). Noting the stronger focus on IPLCs in the revised strategy, they proposed amending the resolution's title to "CITES and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples, as well as local communities".

On the draft decisions in Annex 3, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported draft decision 20.AA with an amendment and opposed draft decisions 20.BB and 20.CC, stating that most tasks in draft decision 20.BB, including the development of case studies, could be carried out at the national level more efficiently. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) disagreed, considering that the support of the international community was needed to complement national actions. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) supported Poland's amendments but proposed the retention of draft decisions 20.BB and 20.CC as a compromise. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) agreed to the deletion of draft decision 20.CC but proposed to retain 20.BB with amendments. Poland (Committee Member for Europe) supported these amendments; however, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) did not support Kenya's suggestion.

Madagascar proposed an additional subparagraph under draft decision 20.BB to request the Secretariat to collaborate with the Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) programme in Madagascar to advance the implementation of strategies on maximizing the benefits of indigenous peoples and local communities from trade in CITES-listed species in its operating countries, addressing both policy and legal frameworks, as well as field activities.

Canada, also speaking on behalf of Mexico, broadly supported the six strategies presented by the working group on maximizing benefits from trade in CITES-listed species in Annex 1 but proposed further revisions to ensure alignment with the Convention's mandate and scope. These included to delete references to markets and pricing structures of value chains in paragraph 2 d) and to delete paragraphs 3 and 4 to keep the strategy within the Convention's scope.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position on the matter at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

Given the variety of proposed amendments to the resolution and draft decisions, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) proposed the creation of an in-session working group.

The Committee established an in-session working group on livelihoods with the mandate to review the draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES and livelihoods* contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 28 and the draft decisions in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 28; and to report back to the Standing Committee. Membership was agreed as follows: Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia (Chair) and Zimbabwe; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Union for Conservation of Nature; Association of Northeast Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Born Free Foundation, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, International Fur Federation, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Ranching South Africa NPC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, Zambia, as Chair of the in-session working group, introduced document SC78 Com. 18, reporting that no consensus had been reached in the working group, and it had been agreed to present the different options to the Conference of the Parties for consideration.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, reiterated that it did not support the amendment to Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) referencing the six strategies. Poland considered that document SC78 Com. 18 did not reflect the views of the working group, as some proposed amendments had been rejected by a majority of Parties. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) aligned themselves with Poland's position. Canada disagreed with the statement by Poland that the document did not accurately reflect the views of the working group, where it had been agreed that the discussion should take place at the Conference of the Parties. China objected to Poland's statement and explained that the majority mentioned by Poland was only achieved when counting the European Union and its 27 Member States, whereas a majority of attendees within the working group had supported the submission of the document.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Indonesia and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), Canada, Iran, Nigeria, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and the World Wide Fund for Nature supported the submission of document SC78 Com. 18 to the Conference of the Parties for debate, given the differing views, and some suggested that the three options for the draft decisions be consolidated to present only one option.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested that the original document SC78 Doc. 28 be submitted to the Conference of the Parties rather than document SC78 Com. 18, since there was no consensus. This was supported by Brazil (Committee Member for South America), Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and Canada.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, reiterated being unable to take a position on the matter at this meeting.

The Committee agreed that consensus could not be achieved on this issue within the Standing Committee and that the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 28 be submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

The Committee noted the comments made by Brazil, Canada, China, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Kuwait, Nigeria, Poland, Senegal, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Zambia.

29. Demand reduction to combat illegal trade (Decision 19.56) SC78 Doc. 29

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 29 summarizing the work of the Secretariat related to demand reduction to combat illegal trade through the organization of pilot projects and regional training

workshops in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Standing Committee was invited to review and submit a new set of draft decisions to CoP20 to continue this work.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), supported by Argentina and Peru, agreed with the recommendations in the document but proposed to include a reference to international demand within draft decision 20.BB, paragraph b). This addition was supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and Species Survival Network, who stressed the importance of demand reduction strategies in consumer countries.

Argentina highlighted that a training workshop on demand reduction to combat illegal trade would be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 26 and 27 March 2025, with the aim to build capacity for authorities in the region.

TRAFFIC highlighted its collaboration with Parties in the implementation of demand reduction objectives, including leading technical components of Asia and Africa regional training sessions and helping Parties development workplans for priority behaviour, species and audiences to target.

Wildlife Conservation Society suggested expanding draft decision 20.AA, paragraph a), beyond the CITES guidance to include other materials or guidance on science-based behaviour change, which was supported by the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and the United States (Committee Member for North America).

Canada observed that guidance on demand reduction was difficult to find on the CITES website and suggested that it should be available on the 'implementation' or 'topics' page.

The Committee:

- a) noted the progress made in implementing Decision 19.55;
- b) agreed to submit the draft decisions on demand reduction to combat illegal trade contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 29 and amended by Brazil and the Wildlife Conservation Society to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.55 to 19.57 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON
DEMAND REDUCTION TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE**

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) share their experience in using the [*Guidance for CITES Parties to develop and implement demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*](#) and other materials on science-based behaviour changes with other Parties and the Secretariat;
- b) communicate to the Secretariat information on priority species for potential pilot projects that require extrabudgetary resources; and
- c) promote the use of the *Guidance* by organizing pilot projects and providing support to the potential pilot projects mentioned in paragraph b) above.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) collect and analyse the experiences in using the *Guidance* shared by Parties;
- b) subject to extrabudgetary resources, and in consultation with donors and potential target Parties, organize pilot projects to promote the use of the *Guidance* for priority species and Parties with necessary adaptation to suit local context as well as consideration of the implications of international demand in range States;

- c) subject to extrabudgetary resources, support interested Parties in implementing demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species; and
- d) report on the progress made in the implementation of this Decision to the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 20.BB and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

30. Review of Resolutions and DecisionsSC78 Doc. 30

For agenda items 20, 22, 30, 72 and 78, the Committee requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and other stakeholders for consideration by the Chair of the Standing Committee when these documents are submitted to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

31. National laws for implementation of the Convention (*Decisions 19.60 and 19.61*)

31.1 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 31.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 31.1, summarizing progress on national legislation and providing an overview of the Parties with legislation placed in Category 1, 2, or 3 under the National Legislation Project, including those subject to a recommendation to suspend trade or a formal warning. The Secretariat noted several updates to the document since its publication, including the fact that Uganda had adopted legislation meeting the CITES minimum requirements and that Mongolia had submitted a letter on 30 January 2025 regarding ongoing legislative work, but without draft legislation or timeline for adoption, the recommendation remained unchanged. The Secretariat noted that, in recent days, it had received information from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bhutan, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, and Macao Special Administrative Region of China, which would be reviewed and reported on at future meetings. The Standing Committee was invited to commend Andorra, Botswana, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sierra Leone, Tunisia, and Uganda for having their legislation placed in Category 1; issue a formal warning to several Parties; and consider the draft guidance on exceptional circumstances impeding the proper functioning of CITES at the national level.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) provided an update on its legislative progress and requested an extension from 30 March 2025 to May 2025 to deliver an updated legislation. It reaffirmed its commitment to finalizing the updated legislation by the end of the year to ensure compliance with the Convention and its placement in Category 1.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the recommendations in the document, with an additional suggestion to allow Parties to review the finalized guidance on exceptional circumstances before it is made available on the CITES website, a request which was echoed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe). The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) supported allowing Parties to revisit the draft guidance before completion and recommended that the Standing Committee request the Secretariat to incorporate comments from the current meeting, invite further inputs through a Notification to the Parties, and submit the draft guidance to CoP20 for review and approval. This was supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) and Switzerland (Depositary Government). Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) suggested that the draft guidance should be reviewed at the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee rather than CoP20 to allow for more in-depth discussion.

The United Kingdom further noted that it would be helpful for the draft guidance to include examples of events where the principle of force majeure would apply.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, requested to defer a decision on the recommendation to continue to suspend commercial trade in CITES-listed species from the Parties referenced in recommendation b). Regarding the remaining recommendations, the Party emphasized that the draft guidance on exceptional circumstances should not obstruct legitimate trade but also must not create loopholes contrary to the provisions of CITES. It stressed that

trade under exceptional circumstances should be limited to essential cases, such as non-commercial trade, reintroduction into the wild, or rescue operations

The Russian Federation disagreed with the assessment in paragraphs 35 and 41, believing the attempts to define exceptional circumstances included elements that went beyond the original mandate outlined in document SC77 Doc. 31.

Wildlife Conservation Society regretted that several countries were still not in compliance with regards to their national legislation and raised concerns that the exceptional circumstances described in paragraphs 35 to 40 could introduced an unintentional loophole.

The Committee:

- a) commended Andorra, Botswana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Uganda for the efforts leading to their legislation being placed in Category 1 and other Parties or territories that have made substantial progress in adopting measures for the effective implementation of the Convention;
- b) agreed on a recommendation to all Parties to suspend trade in all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes with Comoros, Lebanon, and Mongolia. The Secretariat shall inform the Parties concerned of this measure immediately after the present meeting. The recommendation shall take effect 60 days after it is agreed unless the Party concerned adopts appropriate measures before the expiry of the 60 days or takes significant and substantive steps to do so. Upon the expiry of the 60 days after the recommendation is agreed, the Secretariat shall issue a Notification to the Parties informing them of the recommendations to suspend commercial trade taking effect from that date;
- c) requested the Secretariat to issue a formal warning to the Parties that have not reported any legislative progress for more than three years, requesting them to immediately take steps to ensure progress before SC81 and to report such progress to the Secretariat 90 days before the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee. At the time of writing, this includes:
 - Afghanistan: first formal warning;
 - Antigua and Barbuda: first formal warning;
 - Cabo Verde: first formal warning;
 - Chad: first formal warning;
 - Eritrea: first formal warning;
 - Iraq: first formal warning;
 - Myanmar: first formal warning;
 - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: first formal warning; and
 - the Syrian Arab Republic: first formal warning.
- d) requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to seek Parties' inputs on the preliminary guidance on the implementation of the Convention in exceptional circumstances that impede the proper functioning of CITES at the national level and to submit a revised guidance and any recommendations for the consideration of CoP20, taking into account any comments made in plenary at SC78.

The Standing Committee recognized and welcomed the support provided by Parties, development partners as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the development and adoption of national measures to effectively implement and enforce the Convention.

31.2 Request by the Sultanate of Oman to lift the suspension of international trade..... SC78 Doc. 31.2

Oman introduced document SC78 Doc. 31.2 and outlined its national law introduced in October 2024 to fulfil the core requirements of CITES and informed the Committee that the executive regulations for the law had been drafted, reviewed by the Secretariat and were in the process of revision and consultation with the relevant national authorities. Oman expected that the executive regulations would be approved and adopted by October 2025 and committed to implementing all provisions of the regulations prior to their official issuance. Oman stated that the suspension of international trade had posed significant challenges to vital sectors in the country, including healthcare, and therefore appealed for the suspension to be lifted. The Secretariat presented a timeline of its assistance to Oman.

Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), speaking on behalf of the Asia region, supported the request by Oman to lift the recommendation to suspend trade, in light of the adoption of a law that fulfilled the requirements of CITES and a clear timeline with progress updates for the adoption of the executive regulations. Kuwait, speaking on behalf of the Asia region, stressed that the suspension had impacted the health sector and also drew attention to Oman's efforts to prevent illegal trade and protect wildlife. The request to lift the suspension of international trade was also supported by Brazil and Honduras (Committee Members for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), Morocco (Committee Member for Africa), China, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Sudan.

While recognizing the progress made, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), echoed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the Dominican Republic (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking as a Party, Switzerland (Depositary Government), Canada, and World Wide Fund for Nature, did not support the lifting of the suspension until the executive regulations were adopted and enforced, as these were required for Oman's legislation to meet the requirements of CITES, and lifting the suspension prior to their adoption would not be fair to other Parties in a similar position.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, referred the Committee to information document SC78 Inf. 32, requesting that the decision be deferred to a future meeting.

Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) called for a vote under Rule 15.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee which was supported by Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean). The Committee voted on a motion to agree the following recommendation in paragraph 6 of document SC78 Doc. 31.2:

The Committee approves the lifting of the suspension of international trade with the condition of Oman commits to the following:

- a) submitting periodic reports to the Secretariat on the progress made towards adopting the executive regulations every three months; and*
- b) adhering to the final deadline of October 2025, as per the timeline for issuing the executive regulations*

The motion was rejected by a simple majority of 7 votes against and 5 in favour.

The Committee encouraged Oman to make the progress outlined in the document.

32. National reports

32.1 Submission of annual reports SC78 Doc. 32.1

The Secretariat provided an update of document SC78 Doc. 32.1, noting that the following Parties had submitted missing annual reports since the publication of the document: Cameroon, Malawi, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay and the United Republic of Tanzania. The remaining four Parties having failed to provide annual reports for three consecutive years without having provided adequate justification were: Bahamas, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Samoa. The Secretariat also clarified that paragraph 15 of Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19) on *National reports* stipulated that trade

suspensions arising from the non-submission of annual reports applied to “trade in specimens of CITES-listed species” and was not restricted to trade for commercial purposes.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) provided an update on behalf of Samoa, stating that staffing changes had affected their technical capacity to ensure that the reports were up to date, and that they would be submitted shortly. Cameroon and the United Republic of Tanzania informed the Committee that they had submitted the missing reports, as noted by the Secretariat.

Senegal supported the recommendations to suspend trade with Parties that had not provided annual reports for three consecutive years without adequate justification.

Japan (Committee Member for Asia) requested clarification on what to do about shipments already in transit when the recommendation to suspend trade was issued. Japan argued that there would be no impact on conservation since the shipment of the specimens had already been assessed and authorized, and that prolonging the transit of live specimens by shipping them back to the origin country would be a welfare issue. The Secretariat informed the Committee that a draft decision to consider such elements was already agreed in the context of document SC78 Doc. 33.1.

The Committee instructed the Secretariat to determine whether Bahamas, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Malawi, Mali and Samoa have failed to provide annual reports for three consecutive years, without having provided adequate justification. If so determined, the Secretariat will issue a Notification (60 days after the closure of this 78th meeting of the Standing Committee) recommending that Parties not authorize any trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with those Parties until they have provided the missing reports.

32.2 Revised Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports and Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports..... SC78 Doc. 32.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 32.2, noting that it contained suggestions for additional descriptions for the term codes for bodies, worked ivory, and powder, as well as a proposal for a new section in the guidelines on reporting on specimens taken from Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ).

Japan (Committee Member for Asia) noted that, in some cases, products in trade (such as medicines) contain a mixture of specimens taken from exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and ABNJ that are not possible to differentiate. On this basis, Japan proposed a flexible option for reporting on such cases, by recording such trade under a flexible source code “X/W”. The United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, as the managers of the CITES Trade Database, cautioned that the database is currently only capable of displaying one source code per shipment, and that multiple source codes could present difficulties in terms of processing the data.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, proposed amendments to the definition of worked ivory and opposed the suggested inclusion of a note related to agarwood to the term code POW.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) supported the proposed amendments in the document with an edit to the explanatory text for the term code BOD to specify “dried” seahorses.

The Committee approved the following amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* and the amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports*.

Description	Trade term code	Preferred unit	Alternative unit	Explanation
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Body	BOD	no.	kg.	substantially whole dead animals, including whole fish, stuffed turtles, preserved butterflies, reptiles in alcohol, whole stuffed hunting trophies, etc. If referring to specimens of sharks and rays (<i>Elasmobranchii</i> spp.) <u>and dried seahorses (<i>Hippocampus</i> spp.)</u> , the preferred unit is kg.
carving – ivory (worked ivory)	IVC	Kg	no.	ivory carvings, including e.g. smaller worked pieces of ivory (knife handles, chess sets, marjoram <u>mahjong</u> sets, etc.). N.B. <u>Worked ivory means ivory that has been carved, shaped or processed, either fully or partially.</u> Whole carved tusks should be reported as carving – ivory (IVC) <u>not only when the whole surface has been carved, otherwise they should be reported as tusks</u> (see “TUS” below). Jewellery made from carved ivory should be reported as ‘jewellery – ivory’ (see IJW below).

The Committee also approved the new section on *Specific instructions for reporting on specimens taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction* to be included in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 32.2.

The Committee noted the following edit proposed by Japan: “The specimens which are inseparable into source code X and W can be recorded as source code X/W, as appropriate.” for inclusion under *Specific instructions for reporting on specimens taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction* and also noted the clarification provided by the Secretariat that, in such cases, only one source code must be chosen and both source codes cannot be used jointly. In addition, the Committee invited Japan and the Secretariat to explore the feasibility of using a dual source code in the CITES trade database and to report back at a next meeting of the Standing Committee.

33. Compliance matters

33.1 Implementation of Article XIII and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES compliance procedures.....SC78 Doc. 33.1

Regarding the implementation of Article VII, paragraph 4 of the Convention by the European Union and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), with support from the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), proposed to replace the verb “invite” with “remind” in recommendation c) of paragraph 74, noting that as per Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, Parties were obligated to restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes to those produced by operations included in the Secretariat’s register. While Canada noted its preference for the original recommendation on the basis that Resolutions were not binding, it could support Israel’s amendment.

The United States (Committee Member for North America) appreciated the updates provided by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union and, accordingly, did not believe they needed to be invited to provide a report to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Committee:

- a) noted the progress made by the United Kingdom and the European Union and its Member States in ensuring that facilities that are breeding specimens of Appendix-I listed species for commercial purposes be registered with the CITES Secretariat in accordance with the procedures established in Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*;
- b) recalled paragraph 8 a) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) and reminded Parties to restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes of captive-bred specimens of Appendix-I species to those produced

by operations included in the CITES Register and to reject any permit or certificate if the specimens concerned do not originate from a registered facility;

Regarding potential compliance matters related to trade in Amazona imperialis, A. arausiaca and Cyanopsitta spixii

The United States (Committee Member for North America) suggested the Secretariat continue to request information from Dominica regarding exports of *Amazona imperialis* and specimens of *A. arausiaca*, noting that no additional information had been received.

Consideration of recommendation e) on Spix's macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) was postponed until document SC78 Doc. 64 was discussed by the Committee.

The Committee:

- c) noted that no further information or response has been provided by Dominica regarding the export of two specimens of *Amazona imperialis* and ten specimens of *A. arausiaca* and, noting that work is ongoing with Dominica in the context of the National Legislation Project, requested the Secretariat to continue to seek information from Dominica on these exports and to report back to the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee;

Regarding trade in live animals to India

India stated that it has a robust system for implementing CITES provisions with regards to trade in CITES-listed live animals, involving clearances from multiple ministries as well as consultations with several of its Scientific Authorities before permits are issued. India clarified that the facility mentioned in document SC78 Doc. 33.1 is a recognized centre for conservation breeding by India's Central Zoo Authority. It informed the Standing Committee that its Management Authority had previously invited the Secretariat to visit the facility and reiterated this invitation.

Species Survival Network, also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, ADM Capital Foundation, Four Paws, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Pro Wildlife, World Parrot Trust, and Whale and Dolphin Conservation, expressed concern a mission to India had not been yet been conducted, despite reports indicating that a significant number of animals, including Appendix-I species, continue to be transferred to or sought by Greens Zoological Rescue & Rehabilitation Center. IWCWC echoed these concerns, querying whether India's imports of Appendix-I live animals originated from facilities registered with the Secretariat. India asserted that Greens Zoological Rescue & Rehabilitation Center was a registered centre with its Central Zoo Authority and with CITES, and that all centres importing species listed in Appendix-I for conservation breeding were appropriately registered.

The Greens Zoological Rescue & Rehabilitation Center extended an invitation to the Secretariat to visit its facility.

Brazil and Honduras (Committee Members for Central and South America and the Caribbean), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) supported a mission to India by the Secretariat.

The Committee:

- d) noted the information provided by India, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Mexico regarding the trade in live animals with purpose code Z to the facility of the Greens Zoological Rescue & Rehabilitation Center (GZRRC) in India; and requested the Secretariat to keep close communication and strengthen the cooperation with India on this potential case and, subject to the availability of external funds and human resources, accept an invitation from India to provide in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a verification mission to understand how the CITES authorities ensure that live animal specimens are legally acquired and imported in full compliance with CITES and present its findings and recommendations to the Standing Committee;

Regarding trade in live birds from Suriname

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), in their capacity as a regional representative, made an intervention on behalf of Suriname. Suriname reaffirmed its commitment to CITES and to comply with Articles III and IV of the Convention and confirmed that its Management Authority had followed the recommendations of the Standing Committee by establishing a zero-export quota for *Ara chloropterus* since

2022 as a precautionary measure. To enhance transparency, Suriname formally extended an invitation to the Secretariat to conduct an in-country assessment to identify areas for further improvement, and looked forward to continued cooperation with the Secretariat, the Standing Committee, and international partners to uphold conservation principles and responsible trade.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, expressed serious concerns with the information reported in the document regarding trade in live birds from Suriname that did not appear to be in compliance with the Convention. Accordingly, they suggested that the Secretariat issue a Notification the Parties advising importing Parties to be vigilant regarding CITES documents issued by Suriname.

A mission by the Secretariat to Suriname was supported by the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and Senegal.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) made a general observation that, in many instances, Parties appeared to not have registered facilities breeding Appendix-I species as called for in Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*. New Zealand further highlighted the number of examples of purpose code 'B' being used in ways that did not reflect the original intention of the code, demonstrating the need for a definition of purpose code 'B'.

The Committee:

- e) requested the Secretariat to continue its close communication and strengthened cooperation with Suriname on a potential compliance matter related to trade in birds and other species and to seek an invitation from Suriname to provide, subject to the availability of external and human resources, in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a verification mission in response to Suriname's invitation to understand how the CITES Authorities ensure that live bird specimens are legally acquired and traded in full compliance with CITES; and present its findings and recommendations to a forthcoming meeting of the Standing Committee;
- f) noted the comment by the United States of America to advise importing Parties to be particularly vigilant with regard to CITES documents issued by Suriname and to take steps to ensure that such trade is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Convention;

Regarding exports of Macaca fascicularis from Cambodia

Cambodia expressed its full support for the recommendations and was pleased to invite the CITES Secretariat and relevant Parties to visit its breeding facility in Cambodia.

Animal Alliance for Canada noted its ongoing concern for trade in *M. fascicularis* from Cambodia, highlighting a recent shipment of the species from Cambodia to Canada.

The Committee:

- g) requested the Secretariat to continue its close communication and strengthened cooperation with Cambodia to ensure that any trade in wild caught *Macaca fascicularis* and captive breeding of this species is conducted in compliance with the provisions of the Convention, in particular Articles IV and VII and seek an invitation from Cambodia to provide, subject to the availability of external and human resources, in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a verification mission to understand how the CITES authorities ensure that trade and captive-breeding of *M. fascicularis* are compliant with the Convention; the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming meeting of the Standing Committee;
- h) urged Parties importing live specimens of *M. fascicularis* to exercise due diligence in accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement* to ensure that no imports are accepted in violation of the Convention, in particular Articles IV and VII;

Regarding trade reported from Guyana by importing Parties

There were no interventions.

The Committee:

- i) urged Parties to liaise with the CITES Management Authority for Guyana to verify the validity of any export permit or re-export/captive breeding certificate attributed to Guyana;
- j) requested Bangladesh, Indonesia, Oman and Sri Lanka to support the CITES Management Authority of Guyana in verifying any necessary information in instances of trade of live specimens reported as imports from Guyana; and
- k) requested the Secretariat to support the CITES Management Authority of Guyana to clarify the matters and follow-up with relevant Parties regarding the cases identified by Guyana, as needed;

Regarding guidance on the scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade

The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe), the United States (Committee Member for North America), Mexico and Canada proposed drafting suggestions for the draft decisions on scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested these could be consolidated by a small drafting group.

The Committee:

- l) requested the Secretariat to prepare an in-session document with the edits to the draft decision on the scope and application of a recommendation to suspend trade contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 33.1 proposed by Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America;

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 1, which presents the consolidated draft decisions on scope and application of a recommendation to suspend trade.

The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe), supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, and the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, considered that draft decision 20.XX, as amended in the document, was sufficient to inform the way forward, and did not support draft decisions 20.AA and 20.BB.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), supported by Israel and Niger, opposed the draft decisions, preferring that the resources of the Secretariat be focused on helping Parties to implement the Convention.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 1 as amended by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as follows:

The Committee agreed to submit the following draft decision to the Conference of the Parties:

Directed to the Standing Committee, with the support of the Secretariat

20.XX With the support of the Secretariat, the Standing Committee shall prepare draft guidance on the scope and application of a recommendation to suspend all trade (or trade for commercial purposes) in specimens of one or more CITES-listed species with a Party subject to a compliance procedure decided consistent with paragraph 30 of Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, including standard terminology for describing suspensions, and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its 21st meeting.

Regarding the development and adoption of a compliance action plan template

Canada supported the recommendation with minor amendments to the compliance action plan template.

The Committee:

- m) agreed on the draft template of a compliance action plan contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 33.1 as amended by Canada and requested the Secretariat to submit it for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, together with amendment to paragraph 29 h) of Annex 1 to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, also contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 33.1.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 14.3 (REV. COP19) ON *CITES COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES*

New text is underlined.

Insert in Annex 1, paragraph 29:

- h) request a compliance action plan to be submitted to the Standing Committee by the Party concerned identifying appropriate steps, a timetable for when those steps should be completed and means to assess satisfactory completion. The template contained in Annex 2 may be used as a basis for the compliance action plan to be submitted.

Insert a new Annex 2:

ANNEX 2
OPTIONAL COMPLIANCE ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Introduction

Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, in the section on *Measures to achieve compliance*, provides as follows in paragraph 29 of Annex 1:

If a compliance matter has not been resolved, the Standing Committee decides to take one or more of the following measures:

- h) request a **compliance action plan** to be submitted to the Standing Committee by the Party concerned identifying **appropriate steps**, a **timetable** for when those steps should be completed and **means to assess satisfactory completion**.

The following template is a guiding tool for Parties that are subject to an Article-XIII compliance process for which the Standing Committee has agreed on a set of recommendations for the Party to achieve compliance with the obligations of the Convention. The Compliance Action Plan is first and foremost intended to be a tool for the Party itself to ensure that the recommendations of the Standing Committee to the Party with regard to the compliance matter will be considered and addressed in an adequate and timely manner. The Compliance Action Plan will also assist Parties in monitoring progress and preparing progress reports to the Secretariat for onward reporting to the Standing Committee.

Any Party subject to an Article-XIII process is therefore invited to use the Compliance Action Plan template even if the Standing Committee has not requested the submission of an action plan in accordance with paragraph 29 h) of Annex 1 to the Resolution. It is important to keep in mind that the recommendations of the Standing Committee are addressed to the Party concerned, i.e. the Government of the State that is a Party to the Convention. They are not addressed to the CITES Management Authority. Therefore, the CITES Management Authority may need to consult with other entities of the Government on the actions to be taken to implement the recommendations as such entities need to be engaged and committed to achieve the goals of the action plan.

It is also important that relevant actors and stakeholders are consulted by the Party concerned when developing the draft Compliance Action Plan before it is finalized and submitted to the CITES Secretariat, if so required.

The Compliance Action Plan template can be modified by the Party if additional fields are required to fit the circumstances of a particular Party. For instance, Parties that are also subject to a separate process under the Review of Significant Trade (RST) in Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species* may incorporate the recommendations by the Animals or Plants Committee into the Compliance Action Plan, if appropriate.

Guidance

The following explanations are offered to assist in the development of a Compliance Action Plan.

Terminology in the Compliance Action Plan template	Explanation
Header	It is important to refer to the Summary Record of the meeting in which the Standing Committee agreed to the recommendations. If the recommendations are amended/updated at subsequent meetings, the references in the <u>Compliance</u> Action Plan may need to be updated as well.
Area of work	The recommendations of the Standing Committee are often structured around certain areas of work, e.g. <i>Regarding national legislation; Regarding issuance of export permits; Regarding national coordination; Regarding law enforcement;</i> etc. These areas of work can be used to structure the elements of the Compliance Action Plan.
Recommendation of the Standing Committee	The text of each recommendation agreed by of the Standing Committee can be included in full in the <u>Compliance</u> Action Plan, if considered helpful. The recommendation can also be reformulated into a more concise goal if that will help the Party navigate the actions and the steps required to implement the recommendation of the Standing Committee – as long as the goal achieves the recommendation.
Steps/actions	With respect to each recommendation of the Standing Committee, Parties may identify several actions or steps to be taken to respond to the recommendation.
Timeline for implementation	It is important to provide a timeline for implementing the steps. Realistic timeframes (month and year) should be set for each element needed to complete the step/action corresponding to the Standing Committee recommendation
Means to assess satisfactory completion (milestones and indicators)	The means to assess satisfactory completion should follow naturally from the recommendations and the steps/actions devised to implement them. They can be formulated as indicators and in essence must provide a way to determine whether the step/action has been completed. If the achievement of a recommendation requires several steps, several milestones may be set with associated indicators to determine that the milestone has been met.
Leading national entity and other involved entities	The national entity (CITES Management Authority, Scientific Authority, customs, Ministry of Justice etc.) that will lead on and take responsibility for the implementation of the action should be identified. Where appropriate, additional involved entities should be included as well.
Costs, funding source	The estimated cost for implementation of each action as well as the funding source if external funding has been identified. The recommendations of the Standing Committee should ideally be possible to implement with existing means but, if external resources are required, this can be indicated here and in the next column. Identification of budget needs and gaps for implementation of selected actions is an important component for potential mobilization of external resources.
Comments (risks, assumptions, mitigation measures)	If there are certain assumptions or risks related to the completion of the action/steps, it should be noted in this column. With regard to the risks, a short explanation on how such will be mitigated should be included as well.

Regarding trade in oceanic whitetip shark (Carcharhinus longimanus)

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) supported the concerns raised by Maldives regarding irregularities in the trade of oceanic whitetip sharks, as outlined in paragraphs 63 to 67 of document SC78 Doc. 33.1, emphasizing that these concerns were neither trivial nor unfounded. While recognizing it was not the Secretariat's role to assess the quality of legal acquisition findings (LAFs), New Zealand agreed with the Maldives that the Standing Committee should investigate potential non-compliance with Article IV, paragraph 2 b), which requires Management Authorities to ensure specimens are not taken in violation of national laws. Noting the absence of any published non-detriment findings (NDFs) supporting sustainable trade for oceanic whitetip shark and the lack of responses received by the Secretariat justifying such trade, New Zealand recommended that the Standing Committee direct the Secretariat to investigate these concerns further. It proposed a decision for the

Secretariat to examine LAFs and NDFs for commercial trade in oceanic whitetip sharks. New Zealand's intervention was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe), and Senegal.

Maldives, echoing the statement of New Zealand, and with support from Panama, Ecuador and Senegal, expressed its concerns that document SC78 Doc. 33.1 did not propose direct action in response to seizure data and stressed the need for appropriate follow-up. It recommended that the Secretariat engage with Parties mentioned in paragraph 64 that did not respond to the Secretariat's consultation, with their responses and actions to be reported at the next Standing Committee meeting.

Senegal informed the Committee that it had established a zero export quota for oceanic whitetip shark.

Canada, sharing the concerns raised, proposed a small drafting group to focus on obligations under the CITES Convention and prepare recommendations related to NDFs and LAFs.

- n) The Committee established an in-session drafting group to draft a recommendation for consideration by Standing Committee in order to request the Secretariat to explore an issue raised by the Maldives regarding trade in oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) that may not be in compliance with Article IV of the Convention. Membership was agreed as follows: Belgium, Canada, Maldives, New Zealand (Chair), Panama, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as the Secretariat.

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 2, which presented the consolidated recommendation regarding trade in oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*). New Zealand, as Chair of the drafting group, informed the Committee that recommendation d) should be amended to a new paragraph.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) remarked that, in the plenary discussions under agenda item 34.2, Kenya had reported on measures implemented to regulate trade in oceanic whitetip shark, including a moratorium, and that it was premature to recommend compliance actions for Kenya, therefore Kenya should be removed from the decision and given time to fully implement the actions requested under the Review of Significant Trade. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) noted that the recommendation would only involve, in Kenya's case, providing information on its moratorium in preparation for the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee, at which time Kenya could be removed from the process if appropriate. This approach was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe).

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 2 as amended by New Zealand as follows:

- o) The Committee requested the Secretariat to request Indonesia, Kenya, Oman, Senegal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Yemen to:
 - i) provide information regarding the catch data on *Carcharhinus longimanus*, including location and whether the catches originated from an exclusive economic zone or from areas beyond national jurisdiction;
 - ii) provide detailed information on the making of non-detriment findings and legal acquisition findings where export permits were reported to CITES as issued for commercial trade of *Carcharhinus longimanus*;
 - iii) provide information on how applicable measures, including those resulting from other treaties, conventions or national legislation for the conservation or management of *Carcharhinus longimanus* were taken into account when making non-detriment findings and determining the legal acquisition of specimens of *Carcharhinus longimanus*; and
- p) The Committee requested the Secretariat to review the responses in consultation with the Chair of the Animals Committee, as appropriate, and report them to the Standing Committee at its 79th meeting.

33.2 Expedited application of Article XIII for West African rosewood
(*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) for all range States SC78 Doc. 33.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.2, which provides an update on progress of both Article XIII recommendations and Review of Significant Trade (RST) recommendations for range States of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and reports on the CITES legal acquisition findings (LAF) and non-detriment findings (NDF) regional workshop for West African rosewood that took place in September 2024 in Douala, Cameroon. The Secretariat informed the Committee that Sierra Leone had submitted additional information at the present meeting, and that the consultations with the Plants Committee on information submitted by Ghana were still ongoing. An update on these cases would be provided at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, and Cameroon thanked the Secretariat for organizing the workshop.

The Central African Republic requested the support of the Secretariat to build capacity to carry out a national inventory to understand its resources of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and to make a non-detriment finding to determine an appropriate quota. The Party wished for the suspension of trade in the species to be lifted as it was considered a secondary species and it hoped that the species could contribute towards the country's economy.

Cameroon indicated that it had submitted information to the Secretariat on a framework agreement with Niger to fight illegal forestry, and that it had drawn up a national management plan and adopted a new forestry law which covered a number of species, including *Pterocarpus erinaceus*.

Ghana, reiterating its commitment to ensuring that trade was sustainable and legal, requested the Plants Committee and Standing Committee to consider its outstanding request of an additional quota for 18,719.93 m³ living stands of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* intersessionally.

Canada, supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and Switzerland (Depositary Government), supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 33.2.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, referred the Committee to information document SC78 Inf. 32, requesting that decisions regarding suspensions of commercial trade in *Pterocarpus erinaceus* be deferred to a future CITES meeting.

Progress in the implementation of Article XIII recommendations for range States of *P. erinaceus* subject to a recommendation to suspend trade, including those also undergoing RST recommendations

Gambia (The)*:

a) The Committee:

- i) maintained the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from The Gambia under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are met;
- ii) with regards to RST, noted that some progress has been made by the Gambia towards the implementation of short-term recommendation b) and the long-term recommendation c), however this progress remains in its early stages; and
- iii) agreed to retain the RST short-term and long-term recommendations.

Guinea-Bissau*:

b) The Committee:

- i) maintained the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Guinea-Bissau under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are met;

- ii) with regards to RST, noted that some progress has been made by Guinea-Bissau towards the implementation of short-term recommendation b) and the long-term recommendation c), however this progress remains in its early stages; and
- iii) agreed to retain RST short-term and long-term recommendations.

Mali*:

c) The Committee:

- i) agreed that the RST short-term recommendations a) and b), and long-term recommendation c) have been implemented through the Plants Committee's acceptance of the quota for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* of 55,384.8 m³ in round wood equivalent;
- ii) agreed to retain long-term recommendation d), provided that Mali would wish to make any increase to the quota approved by the Plants Committee at PC26;
- iii) acknowledged the significant progress made by Mali in implementing recommendations under the expedited application of Article XIII and long-term RST recommendations, particularly concerning the submission of evidence of legal acquisition findings for a volume of 39,950.4 m³ of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in accordance with Notification No. 2024/057 of 29 April 2024, thus achieving a partial withdrawal of the recommendation to suspend trade in *P. erinaceus*;
- iv) noted the progress made by Mali in the preparation of the legal acquisition findings for *P. erinaceus*;
- v) acknowledged the efforts made by Mali, with the support of Senegal, in preparing an inventory of any specimens or stockpiles of timber originating from Mali and possibly present on Senegal's territory, invite Mali to continue liaising with the Secretariat and with Senegal to ensure that these specimens are managed in accordance with the provisions of the Convention; and
- vi) maintained the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *P. erinaceus* from Mali under the expedited application of Article XIII until Mali finishes providing the evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee for the remaining 15,434.4 m³ of the quota accepted at PC26 as required under Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045.

Nigeria*:

d) The Committee:

- i) acknowledged the progress made by Nigeria in implementing recommendations under the expedited application of Article XIII and long-term RST recommendations in the context of the compliance assistance programme;
- ii) encouraged Nigeria to continue implementing these recommendations;
- iii) maintained the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are met; and
- iv) agreed to retain the RST short and long-term recommendations.

Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Togo:

- e) The Committee maintained the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Togo under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are fully met;

Progress in the implementation of RST recommendations for range States of *P. erinaceus* subject to a voluntary zero export quota

Benin*

- f) The Committee:
 - i) agreed that the RST short-term recommendation a) has been implemented by confirming the maintenance of a zero export quota for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* for 2024 and 2025; and
 - ii) agreed to retain RST short-term recommendation b) and the long-term recommendations c) and d).

Burkina Faso*

- g) The Committee:
 - i) requested Burkina Faso to confirm a voluntary zero export quota for 2024 and 2025 for *Pterocarpus erinaceus*; and
 - ii) agreed to retain the short and long-term RST recommendations.

Ghana*

- h) The Committee:
 - i) agreed that the RST short-term recommendations a) and b), have been implemented through the Plants Committee's acceptance at PC27 of the 40,000 m³ quota in round wood equivalent for the off-reserve underwater (Volta Lake) operations;
 - ii) noted that the long-term recommendations c) and d) are in process of implementation, pending the Plants Committee's review of the additional quota for 18,719.93 m³ living stands of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*; and
 - iii) reminded Ghana that the next step to follow in implementing the PC27-accepted quota is the presentation of LAF to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19).

Sierra Leone*

- i) The Committee:
 - i) agreed that the RST short-term recommendations a) and b), and long-term recommendation c) have been implemented through the Plants Committee's acceptance of the quota for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* of 76,324.5m³ in round wood equivalent;
 - ii) agreed to retain long-term recommendation d), provided that Sierra Leone would wish to make any increase to the quota approved by the Plants Committee at PC27; and
 - iii) reminded Sierra Leone that the next step to follow in implementing the PC27-accepted quota is the presentation of LAF to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19).

With regards to Parties with voluntary zero export quotas not subject to further specific recommendations (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Senegal)

- j) The Committee noted that no further recommendations with regard to Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Senegal are required.

k) The Committee:

- i) noted the elements provided in Section 3 of document SC78 Doc. 33.2 and the report of the workshop contained in Annex 3; and
- ii) encouraged Parties to continue sharing experiences and best practices concerning NDFs and LAFs for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in order to share knowledge and build capacity in the implementation of the Article XIII and RST recommendations for this species.

Reflections on the simultaneous implementation of the expedited application of Article XIII and RST for *P. erinaceus*

- l) The Committee welcomed the proposal that, when Article XIII and RST processes are running concurrently, the RST recommendations be included within the Article XIII recommendations to facilitate reporting.

33.3 Application of Article XIII in BangladeshSC78 Doc. 33.3

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc 33.3, noting that it had reviewed the report submitted by Bangladesh and assessed the progress made. The Secretariat directed the Standing Committee to the recommendations in the document, including that Parties continue to suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds from Bangladesh, and proposed to review progress of the case again at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC79) in November 2025.

Bangladesh drew attention to the Secretariat's conclusion that the country had demonstrated progress towards the implementation of most of the recommendations formed at the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee. In particular, Bangladesh highlighted its substantive progress towards strengthening legislation and law enforcement. While acknowledging that more remained to be done to address the remaining recommendations, Bangladesh considered that the timeframe provided in the document was insufficient for full implementation of the recommendations, and that its achievements to date had been done in the context of major political changes in the country. Bangladesh emphasized its commitment to enacting the necessary legal and procedural changes to improve compliance with the Convention and agreed to submit a progress report ahead of SC79. Bangladesh further indicated that continued financial support from governmental and non-governmental partners was needed to continue its progress to CITES compliance.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Canada, Israel and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) acknowledged the progress made by Bangladesh and supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 33.3. Belgium further encouraged the Management Authority of Bangladesh to share information on seizures for enforcement purposes, noting the importance of timely information exchange to combat illegal trade.

WCS noted it would continue to support and engage with Bangladesh in their efforts to address the recommendations.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, agreed with the recommendations in the document with the exception for the continuation of the recommendation to suspend commercial trade, requesting to defer the decision to a future CITES meeting. Canada and Israel did not support deferring a decision on the recommendation.

The United States, noting that the Committee had not agreed to defer a decision to retain the trade suspension to a future meeting, stated it was not able to take a position at the current meeting, without prejudice to its ability to take a position in the future.

The Committee acknowledged the initial progress made by Bangladesh in addressing the compliance matters leading to recommendations agreed at its 77th meeting.

The Committee agreed the following recommendations:

Regarding management of trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds

- a) The Committee recommended that Parties continue to suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds with Bangladesh until the Party is in a position to adequately regulate and monitor trade in CITES-listed birds notably through the establishment of a reliable and efficient system for maintaining records of trade in specimens of species included in Appendix I, II and III in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 6 of the Convention.

Specifically, the Committee recommended that Bangladesh:

- i) operationalize and further develop the online permitting system “CITES Permit/Certificate and NOC System” to facilitate the management and issuance of CITES permits and certificates and the verification of the legal acquisition of specimens in trade;
- ii) further develop the database of all registered pet bird farms and traders to ensure that it includes all relevant information and is maintained up-to-date and to integrate it with the “CITES Permit/Certificate and NOC System” as soon as possible to facilitate control, communication and collaboration; and
- iii) explore linkages with and possible integration of the online permitting system with the national single window or other similar national systems, including health and veterinary certifications, or customs declarations.

Regarding legislation and law enforcement

- b) Bangladesh should strengthen the regulatory framework in relation to management of and trade in birds and marine species, to ensure that the national legislation meets the CITES minimum requirements as set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for the implementation of the Convention*, including ensuring appropriate measures to enforce the provisions of the Convention, prohibit trade in violation of the Convention, and penalize offences related to wildlife crime (Art. VIII, paragraph 1).

Specifically, the Committee recommended that Bangladesh:

- i) as soon as possible and within a set deadline adopt and implement the amendments to the Pet Bird management rules (2020) and the Bangladesh Wildlife (Conservation & Security) Act (2012), to bridge gaps and close any loopholes that may be generated by the distribution of competences between different divisions, lack of adequate enforcement powers, the No Objection Certificates (NOC) system, lack of adequate penalties for offences related to wildlife crime and the final disposal of confiscated live specimens;
- ii) finalize the review and adoption of necessary amendments to the regulatory framework in relation to CITES-listed marine species and the implementation of the shark listings as soon as possible and within a set deadline;
- iii) implement appropriate measures to further strengthen capacity among law enforcement agencies to reinforce CITES controls, using risk-based management approaches, in particular container controls at airports and seaports, as well as control of mailed parcels and of air cargo. Additional measures should be considered to address the weakness that scanning machines in use at the ports of entry and exit are unable to detect biological products, that only suspicious products are examined, and that containers are opened in a very limited number of cases; and
- iv) take measures to further strengthen criminal intelligence, exchange of intelligence, controlled delivery, mapping of organized crime groups, wildlife crime investigation and prosecution. The newly established National CITES Enforcement Committee could be an important forum for the definition of measures of implement in this context and monitoring of their implementation.

Handling of live animals and disposal of seized live specimens

- c) Bangladesh should take measures to ensure strict implementation of Article VIII, paragraph 4 of the Convention, taking into account the recommendations and all management options contained in Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*, and of Article VIII, paragraph 3 of the Convention, taking into account the recommendations in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.

Specifically, the Committee recommended that Bangladesh:

- i) expand the inventory of all seized live specimens of CITES-listed birds, and include all pertinent data to obtain a complete view of all seizures of illegally traded specimens of CITES-listed birds and the disposal method used regarding confiscated live specimens, in accordance with Article VIII and Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19);
- ii) develop and implement a strategy with monitorable control and management measures for seized live specimens of CITES-listed birds, including measures to manage the species in the short-term, and to reduce the risk of injury, mortality or theft from the rescue centres, taking into consideration Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19), and adopt and implement the *Protocol on Identifying, Recording, Processing, and Compounding Exotic Live Birds*; and
- iii) ensure that a border control strategy is in place to continue the efforts taken in this regard in line with paragraph 13 of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19).

Scientific Authority and surveys

- d) Bangladesh should take measures to strengthen its Scientific Authority by building capacity on wildlife issues and allocating sufficient resources to undertake population surveys that can be used in the making of the non-detriment findings and the setting of annual export quotas for any CITES-listed species, when required, taking into account recommendations contained in Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and the preliminary *CITES Guidance on Non-Detriment Findings*, prior to authorizing exportation of CITES-listed species of fauna and flora.

The Committee requested Bangladesh to submit a report on the implementation of the above recommendations to the Secretariat 90 days before the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee for the Secretariat to report on the application of Article XIII in Bangladesh and provide its recommendations to the Standing Committee.

33.4 Application of Article XIII in Cameroon SC78 Doc. 33.4

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.4, reporting on its second mission to Cameroon in September 2024 and the information submitted by Cameroon, concluding that there were no longer any compliance matters regarding trade in CITES-listed tree species from Cameroon, including *Pericopsis elata*, and encouraging Cameroon to strengthen implementation of the Convention regarding specimens of CITES-listed species in transit through Cameroon.

Cameroon thanked the Secretariat for the support provided and gave an outline of the improvements it had made, including, *inter alia*, the addition of modules in the Computerized Forest Information Management System (SIGIF2), the update of a legal verification system, and the adoption of a new Forest Law in July 2024 providing for the entry into force of a new ban on exports of logs of all species from the end of July 2025, with an implementation decree of this new law expected soon, while the export of logs of CITES-listed species was already banned. Cameroon requested that the date of entry into force of the ban on exports of logs in paragraph 16 of document SC78 Doc. 33.4 be corrected from January to July 2025. Cameroon also informed the Committee that it was one of the founding Parties in the Broader Market Recognition Coalition (BMRC) initiative. The remaining priorities of Cameroon were

the operationalization of the SIGIF2 CEMAC Timber Module to digitize the traceability of timber in transit through Cameroon, and the strengthening of internal procedures for managing port areas.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, echoed by Benin and Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux (ATIBT), congratulated Cameroon on its progress in strengthening implementation, and supported the finding that the majority of the recommendations could be considered to have been fulfilled and that there were no further outstanding compliance issues on CITES-listed tree species.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, while congratulating Cameroon for the progress made, reported that challenges remained regarding transit through the port of Douala, and therefore could not agree that no compliance issues remained. Belgium proposed that Cameroon report to the Secretariat on progress made in implementing the recommendations relating to Article XIII in Cameroon before the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee. This was supported by the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) and Switzerland (Depositary Government) but opposed by Benin and ATIBT.

The Secretariat stated that it had not received or found evidence of any ongoing violations, so suggested that Cameroon report to the Secretariat on implementation, without mention of Article XIII as this was no longer an Article XIII compliance issue.

The Committee:

- a) noted the progress made by Cameroon in the implementation of the recommendations of the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting and congratulate the country for this;
- b) determined that there are no longer any compliance matters regarding trade in CITES-listed tree species from Cameroon, including *Pericopsis elata*; and
- c) encouraged Cameroon to continue strengthening the implementation of the Convention regarding specimens of CITES-listed species in transit through Cameroon, specifically by:
 - i) submitting an annual report on illegal trade, in accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph 3;
 - ii) continuing to develop the SIGIF2 information system, particularly the creation of the CEMAC (Central African Economic and Monetary Community) module to record timber from third countries, particularly the Central African Republic and the Congo, thus enabling a better monitoring of statistics, volumes and timber species from neighbouring countries and a better traceability of specimens during their entire transit through Cameroon, considering the Convention and the provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.7 (Rev. CoP15) on *Transit and transshipment*; and
 - iii) promptly conducting an evaluation of the role and methods of work of the Société d'Exploitation des Parcs à Bois du Cameroon (SEPBC) for the management of stocks of timber at the ports of shipment, ensuring a clear and strict separation between stocks of specimens from Cameroon and those of specimens from neighbouring countries, and between the different types of specimens traded.

Cameroon should report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC81) in order for the Secretariat to consider it in its report to the Standing Committee.

33.5 Application of Article XIII in the Democratic Republic of the CongoSC78 Doc. 33.5

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.5, which contains a summary of the report submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the conclusions of the Secretariat. The Secretariat noted the Standing Committee was principally invited to renew recommendations adopted at the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee, including a recommendation to suspend trade in specimens of *Psittacus erithacus*.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo thanked the Secretariat for its support and advice and noted that it continued to uphold the suspension in trade of *P. erithacus*. Regarding other matters related to the application of Article XIII, the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported on its substantial efforts towards strengthening its regulatory framework, including updates to Law 14/003 in December 2024 as well as its submission of reports, including illegal trade and NIAPs reports for the period 2022-2024. They highlighted progress related to *P. erithacus* such as the development of a management plan, required resources, for which it had contacted partners in South Africa to obtain more assistance. The Democratic Republic of the Congo noted its continued efforts against illegal trade in several taxonomic groups, such as great apes.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) congratulated the Democratic Republic of the Congo on its progress against the recommendations. Belgium supported all the recommendations in the document but proposed an additional recommendation to invite the Democratic Republic of the Congo to adopt a regulatory act to implement a moratorium on trade for *P. erithacus*, which was supported by New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) noted that the Democratic Republic of the Congo indicated in the document that it is not implementing its reservation for the Appendix-I listing for *P. erithacus*. Accordingly, Israel invited the Democratic Republic of the Congo to consider withdrawing its reservation but noted that it would otherwise support Belgium's suggested addition.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, agreed with the recommendations in the document with the exception for the recommendation to renew the recommendation to suspend trade in *P. erithacus*, requesting to defer this decision to a future CITES meeting. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) did not support deferring a decision on the recommendation.

World Parrot Trust (also on behalf of Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Species Survival Network and Pro Wildlife) voiced concerns regarding the scale of illegal export of *P. erithacus* from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, drawing attention to large parrot consignments from a single regional airport since the previous Standing Committee meeting. World Parrot Trust raised further concerns that commercial trade in Appendix-I species by Parties with reservations in place was undermining the effectiveness of Convention.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), noting that the Committee had not agreed to defer a decision to retain the trade suspension to a future meeting, stated it was not able to take a position at the present meeting, without prejudice to its ability to take a position in the future.

The Committee noted the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and agreed to renew the recommendations adopted at SC77 as amended by Belgium:

Regarding the management of trade in Psittacus erithacus

- a) The Parties maintain the recommendation to suspend trade in specimens of the species *Psittacus erithacus* from the Democratic Republic of the Congo pending compliance with the following recommendations:
 - i) on the basis of the reservation entered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the species *Psittacus erithacus*, this State is considered as a non-Party with respect to trade in this species. However, Resolution Conf. 4.25 (Rev. CoP14) states that a State not a Party to the Convention for a species included in Appendix I (*Psittacus erithacus*) should treat that species as if it were included in Appendix II for all purposes, including obligatory documents and controls, and suspend the issuance of export permits for commercial and non-commercial trade in specimens of *Psittacus erithacus* of wild origin until it is in a position to make scientifically based non-detriment findings;
 - ii) the Committee noted again the moratorium announced by the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the 69th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC69; Geneva, November 2017)

to suspend trade in *Psittacus erithacus* and its announcement that it will not implement its reservation on the listing of the species in Appendix I, and it invited the Democratic Republic of the Congo to adopt a regulatory act to implement the moratorium;

- iii) the Democratic Republic of the Congo should take steps to implement Decision 17.256 (Rev. CoP19) on African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*); in this context, the Committee noted the commitment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to undertake population surveys and develop a management plan for *Psittacus erithacus* and encouraged the country to continue its efforts launched in this regard; and
- iv) the Democratic Republic of the Congo should not establish experimental export quotas as part of scientific surveys of the species in the country.

Regarding illegal trade and enforcement

- b) The Democratic Republic of the Congo should continue its efforts to collect all the relevant data on illegal trade and on the action of the criminal groups operating in the country, to develop a register to collect all these data, and to continue to work in close collaboration with all the authorities concerned, including at the local level in the areas identified as most important, so as to conduct operations and investigations based on the intelligence obtained, focusing particularly on the trafficking of *Psittacus erithacus* (African grey parrots), *Manis* spp. (pangolins), great apes and other species of primates, and elephant ivory;
- c) The Democratic Republic of the Congo should consider developing and launching a strategy to fight corruption linked to wildlife crime at all levels, including anti-corruption policies, and step-up efforts to ensure the full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention*. The strategy should include recommendations aimed at protecting officials in charge of the implementation of CITES from undue pressures, obstructions and threats;
- d) The Democratic Republic of the Congo should continue to report on the implementation of its National Ivory Action Plan, in accordance with the guidelines in Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo should report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC81), in order for the Secretariat to consider it in its report to the Standing Committee on the application of Article XIII in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

33.6 Application of Article XIII in Ecuador and Peru SC78 Doc. 33.6

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.6, summarizing progress made by Ecuador and Peru in implementing the recommendations agreed at the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee and the outcomes of its technical mission conducted in September-October 2024, alongside an analysis of progress reports from both countries. The Standing Committee was invited to consider the updated recommendations, including the continuation of the suspension of commercial trade in specific shark species from Ecuador, until full implementation of Article IV for these species is achieved. An additional recommendation was directed to Peru to ensure that national legislation provides for regulation of introduction from the sea (IFS).

Ecuador drew attention to the progress reported by the Secretariat, particularly regarding non-detriment findings (NDFs), as well as improvements in traceability and other types of controls. Ecuador reported on various activities to improve the management of shark species and strengthening legislation against illegal fishing and the sustainability of export quotas and the management of bycatch. Regarding the monitoring of fishing activities, Ecuador stated that it had the most advanced monitoring systems in the region, noting that it had complete supervision of its industrial fleet and landings at ports, including from its artisanal fleet. Ecuador agreed with the recommendations outlined in the document and expressed hope for increased joint efforts, particularly with respect to collection of data on catches, releases and mortality rates. Accordingly, Ecuador proposed an additional recommendation to invite Parties from the Southeastern Pacific region to share information on these aspects.

Peru emphasized that, despite the title of document SC78 Doc. 33.6, Peru's compliance with its obligations under the Convention was not the issue here. Peru reported that it had strengthened its legislation and introduced strict monitoring systems to ensure a sustainable approach to marine species, particularly sharks. Peru reported it had developed over thirty NDFs for shark species, including those listed in the CITES Appendices. It further recognized the challenges posed by introduction from the sea (IFS), and highlighted the complexities associated with artisanal fisheries and shark fishing beyond its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and aimed to enhance monitoring in this area. Peru stressed that shark fishing in the country is largely artisanal and plays a crucial role in the livelihoods of coastal communities. Peru reaffirmed its awareness of its responsibilities regarding marine biodiversity conservation and its determination to fulfil its obligations under the Convention and commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, noted the significant discrepancies in volumes from trade from Ecuador to Peru reported in the CITES Trade Database and the volumes reported in Table 5 of document SC78 Doc. 33.6 and urged Parties to accurately report trade in CITES-listed shark species. New Zealand further highlighted the retention ban for silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*) by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas effective since 1 January 2022. Given its frequent bycatch in purse seine fisheries, New Zealand stated that forthcoming NDFs and legal acquisition findings (LAFs) for the species should reflect that specimens caught in purse seine fisheries should not be retained or exported.

The Chair of the Animals Committee congratulated Ecuador's efforts and the transparent manner in which it had shared information, and echoed Ecuador's call for regional data sharing.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) acknowledged the progress of Ecuador and Peru and supported the recommendations in the document. Poland additionally requested the Secretariat to share the information provided by Ecuador to the Secretariat during its mission with all Parties.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, requested to defer a decision on the recommendation to continue to suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed sharks and rays from Ecuador, but agreed with the remaining recommendations in the document.

WCS highlighted the scale of ongoing trade and stressed the need for full details on the sustainability of ongoing catches, particularly in mako and thresher sharks.

The Committee noted the progress made by Ecuador and Peru and the Committee agreed that:

Regarding management of trade in sharks and rays specimens

- a) Parties continue to suspend trade in specimens of sharks and rays from Ecuador for *Carcharhinus falciformis*, *Alopias* spp. and *Isurus* spp. until Ecuador fully implements Article IV by establishing sustainable export quotas for these species to the satisfaction of the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Animals Committee and inform the Secretariat of the timeline for implementation, and monitoring methodology, of by-catch limits and other mitigation measures, as appropriate;
- b) Ecuador share the information on the implementation of by-catch limits and other mitigation measures, as appropriate, to the 35th meeting of the Animals Committee;
- c) Ecuador take steps to conduct further work on population assessments in cooperation with Peru and/or other organizations such as the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, the Permanent Commission of the South Pacific and the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation, to gather additional information for non-detriment findings (NDFs) on shark species;
- d) Parties share with Ecuador information related to sizes, catches, landings, releases and mortality of shark specimens from the Southeast Pacific, all data used in the making of non-detriment findings;

Regarding legislation

- e) Ecuador finalize the revision of its national legislation to ensure that it meets the minimum requirements of CITES set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for the implementation of the Convention* and in accordance with the guidance provided by the Secretariat under the National Legislation Project;
- f) Peru, with the support of the Secretariat, as appropriate, ensure that its national legislation allows for the implementation of rules governing introduction from the sea, in accordance with Articles III and IV of the Convention;

Regarding controls, inspections and the fight against fraud

- g) Ecuador and Peru continue to develop and use innovative technologies, and encourage companies to use such technologies, to track and monitor vessels and smaller boats to ensure that the catch location of specimens of CITES-listed species is known, thus allowing for the full implementation of Articles III and IV of the Convention, and to prevent illegally fishing, illegal exploitation or illegally traded catch from entering their supply chains;
- h) Ecuador and Peru continue to strengthen the capacities and mandates of their Management Authorities and of other authorities competent in the fight against illegal trade, in order to strengthen the control of illegal trade in CITES-listed hydrobiological species and the fight against transnational organized crime;
- i) Ecuador and Peru operationalize the binational platform for cooperation and coordination among the competent authorities involved in the fight against crime, in order to strengthen the monitoring of trade in CITES-listed species and to combat transnational organized crime in fishing activities, in accordance with paragraphs 9 a) and b), and Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*; and

Regarding reporting

- j) Ecuador and Peru report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC79), for the Secretariat to report on the application of Article XIII in Ecuador and Peru to the Standing Committee.

33.7 Application of Article XIII in GuineaSC78 Doc. 33.7

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.7 on Guinea's progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Secretariat noted progress on the technical recommendations, but with a need to strive for swifter decision-making at the national level in order to address the recommendations at the Standing Committee.

Guinea was not present at the meeting.

Senegal supported the recommendations in the document and noted challenges in monitoring border activities as a neighbouring country to Guinea and welcomed progress towards addressing the issues outlined in the document.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, requested to defer a decision on the recommendation to continue to suspend commercial trade, but agreed with the remaining recommendations in the document.

The Committee agreed to revise and update its recommendations adopted at SC77 as follows:

Regarding the recommendation to suspend trade

- a) The Committee recommended that Parties continue to suspend all trade in CITES-listed species with Guinea for commercial purposes until the following recommendations have been met to the satisfaction of the Standing Committee:

Regarding the proceeds from the export of the stockpile of Pterocarpus erinaceus

Guinea should:

- b) provide to the Secretariat evidence of the transfer of the 40% of the proceeds obtained from the sale of the *Pterocarpus erinaceus* pre-Convention stockpile or any income from legal proceedings (i.e. an amount equivalent to at least USD 144,716) to a separate subaccount of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, and the establishment of a budget for the use of the funds in support of CITES implementation and conservations of fauna and flora in Guinea;

Regarding national legislation

Guinea should:

- c) as a matter of priority adopt and ensure the application of the revised legislative measures that meet the minimum requirements of CITES set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* and in accordance with the guidance provided under the National Legislation Project; this should include the issuance of a legally binding instrument on the functions and responsibilities of the CITES Management and Scientific Authorities;

Regarding management and issuance of CITES permits and certificates

Guinea should:

- d) validate the protocol for the making of non-detriment findings by the CITES Scientific Authority prior to the issuance of export permits;

Regarding compliance and law enforcement

Guinea should:

- e) under the aegis of the Advocate General of the Conakry Court of Appeal (Focal Point for Wildlife Crime of the Ministry of Justice), and in accordance with national law, continue to conduct criminal and financial investigations, through specialized agencies such as INTERPOL's National Central Bureau, the National Financial Information Processing Unit (*Cellule Nationale de traitement des Informations Financières*), the National Anti-corruption and good governance promotion agency, and the National Wildlife and Forest Crime Brigade; and undertake judicial prosecutions against all individuals and entities involved in alleged offences associated with the illicit trafficking of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, including the members of the National Commission, irrespective of their position;
- f) continue its efforts to investigate and collect information on the transnational organized syndicates operating in the country so that they can be brought to justice and avoid that only small perpetrators are targeted;
- g) continue to investigate and prosecute other cases of illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed species and inform the Secretariat of the results of any legal proceedings by submitting the annual illegal trade report in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report*;
- h) consider developing and implementing a strategy to counter corruption linked to wildlife crime at all levels, including anti-bribery policies, and intensify efforts to ensure full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention*. The strategy

should include recommendations to protect officials responsible for the implementation and enforcement of CITES from undue pressure, obstruction and threats;

- i) validate and implement the formal agreement between the CITES Management Authority and the Customs Service on collaboration, coordination and exchange of information;
- j) validate and implement the developed protocol for the management and disposal of seized and confiscated specimens (live and dead), taking into account the provisions of the Convention and the recommendations of Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*;
- k) continue taking action to address the gaps identified through the implementation of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) Indicator Framework.

The Committee requested that Guinea prepare a comprehensive report on the implementation of these recommendations, including the budget and the use of the funds mentioned in recommendation b) and any progress in the criminal investigations mentioned in recommendations e) to g) and any other pertinent information and evidence needed to confirm implementation by the Secretariat. Guinea shall submit the report to the Secretariat 90 days before the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee so that the Secretariat can in turn submit its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee at that meeting.

33.8 Application of Article XIII in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.....SC78 Doc. 33.8

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.8, which summarizes the progress made by Lao People's Democratic Republic since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Secretariat drew attention to the recommendations which included a recommendation that Parties continue to suspend trade in CITES-listed species from Lao People's Democratic Republic until the Party substantially achieves the recommendations.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic noted that it had strengthened its legal framework and achieved Category 1 status in the CITES National Legislation Project, demonstrating full legislative compliance. The Party also highlighted its efforts to intensify enforcement, resulting in convictions related to the illegal ivory trade and possession of sun bear carcasses, and emphasized its collaborative work within the wider ASEAN region on cross-border enforcement. They reported on its sterilization programme for captive tigers across the country, excluding *Panthera tigris corbetti*, which was noted to be undergoing identification to ensure controlled breeding practices. The Lao People's Democratic Republic also shared improvements in elephant registration and marking to ensure traceability, and its cross-border *in situ* conservation partnership with China. Lao People's Democratic Republic drew attention to the socioeconomic impacts of the trade suspension, particularly on its agarwood plantations and legally registered wildlife farms and invited the Standing Committee to reconsider the recommendation to continue to suspend trade in CITES-listed species and, if appropriate, establish a small working group to allow the Lao People's Democratic Republic to present detailed evidence of its progress and compliance.

Indonesia, Kuwait and Japan (Committee Members for Asia), Morocco (Committee Member for Africa), Cambodia, China, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, the Russian Federation, Thailand, and Viet Nam considered that the removal of the trade suspension of all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes from the Lao People's Democratic Republic was justified as the country had demonstrated significant progress towards the implementation of the recommendations.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), and the European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the Secretariat's recommendations as set out in the document, noting several compliance matters that remained. As a compromise, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed to discuss a potential partial lifting of the trade suspension, such as of certain plant species, which was supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania).

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, agreed with the recommendations in the document, except for the recommendation to continue to suspend trade in

all CITES-listed species from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, instead requesting to defer the decision to a future CITES meeting.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), also on behalf of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), indicated it would continue to work closely with the government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to fully implement the recommendations agreed by the Committee. Born Free Foundation supported the recommendation to maintain the trade suspension and suggested that conservation breeding of pure specimens of tigers belonging to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage be carried out by appropriate *ex situ* breeding sites and not by the existing tiger farms in Lao People's Democratic Republic, and strongly recommended independent expert verification of any documentation relating to the production of and trade in long-tailed macaques before considering lifting trade restrictions.

The Committee established an in-session working group to discuss a lifting or partial lifting of the trade suspension proposed in paragraph 71 a) of document SC78 Doc. 33.8. Membership was agreed as follows: Belgium, Indonesia, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Morocco, Poland, Singapore (Chair), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

Later in the meeting, Singapore, as Chair of the working group, introduced document SC78 Com. 4, containing an amended recommendation a) to exempt flora species for which an export quota has been published on the CITES website from the recommendation to suspend trade, noting that the Lao People's Democratic Republic committed to share with the Secretariat the NDF for CITES-listed plants species prior to the issuance of any export permit.

There were no interventions.

The Committee agreed the recommendation in in-session document SC78 Com. 4 as follows:

- a) Parties shall continue to suspend trade with the Lao People's Democratic Republic in specimens of all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes until the Lao People's Democratic Republic has substantially achieved the following recommendations, except for CITES-listed flora species for which an export quota has been published on the CITES website, noting that Lao PDR commits to share with the Secretariat the NDF for CITES-listed plants species prior to the issuance of any export permit:

Recommendations b) to u) were agreed at the third session of plenary as set out in executive summary SC78 Sum. 3.

The Committee agreed the following recommendations:

- b) The Lao People's Democratic Republic should consider whether the Prime Minister Order No. 5 of 2018 has been superseded by more recent legislation and, if so, consider promulgating a new Prime Minister's Order to mandate the effective implementation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic's obligations as a Party to the Convention.

Regarding CITES Authorities

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- c) with the support of the CITES Secretariat, continue to address the need for strengthening capacity and training of staff of the CITES Management and Scientific Authority on the effective implementation of the Convention, and organize regular training for the staff of the CITES Scientific Authority;
- d) take measures to improve the collaboration between national CITES authorities *inter alia* by developing a standard operating procedure for the two authorities and finalizing the development of the national CITES permit database.

Regarding law enforcement

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- e) continue to investigate and prosecute cases involving organized and transboundary illegal trade activities, such as those identified by international partners; and provide to the Secretariat the results (including arrests) of any investigations conducted by competent national authorities and the results of any legal proceedings against alleged perpetrators, in the annual illegal trade report format;
- f) continue to work with the law enforcement agencies from Cambodia, China, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, including within the context of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime, and other relevant networks, to improve the practical, on-the-ground cooperation between enforcement authorities, including justice, police and customs, on the issues of illegal wildlife trade and tourism;
- g) implement all of the recommendations of the Wildlife and Forest Crime Toolkit of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), report on the full implementation, and request support from ICCWC to conduct a follow-up implementation of the ICCWC indicator framework for wildlife and forest crime to monitor performance over time and to identify areas for improvement; and
- h) continue to report on the implementation of its National Ivory Action Plan, in accordance with the guidelines contained in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

Regarding monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- i) complete the evaluation of the utilization of the “TigerBase” and introduce regular monitoring inspections and samplings to ensure that it is maintained up-to-date to assist with identification of individual specimens;
- j) takes steps to identify, if possible, any pure specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*) and encourage facilities to engage in coordinated conservation breeding of such animals, if identified;
- k) implement and enforce measures to limit the number of tigers to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers by:
 - i) restricting the breeding of tigers in captivity (sterilizing, separating male and female specimens), except for specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*);
 - ii) not authorizing any further import of tiger live specimens, except for specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*) for conservation breeding purposes; and
 - iii) prohibiting the establishment of any new tiger facilities;
- l) implement stringent regulations for tiger husbandry standards to improve care and discourage expansion of captive-breeding facilities;
- m) develop standard operating procedures for inspections and disposal of dead tiger specimens (including destruction of carcasses after verification of the dead individual) and train officials to undertake inspections and monitor the disposal of carcasses;
- n) consider and implement [relevant outcomes of the Big Cat Task Force](#) Meeting with specific reference to section 2: Strengthen regulation of facilities breeding big cats in captivity to

prevent and detect any illegal trade from such facilities and deploy strengthened enforcement measures;

- o) take measures to reduce the demand for tiger parts and derivatives through the implementation of campaigns and strategies taking into consideration the guidance in [Resolution Conf. 17.4 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*.

Regarding trade in live Asian elephants

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- p) take measures to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretariat that specimens to be traded with source code C comply with the definition of captive-bred specimens set out in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*; and
- q) continue to take substantive steps to manage captive Asian elephant populations by strengthening its system for registration, marking and tracing Asian elephants held in captivity in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Regarding captive breeding and trade in Macaca fascicularis

- r) The Lao People's Democratic Republic should not issue export permits for *Macaca fascicularis*, including for captive bred specimens of *Macaca fascicularis*, until it proves the legal acquisition of original breeding stocks for captive-breeding facilities, as well as for additional wild caught specimens added to these breeding stocks, where relevant, to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee.

Regarding trade in Dalbergia spp.

- s) The Lao People's Democratic Republic should continue not to issue export permits for *Dalbergia* spp. until it develops a non-detriment finding indicating that it would be sustainable to resume trade and submits a corresponding export quota.

The Committee requested that the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

- t) prepare a Compliance Action Plan to the satisfaction of the Secretariat within 60 days following the present meeting, detailing how it will address these recommendations, using the template provided by the Secretariat with actions, milestones and timelines; and
- u) report on the implementation of the above recommendations/Compliance Action Plan to the Secretariat 60 days before the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee for the Secretariat to take into account in its report on the application of Article XIII in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Standing Committee.

33.9 Application of Article XIII in Nigeria.....SC78 Doc. 33.9

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.9, which summarizes progress made by Nigeria in implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee. Overall, the Secretariat considered that significant progress had been made with respect to law enforcement and handling of seized stockpiles, but that continued and strengthened efforts were needed.

Nigeria reported on several elements, including (1) the development of scientifically-based non-detriment findings for *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, as well as legal acquisition findings; (2) the final reading of the passage of the Endangered Species Conservation and Protection Bill; (3) the continued implementation of national strategies to counter corruption linked to illegal wildlife trade, including anti-bribery policies; (4) the launch of a Wildlife Enforcement Task Force (WLETF) and the signing of a cooperation agreement with Cameroon to combat transnational organised wildlife crime; (5) the development of an electronic permitting system; and (6) implementation of adequate control measures for seized stockpiles of CITES-listed species, including for pangolins, and appropriate disposal of confiscated specimens. Nigeria reiterated its commitment to addressing the remaining recommendations.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), Benin, Niger, Senegal and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) congratulated Nigeria for the progress made towards the recommendations. Belgium, Kenya, Benin, and Niger supported the recommendations in the document. The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, requested to defer the decision on the recommendation to continue to suspend commercial trade in specimens of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria but agreed with the remaining recommendations in the document.

Senegal suggested further collaboration between Nigeria and Niger, citing difficulties with cross-border trade between the two countries.

WCS reported it worked closely with Nigeria on intelligence-driven law enforcement efforts, among other interventions.

The Standing Committee agreed to revise and update its recommendations adopted at SC77 as follows:

Regarding trade in specimens of Pterocarpus erinaceus

- a) The Standing Committee recommended that Parties continue to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria under Article XIII until the following conditions are met:
 - i) The Party concerned makes a scientifically based non-detriment finding for trade in the species to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Plants Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and based on the outcomes of the Review of Significant Trade process for this species; and
 - ii) The Party provides evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*.

Regarding legislation and law enforcement

- b) Nigeria should ensure the adoption of the Endangered Species Conservation and Protection Bill, 2024 and continue to improve the regulatory framework in relation to forestry management, including forestry legislation at the State level, to close any loopholes created by the distribution of competences between Federal and State levels.
- c) Nigeria should continue implementing its national Strategies aiming to counter corruption linked to illegal wildlife trade at all levels, including anti-bribery policies, and intensify efforts to ensure full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption* and reporting on results achieved through implementation. Measures implemented in the framework of these strategies should protect officials responsible for the implementation and enforcement of CITES from undue pressure, obstruction and threats.
- d) Nigeria should maintain and strengthen inter-agency coordination to control trade in CITES-listed species and to combat transnational organized wildlife crime, through the National Stakeholders Forum on Combating Wildlife Crime in Nigeria and the Wildlife Law Enforcement Task Force, in line with relevant paragraphs of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, and report on results achieved through this coordination.
- e) Nigeria should scale up efforts to map out organized crime groups involved in illegal wildlife trade and operating in the country. Nigeria should continue convening multidisciplinary investigative teams involving all relevant authorities to perform intelligence-driven operations and investigations, and report on the activities conducted and results achieved.
- f) Nigeria should continue to report on the implementation of its NIAP, in accordance with the guidelines contained in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

Regarding issuance of export permits and information systems

- g) Nigeria should scale up efforts towards establishment and functioning of an efficient and secure information system, preferably an electronic system (resources permitting), to facilitate the issuance of permits and certificates, and the verification of all CITES provisions applicable to the specimens to be exported, including with support from the CAP.
- h) Nigeria should facilitate liaison and integration with other permitting/certification systems relating to the harvest of and trade in CITES-listed resources, e.g., timber concession authorizations, phytosanitary/veterinary documentation, or customs declarations.

Handling and disposal of seized stockpiles CITES-listed species

- i) Nigeria should continue to implement adequate control measures to secure storage facilities for seized stocks of CITES-listed species, including for pangolins and ivory, and dispose of confiscated specimens in line with recommendations contained in Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*.

The Secretariat should remain in close contact with Nigeria, monitor the Party's progress in the implementation of the above recommendations of the Standing Committee, and bring any matters of concern to the attention of the Committee.

The Committee requested Nigeria to report on progress made in the implementation of recommendations a) to i) 90 days before SC81, in order for the Secretariat to convey this report and its comments, as well as recommended follow-up measures, if any, to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee.

33.10 Application of Article XIII in Viet NamSC78 Doc. 33.10

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.10, which presents the conclusions of the Secretariat's mission to Viet Nam in January 2025. The Secretariat invited the Standing Committee to commend Viet Nam's efforts and to agree that there is currently no evidence of compliance issues to be addressed under Article XIII. The Standing Committee was invited to consider an additional recommendation related to improvements in specific areas, such as disposal and management of stockpiles of confiscated specimens and enforcement.

While acknowledging there were areas for improvement, Viet Nam requested to exit the Article XIII process and aligned itself with recommendations in the document. Viet Nam proposed to amend the reporting obligation under paragraph 70 on the basis that these were already covered under other reporting requirements, such as for stockpiles, capacity building, NIAP progress reports, and annual illegal trade reports.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, congratulated Viet Nam for its efforts. Belgium, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), the United States, speaking on behalf of the North American region, the United Kingdom and China supported the Secretariat's conclusion that there was no evidence of compliance issues to be addressed under the Article XIII process; Belgium, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States additionally voiced their support for Viet Nam's suggested amendments to the recommendation contained in paragraph 70 to avoid duplication of reporting.

The Committee commended the significant efforts made by Viet Nam and agreed with the conclusion of the Secretariat that there is currently no evidence of compliance issues to be addressed under Article XIII of the Convention concerning Viet Nam.

The Committee recommended that Viet Nam:

Concerning the management of imports

- a) assess its national procedures concerning imports of CITES-listed species to ensure that the Management Authority has adequate time and capacity to conduct appropriate due diligence verifications;
- b) continue to build the capacities of the Scientific Authority and law enforcement authorities, in particular with regard to species identification and forensic analysis, with an emphasis on timber species;

Concerning the disposal of confiscated specimens illegally traded or possessed

- c) assess its national procedures concerning the confiscation of specimens illegally traded or possessed, taking into account paragraph 1 of Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*;
- d) assess its national procedures and the roles of the different institutions involved in the management of stockpiles, taking into account Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19), and take any necessary measure to ensure the proper management and recording of such stockpiles;
- e) conduct an inventory of all existing stockpiles of CITES-listed specimens, and report on such stockpiles in accordance with relevant resolutions, as appropriate;
- f) submit a response to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/096 on *Request for information on pangolins (Manis spp.) and pangolin stocks* by 31 March 2025;

Concerning enforcement

- g) review its annual illegal trade reports and include any relevant data on seizures related to CITES-listed species of flora, particularly timber species;
- h) take additional measures to combat transnational organized wildlife crime by strengthening criminal intelligence, exchange of intelligence, controlled delivery, wildlife crime investigation and prosecution, and financial investigations linked to wildlife crime;
- i) take further action to develop and implement strategies to reduce the demand for ivory, rhino horn, pangolin, and big cats specimens and products;
- j) strengthen international collaborations with international organizations and other CITES Parties to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species, exchange information and combat transnational organized wildlife crime;
- k) further support the capacity of law enforcement agencies in combatting wildlife crime; and
- l) submit its implementation report covering 2021 to 2023, in accordance with Article VIII of the Convention and Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev CoP19) on *National reports*.

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat continue to provide technical support to Viet Nam in implementing these recommendations, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, including in the context of the compliance support provided by the Secretariat and initiatives conducted under ICCWC.

33.11 Malagasy palisanders and rosewoods (*Dalbergia* spp.) and ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.) (Decision 19.73).....SC78 Doc. 33.11

Madagascar introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.11, which reports on progress made in the implementation of Decision 19.71. Madagascar reported on aspects not contained in the document: a special squad from the relevant authorities was put together in August 2024 to fight against trafficking; inter-agency collaborations to fight trafficking of natural resources and share information were bearing

fruit with prosecutions at both national and international level; law enforcement agents are constantly updated with respect to wood identification and monitoring of wood products; surveillance measures in protected areas and at borders have been strengthened; and a national database on infractions linked to CITES-listed species was being developed. Madagascar also reported that a pilot project in two regions had been developed with partners on a national usage plan of seized stockpiles involving an inventory, a wood marking technology, a system of traceability and a real-time database. Madagascar informed the Committee that the intention was that the seized wood would be used domestically and not exported. Finally, Madagascar informed the Committee of a joint mission by CITES, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in March 2025 to evaluate the Antsinanana World Heritage site.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, and the European Union and its Member States, congratulated Madagascar on the progress made. The United States, speaking as a Party, urged Parties and other relevant partners to provide funding and resources, and requested further information on measures by Madagascar to secure stockpiles beyond those held by the government and to prevent illegally harvested timber to enter the export chain, in particular wood being provided to artisans making handicrafts for tourist souvenirs.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 33.11 and the progress made by Madagascar.

Madagascar requested Parties and relevant partners, such as the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to provide technical and financial assistance in support of the implementation of Decision 19.71.

33.12 Totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*) [Decision 18.295 (Rev. CoP19)]

33.12.1 Report of the Secretariat SC78 Doc. 33.12.1

and

33.12.2 Report of the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group..... SC78 Doc. 33.12.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1, which includes findings from the missions conducted by the Secretariat to China, Mexico, and the United States of America. The document also provides a summary of Mexico's progress in implementation of its compliance action plan, including the assessment of the Secretariat. The Secretariat further highlighted that a comprehensive study on vaquita and totoaba was available in Annex 7 to the document.

Mexico, as Chair of the Trilateral Contact Group on Law Enforcement (TECG) to combat the illegal trade in totoaba, introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.12.2 which contained a brief report on key progress, including the formalization of the TECG through its inaugural meeting, held remotely on 7 March 2024. Mexico reported that the meeting initiated information exchange on actions taken to combat totoaba trafficking and identified opportunities for collaboration. Mexico welcomed the successful outcomes of an invitation-only working group held during the 8th Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement Meeting held in Cape Town, South Africa in November 2024, which was attended by China, Mexico, the United States of America and INTERPOL.

Mexico provided an update on its progress in implementing its compliance action plan on totoaba and expressed agreement with the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1. They welcomed the recognition of shared responsibility and the importance of cooperation between China, Mexico, and the United States. Mexico informed the Committee that acoustic detection data indicated that the previously declining trend in vaquita detections had stabilized over the past four years, with 2024 recording the highest detection levels in eight years, alongside recent sightings of juveniles. Mexico also noted a 97.6% reduction in vessels detected in the Zero Tolerance Area, as well as the installation of a large-range surveillance system and updates to the fisheries management plan that would cover 50% of permitted fishers in San Felipe. Mexico underscored its work on sustainable alternative livelihoods, which included the introduction of alternative fishing gear in the upcoming fishing season. The Party called for stronger engagement from transit and destination countries in tackling illegal trade, particularly through the TECG.

Several Committee Members and Parties congratulated the efforts of Mexico and supported and encouraged the continued collaboration of Mexico, China and the United States on the conservation of totoaba. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Canada and the European Union and its Member States expressed support for the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1. The United Kingdom of

Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) highlighted that a number of actions in the compliance action plan had passed the deadline, and strongly urged Mexico to expedite their implementation as a matter of urgency.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, acknowledged Mexico's continued progress. However, it emphasized the critical situation in the Upper Gulf of California, with illegal harvest of totoaba continuing to threaten the vaquita. While the United States preferred that decision-making be deferred to a future meeting to allow its new administration to consider the issue, it recognized the urgency of the situation and strongly supported the Secretariat in continuing to monitor implementation of Mexico's compliance action plan. The United States did not support the Secretariat's assessment of several milestones in the compliance action plan that were deemed achieved, particularly for high-priority targets such as 1.1, 2.3, and 3.5 and proposed that Mexico continue to report on all compliance action plan milestones at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee. Mexico stated there was insufficient time to provide a full report at the next Standing Committee meeting but would be able to report on all milestones by the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee. As a compromise, the United States proposed that Mexico report on the three aforementioned high priority targets by the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Regarding draft decisions 20.AA to 20.HH in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1, the United States opposed decisions being directed solely to the United States and China, noting that totoaba trafficking involved sophisticated and shifting networks across multiple countries, and therefore should be directed to all Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoaba and to all destination countries. Mexico proposed to retain the original direction to China and the United States in the spirit of the tripartite cooperation, but to expand the scope of the recommendations to include all affected Parties, which was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Morocco (Committee Member for Africa), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United States (Committee Member for North America), Switzerland (Depositary Government), and Panama (Previous Host Country).

China provided an update on its progress following the Secretariat's visit in July 2024, reporting that two plans had been implemented: an Action Plan on Combatting Illegal Trade in Totoaba and the Work Plan on Curbing Illegal Demand for Totoaba. China reported on numerous initiatives under these frameworks, including special enforcement operations targeting trafficking in totoaba with strict supervision of physical and online markets; active collaboration with Mexico and the United States to establish intelligence sharing; and continued implementation of demand reduction strategies, including awareness campaigns and education programmes. Finally, China was pleased to report that under increased enforcement pressure, illegal cases of totoaba trade had declined.

Canada, noting that the study on totoaba and vaquita trade in Annex 7 identified Canada as a potentially significant shipping hub for totoaba, confirmed that there were no documented records linking illegal trafficking of totoaba with the country in recent years. The Party committed to remaining vigilant to the threat posed by transnational illegal totoaba trafficking networks.

Sea Shepherd Conservation Society highlighted its partnership with the Mexican government, including collaboration with its navy to monitor illegal activity. The organization noted a historic 90% reduction in illegal fishing in the Zero Tolerance Area in 2023–2024 and announced plans to expand patrols and conduct acoustic and visual surveys in 2025.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) welcomed the report but expressed serious concerns over the need to transition to alternative fishing gear in the vaquita's range. They stressed the urgency of implementing comprehensive, real-time vessel monitoring to prevent further declines. Natural Resources Defense Council expressed similar concerns and urged the Standing Committee to impose a trade suspension.

The Committee:

- a) noted the information provided in document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1, the reports of the Secretariat on its missions to China, Mexico and the United States of America, the study on totoaba and vaquita, as well as the report from Mexico on progress with implementation of its compliance action plan on totoaba and the Secretariat's assessment of progress with compliance action plan implementation available in Annexes 4 to 9 to the document;

- b) requested China, Mexico and the United States of America to take into consideration the recommendations resulting from the Secretariat's missions on totoaba as outlined in Annexes 4, 5 and 6 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1;
- c) welcomed the continued progress made by Mexico with implementation of its compliance action plan and request Mexico to:
 - i) take into consideration the observations of the Secretariat as presented in Annex 9 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1;
 - ii) submit a report to SC79, focusing exclusively on progress with achievement of the milestones of targets in the compliance action plan for which the Secretariat concluded that they have either been progressed but not yet achieved or that activities have not yet progressed to achieve them, in Annex 9 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1 and in addition report on targets 1.1, 2.3 and 3.5;
 - iii) continue to implement activities regarding all milestones of targets in the compliance action plan for which the Secretariat concluded that they are of an ongoing nature or should regularly occur and therefore must continue in Annex 9 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1;
 - iv) submit its report to the Secretariat 90 days in advance of SC79, for it to be made available to the Committee for consideration; and
 - v) submit a report on all the milestones of the targets in its compliance action plan at SC81;
- d) requested the Secretariat to continue monitoring Mexico's implementation of its compliance action plan and share the report to SC79 submitted by Mexico with the Committee together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have;
- e) agreed to review Mexico's progress with the implementation of its compliance action plan at SC79 and consider if any further compliance actions or measures are needed;
- f) agreed draft decisions 20.AA to 20.HH presented in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1 and as amended in plenary for onward submission to CoP20; and
- g) recommended to CoP20 that Decisions 18.292 (Rev. CoP19) to 18.295 (Rev. CoP19) and 19.74 to 19.76 on Totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*) be deleted, as they have been implemented or are replaced by the draft decisions proposed in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON *TOTOABAS* (*TOTOABA MACDONALDI*)

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders

- 20.AA** In their implementation of measures and activities to conserve and protect totoaba and vaquita and address poaching and illegal trade affecting these species, Parties and relevant stakeholders are encouraged to:
- a) take into consideration the information contained in the study on totoaba and vaquita available in Annex 7 to document SC78 Doc. 33.12.1;
 - b) support efforts related to the recovery and monitoring of wild populations of totoaba and vaquita;
 - c) support efforts to eliminate supply of and demand for illegally sourced specimens of totoaba; and
 - d) make every effort to support Mexico in the implementation of Decision 20.DD.

Directed to Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoabas

- 20.BB** Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoabas are encouraged to:
- a) fully implement the measures and activities outlined in the online [Meeting of Range, Transit and Consumer States of Totoaba agreed outcomes document](#), as relevant to them, applying strict

enforcement measures to prevent and combat this illegal trade and prosecute the criminals involved;

- b) draw upon the secure law enforcement communication channels and tools provided by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization to share information on seizures and arrests associated with totoaba specimen trafficking; and
- c) engage in awareness-raising activities on the illegal trade in totoaba, and its severe implications for the conservation of vaquitas (*Phocoena sinus*), including demand reduction campaigns, as well as activities to eliminate supply and demand for illegally sourced specimens of totoaba, taking into consideration the measures and activities outlined in the *Meeting of Range Transit and Consumer States of Totoaba* agreed outcomes document under the heading *Opportunities to eliminate supply and demand for illegally sourced specimens of totoaba*.

Directed to China and other destination countries

20.CC China and other destinations countries are is encouraged to:

- a) strengthen information and intelligence gathering regarding individuals within their country managing and organizing illegal trade involving totoaba specimens, analyze data gathered to map out their criminal networks, and target their activities through intelligence-driven investigations and operations to facilitate their arrest and prosecution; and
- b) report to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee on activities conducted and any associated results achieved.

Directed to Mexico

20.DD Mexico is requested to:

- a) pursue the urgent implementation of all aspects of the *Agreement regulating gears, systems, methods, techniques and schedules for the performance of fishing activities with smaller and larger vessels in Mexican Marine Zones in the Northern Gulf of California and establishing landing sites, as well as the use of monitoring systems for such vessels* ("the Agreement"), or any new or revised version of "the Agreement";
- b) continue implementation of measures to effectively prevent fishers from using gillnets in the Vaquita Refuge Area (VRA) and vessels from entering the Vaquita Zero-Tolerance Area (Zo) and to maintain these areas completely gillnet-free, including by:
 - i) ensuring surveillance on a full-time basis drawing upon all systems at its disposal;
 - ii) implementing a strict zero-tolerance policy concerning unauthorized fishing and fishing gear in these areas and imposing strict penalties where irregularities are detected, including the seizure of both vessels and unauthorized fishing gear combined with administrative or criminal penalties as applicable;
 - iii) deploying authorities with legal powers of seizure and arrest, together with the Navy, to effectively prevent, disrupt and put an end to the illegal fishing activities;
 - iv) maintaining resources to ensure uninterrupted gillnet removal and to take all necessary measures to destroy confiscated nets;
- c) scale up activities in support of selective fishing gear development and use, including by implementing dedicated programmes in this regard, in consultation with stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and acceptance;
- d) maintain strict control over the activities of vessels to which fishing permits with alternative gear were granted to ensure that only the alternative gear is used as authorized by the permits and that strict action is taken when any irregularities are detected;

- e) continue delivering activities through awareness and sensitization programmes in pursuit of behaviour change regarding the use of alternative fishing gear that does not pose a threat to the vaquita and to deter illegal activities;
- f) take measures to address illegal totoaba fishing displaced elsewhere due to strengthened measures deployed at the Zo and VRA;
- g) further strengthen intelligence gathering and analyses of information and data to map out the criminal groups in Mexico involved in illegal fishing and totoaba specimen trafficking, and to address them through intelligence-driven enforcement operations; and
- h) submit a report on the implementation of Decision 20.DD to the Secretariat 90 days in advance of the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee, for it to be made available to the Committee for consideration.

Directed to the United States of America and other Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoabas

20.EE The United States of America and other Parties affected by illegal fishing and trafficking of totoabas are encouraged to:

- a) strengthen information and intelligence gathering regarding individuals within ~~its~~their territory facilitating the transit of illegal totoaba specimen consignments through ~~its~~their territory, their *modus operandi* to receive, store and export such illegal consignments, and to target their activities through intelligence-driven investigations and operations, including by sharing information with authorities in Mexico and China and other destination countries, as appropriate, in support of follow up investigations across the illegal trade chain;
- b) in ~~its~~their implementation of measures and activities to address totoaba specimen trafficking, consider the risk of commercial seafood shipments transiting ~~its~~their territory being used to conceal and smuggle illegal totoaba swim bladder consignments and to apply strict inspection measures to such shipments originating from and destined to Parties known to be affected by totoaba specimen trafficking, as well as review related national practices to ensure that the measures in place are effective and adapted as may be needed to respond to any newly identified trends; and
- c) report to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee on the activities conducted and any associated results achieved.

Directed to China, Mexico, and the United States of America

20.FF China, Mexico, and the United States of America are requested to jointly submit, through the Chair of the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group (TECG), a report to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee on the activities conducted in accordance with the TECG terms of reference, as well as associated results achieved, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.GG The Secretariat shall:

- a) seek information from Parties on their implementation of Decisions 20.AA and 20.BB;
- b) report to the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee on its implementation of Decision 20.GG together with any recommendations it may have.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.HH The Standing Committee shall review the reporting submitted by Parties and the Secretariat in accordance with Decisions 20. CC to 20.GG and make recommendations as appropriate.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report in document SC78 Doc. 33.12.2; and

- b) strongly welcomed the trilateral efforts of Mexico, China, and the United States to combat illegal trade of totoaba, urged the continuation of these efforts, and invited the three Parties to report to the next regular meeting of the Standing Committee on the progress of the TECG.

33.13 National ivory action plan process

33.13.1 Report of the Secretariat SC78 Doc. 33.13.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.13.1, outlining the progress from the 13 Parties participating in the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process. The Secretariat recommended that two countries, Cambodia and Malaysia, exit the NIAP process, while written warnings were suggested for Congo, Qatar and Togo. The Secretariat recommended that all Parties be urged to step up efforts to achieve progress by the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee, given that most NIAPs had been designed for a duration of 2 years and the majority should have been completely implemented a number of years ago.

Regarding the recommendations for Cambodia and Malaysia, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, and Gabon agreed that Cambodia and Malaysia could exit the NIAP process, having met compliance levels. Malaysia appreciated the support it had received to ensure successful implementation of its NIAP. Cambodia also expressed gratitude for the support received, in particular from the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, and committed to completing any remaining activities as soon as possible.

Regarding the recommendations for Congo, Qatar and Togo, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested that a recommendation be added for Congo, Qatar and Togo, to state that, if no demonstrable progress had been achieved by the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee, the Committee would consider a suspension of all commercial trade in CITES-listed species for those countries, in line with the stepwise approach outlined in Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Gabon and Qatar opposed Belgium's suggestion, recalling the NIAP procedure to be followed and the measures in place to improve the implementation of the Convention as contained in Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19), and feeling that a recommendation to address inadequacies in reporting and provide assistance would be more beneficial. The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, also supported the recommendations as contained in document SC78 Doc. 33.13.1. Senegal expressed reservations that Parties would have implemented all of their NIAP goals by the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee. Qatar agreed with the recommendations directed to its country and stated that it would give further details on its NIAP implementation in a report, as requested in the recommendations.

Regarding the recommendations for the remaining eight countries in the NIAP process, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, and Gabon agreed with the recommendations. Having achieved 56% of its NIAP, the Democratic Republic of the Congo confirmed its commitment to achieve 80% of NIAP implementation. Nigeria noted the assessment of the Secretariat concerning its implementation and expressed its commitment to make progress for submission of an update before the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Center for Environmental Forensic Science (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, Animal Welfare Institute, Center for Biological Diversity, Environmental Investigation Agency, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund, Pro Wildlife, Species Survival Network, and Wildlife Conservation Society) considered that the lack of follow-up investigation and paucity of information following seizures was limiting the ability to make progress on transnational prosecutions and curb illegal trade. The use of DNA analyses to determine the origin of seized goods would benefit origin, transit and destination countries alike.

The Committee:

- a) urged all Parties included in the NIAP process to step up efforts as a matter of urgency to achieve their NIAP goals by the next regular meeting of the Standing Committee, in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines* and with Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*; and
- b) agreed to consider application of appropriate measures in accordance with Step 4 paragraph f) of the *Guidelines* on Parties in Categories A and B that remain in these categories after SC78 and fail to achieve their NIAP goals by the next regular meeting of the Standing Committee, unless otherwise well justified.

Category A Parties

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- c) The Committee:
 - i) agreed an overall rating of “partial progress”, in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) welcomed the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo since SC77 and encouraged the Party to build upon this to achieve its NIAP goals.

Nigeria

- d) The Committee:
 - i) agreed an overall rating of “partial progress”, in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) welcomed the progress made by Nigeria since SC77 and encouraged the Party to build upon this to achieve its NIAP goals.

Togo

- e) The Committee:
 - i) noted that the progress report submitted by Togo does not demonstrate sufficient progress made;
 - ii) agreed an overall rating of “limited progress” in line with Step 4, paragraph e) of the *Guidelines*;
 - iii) requested the Secretariat, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process*, to issue on its behalf a written caution requesting Togo to submit a progress report to the Secretariat confirming how satisfactory progress has been made towards achievement of its NIAP goals; and
 - iv) urged Togo to step up its effort with a sense of greater urgency to advance achievement of its NIAP goals and provide sufficient details on the activities delivered to justify the self-assessment progress ratings.

Viet Nam

- f) The Committee:
 - i) agreed an overall rating of “partial progress”, in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) commended Viet Nam for the progress made in achieving the goals of its NIRAP and requested the Party to revise and update its NIRAP and continue its implementation.

Category B Parties

Cambodia

- g) The Committee:
 - i) agreed that Cambodia exit the NIAP process in accordance with Step 5 of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) encouraged Cambodia to complete the implementation of any NIAP actions that have not yet been 'achieved'; and
 - iii) requested the Secretariat, in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*, to continue to monitor illegal trade in ivory as it relates to Cambodia, and to bring any matters of concern that may arise to the attention of the Committee.

Gabon

- h) The Committee:
 - i) agreed an overall rating of "partial progress", in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) welcomed the progress made by Gabon since SC77 and encouraged the Party to build upon this to achieve its NIAP goals.

Malaysia

- i) The Committee:
 - i) agreed that Malaysia exit the NIAP process in accordance with Step 5 of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) encouraged Malaysia to complete the implementation of any NIAP actions that have not yet been 'achieved'; and
 - iii) requested the Secretariat, in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19), to continue to monitor illegal trade in ivory as it relates to Malaysia, and to bring any matters of concern that may arise to the attention of the Committee.

Mozambique

- j) The Committee:
 - i) agreed an overall rating of "partial progress", in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - ii) welcomed the progress made by Mozambique since SC77 and encouraged the Party to build upon this to achieve its NIAP goals.

Category C Parties

Angola

- k) The Committee:
 - i) welcomed the progress made by Angola since SC77 and encouraged the Party to build upon this to achieve its NIAP goals; and
 - ii) encouraged Angola to conduct risk assessments to develop risk profiles for illegal trade in ivory and reach out to the World Customs Organization for support as needed.

Cameroon

- l) The Committee:
 - i) noted the limited progress made by Cameroon in implementing its NIAP and encouraged the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP and provide sufficient details on the activities delivered to justify the self-assessment progress ratings; and
 - ii) agreed an overall rating of “limited progress” for Cameroon, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;

Congo

- m) The Committee:
 - i) noted that the progress report submitted by the Congo does not demonstrate sufficient progress made;
 - ii) agreed an overall rating of “limited progress” in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - iii) requested the Secretariat, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines*, to issue a written caution on its behalf requesting the Congo to submit a progress report to the Secretariat confirming how progress has been made towards achievement of its NIAP goals; and
 - iv) urged the Congo to submit information on seizures of elephant ivory to the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) in advance of the next assessment.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic

- n) The Committee:
 - i) welcomed progress made by the Lao People’s Democratic Republic in achieving its NIAP goals and encouraged the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP; and
 - ii) agreed an overall rating of “partial progress” for the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*.

Qatar

- o) The Committee:
 - i) noted that the progress report submitted by Qatar does not demonstrate sufficient progress made;
 - ii) agreed an overall rating of “partial progress” in line with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines*;
 - iii) requested the Secretariat, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines*, to issue a written caution on its behalf requesting Qatar to submit a progress report to the Secretariat confirming how progress has been made towards achievement of its NIAP goals; and
 - iv) urged Qatar to step up its effort with a sense of greater urgency to advance implementation of its NIAP and provide sufficient detail of the activities delivered to justify the self-assessment progress ratings.

33.13.2 Review of the National Ivory Action Plans Process
(*Decisions 19.68 and 19.70*)..... SC78 Doc. 33.13.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2, which contains the findings of a review of the National Ivory Action Plans process and proposes amendments to the *Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plan Process* contained in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) welcomed the report and the proposed amendments but considered that several findings from the review had yet to be taken into consideration in the *Guidelines* and

consequently suggested that the work on revising the *Guidelines* continue. This was echoed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), and Environmental Investigation Agency UK (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Fondation Brigitte Bardot, Fondation Franz Weber, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Species Survival Network, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wide Fund for Nature). Japan (Committee Member for Asia) pointed to an inconsistency in the amendments proposed in paragraph 25 of document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2 and in Annex 1 to that document.

The Committee:

- a) noted document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2, the *Review of the National Ivory Action Plan Process in CITES* in Annexes 2 and 3 to document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2, and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.68;
- b) agreed to submit to CoP20 the draft amendments to Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2 as amended by Japan so that the text in Annex 1 aligns with the text in paragraph 25 of document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2;
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.68 to 19.70 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion; and
- d) agreed to submit to CoP20 the following draft decision:

Directed to the Standing Committee, with the support of the Secretariat

20.AA The Standing Committee, with the support of the Secretariat, shall consider further the long-term considerations in the *Review of the NIAP process*, contained in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 33.13.2, and submit any recommendations for consideration at CoP21, including if appropriate, further amendments to the *Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plan process*.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ANNEX 3 OF RESOLUTION CONF. 10.10 (REV. COP19) ON
TRADE IN ELEPHANT SPECIMENS

Text proposed to be deleted is in ~~strike through~~. Proposed new text is underlined.

Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plan Process

Step 1: Identification of Parties to participate in the National Ivory Action Plan Process

- a) The foundation for identifying Parties to participate in the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) Process, is the ~~ETIS~~ report of the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) submitted to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP) under this Resolution.

[...]

Step 2: Development of a NIAP

- a) Upon the request by the Standing Committee, the Party concerned will develop an 'adequate' NIAP, ~~which is a NIAP~~ that:
 - 1. Addresses the specific issues (or gaps) identified in Step 1.
 - 2. Is structured along the following five pillars, as required:
 - i) Legislation and regulations;
 - ii) National level enforcement action and inter-agency collaboration;
 - iii) International and regional enforcement collaboration;

- iv) Outreach, public awareness, ~~and~~ education and targeted demand reduction for illegal wildlife products; and
- v) Reporting.

[...]

Step 3: Assessment of the adequacy of a NIAP

[...]

- e) If new or emerging elephant poaching or ivory trafficking trends or related matters so require, the Secretariat shall recommend to the Standing Committee that the Party updates its NIAP to incorporate new critical actions needed to respond to such trends or related matters. If agreed by the Standing Committee, the Party shall prepare and submit an updated NIAP to the Secretariat within 60 days following the meeting of the Standing Committee.
- ef) The Secretariat shall assess the adequacy of any revised and updated NIAP received from a Party, in accordance with Step 3, paragraphs a) - c), above.
- fg) The Secretariat shall make any new, revised or updated NIAP accepted as 'adequate' publicly available on the NIAP webpage.

Step 4: Monitoring of implementation

[...]

- c) The Secretariat will evaluate the reports, based on the self-assessments and in cooperation with experts, if needed, submit the reports to the Standing Committee at each of its regular meetings, make recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate, and also make the reports publicly available on the NIAP webpage as soon as they are received.
- d) The Secretariat will determine where insufficient information was available to conduct an evaluation of progress or actions against set milestones ~~or~~ objectives and indicators to assess both the achievement and impact of the actions taken.
- e) Upon the overall assessment by the Secretariat of a Party's progress report, the Standing Committee should consider the following ratings:
 1. *Achieved* – a minimum of 80% of NIAP actions have been assessed as 'achieved' or 'substantially achieved', and any remaining actions have been self-assessed as 'on track' for achievement. The progress report submitted by the Party provides sufficient detail of the activities delivered to justify the allocated progress ratings.

[...]

Step 5: Completion of a NIAP and exit from NIAP Process

- a) Parties should inform the Secretariat when they have assessed 80% of their NIAP actions as 'achieved' or 'substantially achieved' and all remaining NIAP actions as 'on track'. Subject to acceptance by the Secretariat, such progress ratings are a prerequisite for eligibility to be considered to exit from the process in conjunction with factors as described in paragraphs b) and c).
- b) The Secretariat will evaluate the progress reported by the Party concerned, and consider if sufficient detail is provided on the measures and activities implemented for each action in the NIAP to justify the allocated self-assessment progress ratings. The Secretariat is encouraged to engage relevant experts or conduct a country mission, to assist in this process, and formulate recommendations with the rationale informing the recommendation for consideration by the Standing Committee on whether:
 - i) there is a need for the Party to revise and update the NIAP and continue implementation;
 - ii) any other measures need to be taken; or

iii) the Party has 'achieved' its NIAP and can exit the NIAP Process.

c) In formulating recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee in accordance with Step 5, paragraph b) above, the Secretariat should take into consideration the following elements, when relevant and appropriate, with a view to assess the achievement of the actions and the impact of the actions taken of a NIAP against set milestones and indicators:

i) the provisions of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19);

ii) if the ETIS analysis continues to identify the Party as requiring attention;

iii) any significant measures implemented or policy developments effected by the Party to address, as applicable, elephant poaching and illegal trade in ivory; and

iv) any other information that may be available, for example a marked reduction in, as applicable, elephant poaching and illegal trade in ivory as it affects the Party, or any continued, new or emerging trends that may be of concern.

34. Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

34.1 Overview of the Review of Significant Trade SC78 Doc. 34.1 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced SC78 Doc. 34.1 (Rev. 1), which provides details of the 90 cases currently in the Review of Significant Trade (RST) process, and an update on a number of cases since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee, based on discussions at the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee. The document also contains an update on the RST Tracking and Management database and on the revision of an online module on RST on the CITES Virtual College which includes a specific module on RST.

There were no interventions.

The Committee:

a) noted document SC78 Doc. 34.1 (Rev. 1);

b) encouraged Parties subject to the Review of Significant Trade process to volunteer as case studies to be included in the RST module on the CITES Virtual College; and

c) agreed that Decision 17.110 (Rev. CoP19) can be proposed for deletion at the next meeting of Conference of the Parties, pending the launch of the RST module on the CITES Virtual College.

There were no interventions.

34.2 Implementation of the recommendations of the Animals Committee..... SC78 Doc. 34.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 34.2, which is composed of two sections. Section 1 contains a progress update on the implementation of recommendations for five taxon/country combinations due for reporting at the present meeting or for which the Party had provided an update. Section 2 contains a progress update on the 14 cases selected following the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and retained at the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee. The Secretariat provided oral amendments to *Python regius*/Benin, for which it had now determined that recommendations a) and b) had not been implemented as the quota submitted by the country was the same as for the previous year and therefore not a conservative interim quota; *Python regius*/Ghana, where the quotas should read 2,500 ranches, 1,000 wild-taken, and 200 captive-bred; and *Sphyrna lewini*/Yemen in paragraph 23 subparagraph q), where Yemen should be invited to report to AC34 not SC77.

Regarding *Hippocampus algiricus*/Senegal, Senegal expressed frustration at the continued recommendation to suspend trade, and stated that it would work with the Secretariat to have the suspension lifted.

Regarding *Varanus ornatus*/Togo, *Python regius*/Benin and *Python regius*/Ghana, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the recommendations but stressed that the updated version of the rapid non-detriment finding form should be used, and expressed concerns about the use of source code R. Poland requested that the countries elaborate on whether gravid females and eggs were being collected from the wild, and how the impacts of this collection were taken into account in the non-detriment findings and establishment of quotas. Benin reported that a precautionary interim quota of 10,000 ranched and 100 wild-taken would be sent to the Secretariat. Benin explained that source code R permits were given to breeding facilities only. Ghana explained that ranching was done with eggs collected from the wild and when hatched, about 10% were released back into the wild.

Regarding *Python regius*/Togo, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, congratulated Togo on having undertaken field studies to estimate densities towards making a robust non-detriment finding, but noted concerns relating to the use of source code R and stressed the need for the establishment of an adaptive management with measures to ensure the application of appropriate source codes.

Regarding *Carcharhinus longimanus*/Kenya and *Sphyrna lewini*/Kenya, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) indicated that a ban on the catching of *Carcharhinus longimanus* was in place at the level of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), of which Kenya was a member; that a voluntary quota of 50 live specimens had been set for *Sphyrna lewini* and would be communicated to the Secretariat for publication; and that actions to undertake a non-detriment finding for these species has been initiated.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, referred the Committee to its information document SC78 Inf. 32, requesting that any decision on trade suspensions or imposition of a [non-voluntary] zero export quota be deferred to a future CITES meeting.

a) Concerning *Anguilla anguilla* / Algeria, the Committee:

- i) commended Algeria for the progress made;
- ii) agreed that recommendations i) and j) have been implemented;
- iii) invited Algeria to provide an update on the FAO-General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) project to the 34th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC34); and
- iv) invited Algeria to implement recommendation l) through the preparation of a non-detriment finding for *A. anguilla* taking into consideration the preliminary CITES NDF guidance materials and present this to AC34.

b) Concerning *Anguilla anguilla* / Tunisia, the Committee:

- i) commended Tunisia for the progress made;
- ii) agreed that recommendations g) to k) have been implemented;
- iii) invited Tunisia to provide an update on the FAO-General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) project to the 34th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC34); and
- iv) invited Tunisia to implement recommendation l) through the preparation of a non-detriment finding for *A. anguilla* taking into consideration the preliminary CITES NDF guidance materials and present this to AC34.

c) Concerning *Hippocampus algiricus* / Senegal, the Committee:

- i) agreed that recommendation a) has been implemented;
- ii) invited the Secretariat and the Animals Committee to work with Senegal and relevant experts to advise Senegal on the development of a non-detriment finding for *H. algiricus*; and
- iii) urged Senegal to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.

- d) Concerning *Pandinus imperator* / Togo, the Committee
- i) withdrew the recommendation to suspend trade in *Pandinus imperator* from Togo;
 - ii) removed *Pandinus imperator* / Togo from the Review of Significant Trade, subject to the publication of an annual export quota of 20,000 live specimens, including a size restriction of a maximum total length of 10 cm (or maximum body length, excluding the tail, of 5 cm) for live specimens of source code R to be exported, which should be published with the export quota; and
 - iii) reminded Togo that any increase in the quota above 20,000 live specimens should be communicated to the Chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretariat for their agreement in advance of any trade taking place, with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable offtake that make use of best available scientific information.
- e) Concerning *Varanus oranatus* / Togo, the Committee:
- i) commended Togo for its progress in implementing the recommendations of the Animals and Standing Committees;
 - ii) invited Togo to undertake a comprehensive non-detriment finding assessment to justify their proposed quota; and
 - iii) invited Togo to submit the updated non-detriment finding to the Secretariat by 31 July 2025 for consideration by the Animals Committee ahead of the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.
- f) Concerning *Carcharhinus longimanus* / Kenya, the Committee:
- i) requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for *C. longimanus* until Kenya provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) invited Kenya to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- g) Concerning *Carcharhinus longimanus* / Yemen, the Committee:
- i) requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for *C. longimanus* until Yemen provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) invited Yemen to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to h) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- h) Concerning *Kinixys homeana* / Ghana, the Committee:
- i) agreed that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented; and
 - ii) invited Ghana to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations c) to j) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- i) Concerning *Mobula* spp. / Sri Lanka, the Committee:
- i) requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for *Mobula* spp. until Sri Lanka provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) invited Sri Lanka to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.

- j) Concerning *Python regius* / Benin, the Committee invited Benin to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations a) to j) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- k) Concerning *Python regius* / Ghana, the Committee:
 - i) agreed that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented; and
 - ii) invited Ghana to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations c) to k) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- l) Concerning *Python regius* / Togo, the Committee:
 - i) acknowledged the progress that Togo has made in the implementation of the Animals Committee recommendations;
 - ii) requested Togo to establish, in consultation with the Chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretariat, an interim conservative annual export quota for source codes W and R within 90 days for *Python regius* and communicate the quota to the Secretariat; and
 - iii) invited Togo to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- m) Concerning *Sphyrna lewini* / Kenya, the Committee:
 - i) requested the Secretariat to publish an annual export quota of 50 live specimens for *S. lewini* until Kenya provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) invited Kenya to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- n) Concerning *Sphyrna lewini* / Mexico, the Committee:
 - i) agreed that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented; and
 - ii) invited Mexico to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations c) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- o) Concerning *Sphyrna lewini* / Nicaragua, the Committee:
 - i) agreed that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented; and
 - ii) invited Nicaragua to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations c) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- p) Concerning *Sphyrna lewini* / Sri Lanka, the Committee:
 - i) requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for *S. lewini* until Sri Lanka provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) urged Sri Lanka to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- q) Concerning *Sphyrna lewini* / Yemen, the Committee:
 - i) requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for *S. lewini* until Yemen provides information to justify a higher quota to be agreed with the AC Chair; and
 - ii) invited Yemen to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations b) to g) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.

- r) Concerning *Sphyrna mokarran* / Mexico, the Committee:
 - i) agreed that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented; and
 - ii) invited Mexico to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations c) to f) 90 days before the documentation deadline for AC34.
- s) Concerning *Testudo horsfieldii* / Uzbekistan, the Committee
 - i) removed *Testudo horsfieldii* from Uzbekistan from the Review of Significant Trade; and
 - ii) reminded Uzbekistan that any increase in the quotas for W or R should be communicated to the Chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretariat for their agreement in advance of any trade taking place, with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable offtake that make use of best available scientific information.
- t) The Committee invited the Secretariat to ask Benin, Ghana and Togo in its consultation on the species *Python regius* to provide information on the application of source code R and the collection of gravid females and eggs and how this is considered in a quota when developing a non-detriment finding.

34.3 Implementation of the recommendations of the Plants Committee SC78 Doc. 34.3

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 34.3, which reports on actions taken by Parties to implement recommendations made by the Plants and Standing Committees under the Review of Significant Trade (RST). The document focuses on eight of the 16 taxon/country combinations due for reporting at the present meeting or for which there were updates, the remaining eight cases, concerning *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, being considered under agenda item 33.2. As consultation with the Plants Committee was still ongoing for some cases, the Secretariat orally amended the recommendations to specify that those cases should be retained until an update could be provided at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Regarding *Dalbergia melanoxylon*/Mozambique, Mozambique expressed concern about the Secretariat's recommendation and argued that it had provided the relevant scientific information and met the requirements in a timely fashion with a conservative interim quota of 8,762.5 m³, which it would like published to be able to resume trade. This was supported by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Senegal and the Confédération des Industries Musicales Européennes (CAFIM), which stated that access to legally sourced wood from this species was essential for the manufacture of clarinets and oboes. The Secretariat reiterated that the Plants Committee's consultation was ongoing and that any quotas would be published if accepted. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) supported awaiting the outcomes of the Plants Committee's consultation.

Regarding *Osyris lanceolata*/United Republic of Tanzania, the United Republic of Tanzania informed the Committee of a zero-export quota for the species. The United States (Committee Member for North America) supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 34.2.

Regarding *Dalbergia melanoxylon*/United Republic of Tanzania, the United Republic of Tanzania informed the Committee that it had implemented the short-term recommendations and submitted a report to the Secretariat. The United States (Committee Member for North America) supported awaiting the outcomes of the Plants Committee's consultation.

Regarding *Aquilaria malaccensis*/Indonesia, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, considered that the new non-detriment finding and quota relied on fragmentary and unpublished data, and recommended that any future increases in quota should require a new non-detriment finding with a rigorous basis. The United States (Committee Member for North America) supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 34.2.

Regarding *Guibourtia tessmannii*/Equatorial Guinea, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, while recognizing that features had been described by Indonesia to correctly identify and distinguish wild-sourced and artificially

propagated wood, suggested that reliable distinction along the entire supply chain was still difficult, and advised that further measures were needed to ensure the correct identification of wild-sourced specimens. The United States (Committee Member for North America) supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 34.2, noting that the quota had yet to be published on the CITES website.

Regarding *Dalbergia retusa*/Nicaragua, the United States (Committee Member for North America) supported the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 34.2 and, noting the progress being made by Nicaragua, suggested revising the deadline to a date following completion of the analysis of the status of the population at the national level.

The United States (Committee Member for North America) supported awaiting the outcomes of the Plants Committee's consultation for *Pericopsis elata*/Congo and *Aquilaria malaccensis*/Malaysia.

Viet Nam referred the Standing Committee to discussions under agenda item 33.10, clarifying that its stricter domestic measures had not been published yet because it was still waiting on the revised government decree to be published, and stating that a zero quota was not necessary as the decree prohibits extraction from the wild for primarily commercial purposes.

- a) Concerning Congo/*Pericopsis elata*: the Committee retained the recommendations a) to e) and requested the Secretariat to provide an update on their implementation at SC79;
- b) Concerning Equatorial Guinea/*Guibourtia tessmannii*: the Committee noted that recommendation a) has been implemented, and that recommendations b) to d) remain ongoing;
- c) Concerning Indonesia/*Aquilaria malaccensis*, the Committee noted that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented, and that recommendation c) remains ongoing;
- d) Concerning Malaysia/*Aquilaria malaccensis*: the Committee retained recommendations a) to c) and requested the Secretariat to provide an update on their implementation at SC79;
- e) Concerning Mozambique/*Dalbergia melanoxylon*: the Committee retained recommendations a) to g) and requested the Secretariat to provide an update on their implementation at SC79;
- f) Concerning Nicaragua/*Dalbergia retusa*: the Committee noted that recommendations a) and b) have been implemented, and that recommendations c) and d) remain outstanding;
- g) Concerning United Republic of Tanzania/*Dalbergia melanoxylon*: the Committee retained recommendations a) to d) and requested the Secretariat to provide an update on their implementation at SC79;
- h) Concerning United Republic of Tanzania/*Osyris lanceolata*: the Committee noted that recommendation a) has been implemented and agreed that this species/country combination can be removed from the RST process.

The Committee noted the Secretariat's report as contained in paragraph 17 d) of document SC78 Doc. 34.3 and requested Mozambique to implement adequate control measures and inspection procedures to detect and intercept illegal shipments of specimens of *Dalbergia melanoxylon* and to report on this matter to the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

35. Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity

35.1 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19)..... SC78 Doc. 35.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 35.1, which provides an update on the progress in implementation since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee and reports on actions taken by Parties to implement recommendations made by the Animals Committee and Standing Committee. The document contains details of the 14 ongoing cases and recommendations by the Secretariat, following consultations with the Animals Committee.

The Chair of the Animals Committee indicated that, in accordance with the paragraphs relevant to Stage 4 of the Review in Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity*, an intersessional consultation with the Members of the Animals Committee would be initiated after the present meeting to review the information submitted by the Parties concerned, with a further update on the cases at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee. Consequently, for cases where the Party had provided new information, the Chair proposed to replace any recommendation in document SC78 Doc. 35.1 with a recommendation inviting the Standing Committee to note that the Animals Committee would consider the additional information provided by the respective countries and report back to the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Regarding *Chlamydotis mcqueeni*/Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan indicated that it remained available to provide any clarifications to the Animals Committee during its review.

Regarding *Macaca fascicularis*/Cambodia, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), speaking on behalf of the Asia region, and supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Cambodia, Canada, China and the National Association for Biomedical Research, considered that, as Cambodia had provided information for review by the Animals Committee, it was premature to agree a recommendation to suspend trade before the review was completed. Cambodia argued that the information used to decide on a trade suspension had been provided by a third Party and had not been verified with Cambodia. Cambodia also reiterated its invitation to the Secretariat, already expressed under agenda item 33.1, for an in-country mission, which could assess the conditions of the captive-breeding facilities. Canada and China suggested that the outcomes of the mission be awaited to make a decision on the case. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) also supported deferring any decision to suspend trade to the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, stated that it could support the deferment provided that the information requested in the current recommendation in document SC78 Doc. 35.1 was provided fully and in writing to the Animals Committee.

Regarding *Macaca fascicularis*/Philippines, the Philippines indicated that there was no trade in wild specimens of *M. fascicularis* and that a yearly average of only 152 live animals had been authorized since 2018.

Regarding *Macaca fascicularis*/Viet Nam, Viet Nam explained that a technical mission in January 2025 had allowed for further clarification and information was provided in information document SC78 Inf. 14. Viet Nam requested to be removed from the Review. The Chair clarified that the Animals Committee had yet to review the information provided and would provide its review at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Regarding *Testudo horsfieldii*/Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan drew attention to the information contained in Information document SC78 Inf. 34. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, expressed concern that the use of source code R may not be in line with Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) on *Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II*. Poland, supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), requested clarification on how individuals of each source codes were managed to ensure that specimens could be differentiated. Uzbekistan clarified that it was in the process of reviewing its CITES legislation and would consult with the Animals Committee on source codes. The Chair requested Poland and the United Kingdom to submit their questions to the Secretariat, who would work with Uzbekistan and the Animals Committee to address the concerns and make the information available for the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Regarding *Testudo kleinmanni*/Syrian Arab Republic, the Chair clarified that, as no response had been provided by the country, the recommendation in document SC78 Doc. 35.1 to request information for the 34th meeting of the Animal Committee was unchanged. Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), expressing concern about smuggling and the misidentification of this species as other species in the genus *Testudo*, recommended that all specimens of the genus be suspended from the Syrian Arab Republic until the issue was clarified. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) opposed the suggestion to suspend trade in all specimens of *Testudo* since only *T. kleinmanni* had been selected for the review. Israel withdrew the request, hoping that more information would be available at the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee. The Chair requested the regional representatives to reach out to the Syrian Arab Republic to urge a response.

Regarding the proposed amendment to Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, requested

clarification on the use of the term 'founder stock' rather than 'breeding stock', and suggested that the text be reviewed under the workshop proposed under agenda item 62, if undertaken. The Chair of the Animals Committee, echoed by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), confirmed that this term was already used in the Resolution. The Chair suggested that Poland raise this issue under agenda item 62.

The Committee noted the status of implementation of the cases selected for the two iterations of the review under Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) and the list of 14 current ongoing cases provided in Annexes 1 and 2 to document SC78 Doc. 35.1, respectively.

Concerning *Centrochelys sulcata* from Benin, Mali and Togo, the Committee urged Benin, Mali and Togo to provide a response to the Secretariat by 31 July 2025 so that the matter can be considered at SC79, noting that failure to provide a response may potentially result in a recommendation to suspend trade in *Centrochelys sulcata* at SC79.

Concerning *Agalychnis callidryas* from Nicaragua, *Chlamydotis macqueenii* from Kazakhstan, *Dendrobatus auratus* from Nicaragua, *Macaca fascicularis* from the Philippines, *Macaca fascicularis* from Viet Nam, *Oophaga pumilio* from Nicaragua, *Testudo graeca* from Jordan, *Testudo horsfieldii* from Uzbekistan, and *Testudo kleinmanni* from Egypt, the Committee noted that the Animals Committee will consider the additional information provided by the respective countries through the intersessional consultation process provided for in paragraph 2 o) of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) and report back to SC79.

Concerning *Testudo horsfieldii* from Uzbekistan, the Committee invited Poland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to submit their questions about source codes to the Secretariat for inclusion in its intersessional consultations process in accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19).

Concerning *Macaca fascicularis* from Cambodia, the Committee noted that the Animals Committee will consider the additional information provided by Cambodia and the outcomes of the mission to Cambodia to be undertaken, subject to external funding, through the intersessional consultation process provided for in paragraph 2 o) of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) and report back to SC79.

Concerning *Testudo kleinmanni* from the Syrian Arab Republic, the Committee agreed to:

- i) retain *Testudo kleinmanni* from the Syrian Arab Republic in the review, until it provides clarification on:
 - A. the identification of the species (*Testudo kleinmanni* or *Testudo graeca*, the latter of which is native to the Syrian Arab Republic);
 - B. the founder stock (information relating to legal acquisition and non-detriment findings, if it is confirmed to be *Testudo kleinmanni*);
 - C. supplementation from the wild, if applicable; and
 - D. annual production and retention rates;
- ii) request the Syrian Arab Republic to register its breeding facilities for *T. kleinmanni* if it intends to export this Appendix-I species for commercial purposes;
- iii) encourage the Syrian Arab Republic to provide a response to the Secretariat by 30 January 2026 so that the matter can be considered at AC34;
- iv) encourage the regional representatives for Asia to reach out to the Syrian Arab Republic to respond to the request for information of the Animals Committee.

The Committee agreed to submit the Animals Committee's proposed amendment to paragraph 2 h) of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity* as outlined in paragraph 11 to CoP20 (also shown below for convenience):

The Secretariat shall also commission, if requested by the Animals Committee, a short review of the species concerned, in consultation with relevant countries and specialists, to compile and summarise known information relating to the breeding biology and captive husbandry, as well as on the conservation status and threats to the species in the respective countries of origin of the founder stock to facilitate an assessment of any impacts, if relevant, of removal of founder stock from the wild.

The Committee agreed to submit the draft decision in paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 35.2 to CoP20 (also shown below for convenience):

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to external funding and available Secretariat resources, the Secretariat shall develop, test and maintain a Captive Breeding tracking and management database as an essential tool for the effective implementation and transparency of the process under Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Review of animal specimens reported as produced in captivity*.

35.2 Review of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) (Decision 19.65) SC78 Doc. 35.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 35.2, which presents the conclusions of the Animals Committee on the comparative analysis of the objectives and processes outlined in Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Review of trade in specimens reported as produced in captivity* and Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*. It had been concluded that there was no need to continue to review the Resolutions to streamline and align them at this time.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) supported the recommendations, and agreed with the conclusions that the two processes differed in scope, purpose and methodology and that there was no need to submit recommendations on streamlining the Resolutions to CoP20.

The Committee agreed with the Animals Committee's conclusion that there is no need to continue with the process of reviewing Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19). and Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) to streamline and align these Resolutions.

The Committee noted the proposed amendment to Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) to be submitted by the Animals Committee to CoP 20.

The Committee agreed that Decisions 19.63 to 19.65 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion at CoP20.

36. Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I (Decision 19.67) SC78 Doc. 36

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 36, summarizing progress on discussions regarding the regulation and penalization of possession of illegally traded specimens included in Appendix I. The Standing Committee was invited to review and submit to CoP20 proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* to explicitly reference regulation and penalization of possession of illegally traded specimens and remind Parties of the necessity to regulate this matter under national legislation. The Secretariat noted that beyond technical updates, the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) were based on the Convention text.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, agreed with recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 36. The Democratic Republic of the Congo supported the inclusion of specific guidance for the management of the possession of pre-Convention specimens listed in Appendix I and on those that have been transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II. Georgia highlighted the need for increased capacity-building activities for effective implementation, such as development of wildlife crime investigation methods. Israel aligned with the comments by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia and the United States.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) generally supported the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15), but did not support the inclusion of new paragraph 3 in the Resolution. Poland also opposed recommendations a) and b) of the document on the basis that it did not consider criminalization of possession to be mandatory under the Convention. Poland considered that presence of the term 'or both' in paragraph 1 of Article VIII of the Convention was indicative that Parties had the discretion to penalize either trade or possession. Kuwait, Japan (Committee Members for Asia), the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and China aligned with the views expressed by Poland.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that if paragraph 1 of Article VIII of the Convention was interpreted as an "either/or" situation, under the National Legislation Project (NLP), a Party could regulate only possession and not trade of illegally traded CITES specimens and still reach Category 1 of the NLP.

Noting the lack of consensus, the United States (Committee Member for North America), with support from Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and Senegal, suggested to submit the original report and its recommendations to CoP20.

The Committee agreed to submit the report in document SC78 Doc. 36 and its recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

37. Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19)
on Compliance and enforcement (Decision 19.66) - SC78 Doc. 37

New Zealand, as co-Chair of the Standing Committee's working group on the review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, introduced document SC78 Doc. 37 that aims to determine if there are "gaps" that should be addressed in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19). On the role of professional bodies and standards, the working group concluded that awareness should be raised by Parties in their own national context when reviewing national legislation. On whether to update timeframes, the working group recommended that a six-month timeframe for Parties to respond be retained overall, but that a justification for the lack of response be communicated to the Secretariat after three months and that the Secretariat remind Parties to respond within three months. The working group agreed that any consideration of amendments to the Resolution relating to marine species, stockpile management and One Health could not take place while discussions were ongoing on these topics.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, noted the recommendations and encouraged Parties to look at the role of professional authorities during the revision of their legislation and to raise awareness of CITES regulations in their country to ensure they work in line with the Convention.

Mexico supported the recommendations in the document, with the exception of recommendation d) on further gaps, considering that the subjects referred to are not necessarily matters of compliance and enforcement. Mexico considered that Decision 19.66 could be deleted, which was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) considered that anyone trading in wildlife, whether a professional body or not, should be held to the same standards and did not think different standards for different bodies should be formalized in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) and considered this aspect should remain within the purview of individual countries. The United Kingdom proposed changes to the amendments proposed in the Annex to the document that were supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and Peru.

China did not support the amendments to the Resolution proposed in the Annex to the document because adding a requirement for a justification for the lack of response of a Party after three months was not constructive. China also considered that it was difficult to define in legal terms what constituted a professional body, with a wide variation among Parties, and that it was outside the remit of CITES to define the concept. Peru aligned itself with the statement by China. Similarly, the Russian Federation, while noting that examples of professional bodies were provided in the text, considered that more work was needed to define the scope of such bodies at the international level, to bring clarity to how this applied in national contexts which may be very different.

The Committee:

- a) noted of the progress made in implementation of Decision 19.66 on *Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement*;
- b) agreed to include reference in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) to professional bodies to; raise awareness of the importance of members of professional bodies complying with CITES, encourage Parties to consider the relevance of the issue in their own context when drafting or reviewing national legislation, and to encourage professional bodies to provide CITES training to members;
- c) agreed to amend Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph 23 b), to retain the overall 6 month time frame for Parties involved in compliance measures to respond to a request from the Secretariat, but requiring the justification for a lack of response to be provided at three months, with the Party then being required to provide the response within the next three months. Parties would therefore still have six months to respond, with the emphasis on a justification for delay at three months and providing the information within the six months;
- d) noted that matters raised as potential “further gaps” are not specifically compliance and enforcement matters appropriate for inclusion in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19);
- e) agreed that Decision 19.66 has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion at CoP20;
- f) agreed to submit the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf 11.3 (Rev.CoP19), contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 37 as amended by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the observations and conclusions of the working group for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of Parties; and
- g) noted the comments made by China and the Russian Federation concerning the term professional bodies.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 11.3 (REV. COP19) ON
COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Note: new text is underlined and text proposed for deletion is in ~~strikethrough~~

[...]

AWARE that a wide range of professional bodies are closely associated with the implementation of CITES **and encourage them to promote an understanding of**, ~~and their members possess the knowledge and expertise to better understand~~ the importance of compliance with the Convention amongst their members (for example: commercial traders, brokers, transporters, trade groups, veterinarians; zoological and aquarium facilities; universities and researchers; museum and antique collection organizations; bodies overseeing auction houses, conservation societies and rescue groups/emergency care facilities, taxidermists/hunting organizations and legal or accountancy accreditation bodies) and the importance of their members complying effectively with the Convention; and

[...]

V. Regarding coordination at national level

10. RECOMMENDS that:

- a) Parties establish inter-agency mechanisms for coordination and communication at the national level, bringing together Management Authorities and all governmental agencies responsible for the enforcement of CITES, including customs and the police;
- b) Parties that have not already done so consider nominating officials from relevant national enforcement and prosecuting agencies to participate in the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group;
- c) Parties put in place, or further enhance, national measures and communication channels to ensure that the required level of real-time support can be provided to park rangers, and other wildlife and

enforcement personnel who are confronted by heavily armed groups and exposed to serious risk of attack;

- d) Parties raise awareness amongst military personnel to sensitize them to the negative consequences of poaching and consumption of illegal fauna and flora; ~~and~~
- e) Parties raise awareness among professional bodies in their national jurisdiction of the need for members to comply with CITES; and encourage professional bodies to provide CITES training for their members, and, where appropriate, to **consider** developing codes of conduct relating to trade in and management of CITES-listed species; and
- ef) Parties remind their diplomatic missions, their delegates on mission in foreign countries and their troops, including those serving under the flag of the United Nations, that they are not exempted from the provisions of the Convention;

[...]

13. FURTHER RECOMMENDS that Parties:

[...]

- g) in developing or reviewing national legislation consider the role of professional bodies involved in CITES processes and the appropriate enforcement standards for the members of professional bodies regarding whether certain professional bodies should be held to higher standards than the general public if they are acting in contravention of the Convention;

[...]

IX. Regarding application of Article XIII

23. RECOMMENDS that:

- a) when, in application of Article XIII of the Convention and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19), the Secretariat requests information on a potential compliance matter, Parties reply within one month or, if this is not possible, provide an approximate date by which they consider it will be possible to provide the requested information;
- b) when, within ~~six months~~, three months, the information requested has not been provided, Parties provide the Secretariat with justification for why they have not been able to respond and provide the response within the following three months ~~the information requested has not been provided, Parties provide the Secretariat with justification for why they have not been able to respond;~~

38. Enforcement matters

38.1 Report of the Secretariat

*[Resolutions Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19); Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17);
Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19); Decision 19.83].....* SC78 Doc. 38.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 38.1 which provides an update on various issues, including illicit financial flows from wildlife crimes; the CITES illegal trade database; wildlife crime linked to the internet; and trade in the Tibetan antelope.

Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) supported the recommendations in the document, including the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention* and Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.

Peru highlighted the recent adoption of Resolution 12/4 by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), sponsored by Brazil and Peru, as a crucial step in combating international wildlife crime. Noting the need for a coordinated global effort to tackle illegal wildlife trafficking, Peru encouraged the involvement of CITES with UNTOC Resolution 12/4.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit to CoP20 the proposed:
 - i) amendments to paragraph 4 of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention*, as presented in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 38.1;
 - ii) amendment to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, by adding a new sub-paragraph d) to paragraph 9 under *Regarding enforcement at national level*, as presented in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 38.1; and
 - iii) draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC on *Wildlife crime linked to the Internet*, presented in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 38.1;
- b) noted the information provided on activities conducted in accordance with the Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties as outlined in paragraphs 2 to 8 of document SC78 Doc. 38.1;
- c) welcomed the SADC Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching Strategy 2022 – 2032, launched by SADC Member States; and
- d) recommended to CoP20 that:
 - i) Decision 19.77 be incorporated in Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) and Decision 19.78 be incorporated in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) and can be deleted; and
 - ii) Decisions 19.81 to 19.83 on *Wildlife crime linked to the Internet* be deleted and replaced with the proposed new set of draft decisions.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 17.6 (REV. COP19)
ON PROHIBITING, PREVENTING, DETECTING AND COUNTERING CORRUPTION,
WHICH FACILITATES ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN VIOLATION OF THE CONVENTION

New text is underlined and deleted text is in strikethrough.

4. ENCOURAGES Parties, and especially CITES Management Authorities ~~to~~:

- a) ensure that corruption risk mitigation policies and strategies are in place to address corruption risks associated with wildlife crime;
- b) ~~to~~-work closely with existing national anti-corruption commissions, and like bodies, law enforcement agencies, judicial authorities, as well as with relevant civil society organisations, in the design and implementation of integrity policies, which might also include deterrence initiatives, such as mission statements, codes of conduct and 'whistle-blower' schemes, taking into account the relevant provisions of the UNCAC; and
- c) ensure that collaboration mechanisms are in place between CITES management and anti-corruption authorities to facilitate swift and decisive action where corrupt activities are detected;

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 11.3 (REV. COP19)
ON COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

New text is underlined and deleted text is in strikethrough.

9. RECOMMENDS that Parties:

[...]

- c) empower officials who have the responsibility to investigate crime involving fauna and flora with appropriate training, authority and resources to effectively carry out their responsibilities to address such crimes;
- d) as appropriate, integrate financial crime investigations into the investigation of crimes involving wildlife, and increase the use of financial investigation techniques to identify criminals involved in wildlife crime and their networks and address associated illicit financial flows from these crimes;
- ~~de~~) address the role of corruption in facilitating crime involving fauna and flora, as recognized in Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19), through implementation of effective anti-corruption measures; and
- ~~ef~~) conduct outreach to and support training for regulated industry to ensure understanding of CITES and national requirements in order to enhance compliance and support the legal trade;

DRAFT DECISIONS ON WILDLIFE CRIME LINKED TO THE INTERNET

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) make available to the Standing Committee, once they are published, the two regional studies identifying the CITES-listed species most frequently involved in illegal trade on digital and online platforms, and examining the relevant national laws and best practices implemented by Parties to combat wildlife crime related to the Internet;
- b) subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, conduct further studies in at least two additional regions to identify the CITES-listed species most frequently involved in illegal trade on digital and online platforms. The studies should also examine the relevant national laws and best practices implemented by Parties to combat wildlife crime related to the Internet; and
- c) based on the findings of these studies, prepare recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.

20.BB The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee, and subsequently the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting, on the implementation of Decision 20.AA.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the Secretariat's report called for in Decision 20.AA and make recommendations, as appropriate.

38.2 International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime

[Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19)] SC78 Doc. 38.2 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 38.2 (Rev. 1) on the implementation of Decisions 19.26 and 19.27 on the ICCWC Vision 2030, and highlighted activities carried out at the national, regional and global levels and related achievements by Parties. On behalf of ICCWC, the Secretariat thanked the European Union, Monaco, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America for supporting the ICCWC Vision, as well as appreciation to contributors and partner organizations.

The European Union (EU) and its Member States acknowledged the important achievements made under ICCWC and announced that the EU would continue to provide financial support to ICCWC through its new GUARD Wildlife initiative, committing EUR 27 million to combat organised wildlife crime globally. The EU and its Member States supported the recommendations in the document.

The Committee:

- a) noted the information provided in document SC78 Doc. 38.2 (Rev. 1) on the efforts of Parties to combat wildlife crime and the support provided by the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC);
- b) encouraged Parties to actively engage in ICCWC initiatives and activities and to reach out to the Consortium for support, where needed; and
- c) welcomed the generous contributions from donor Parties towards the ICCWC Vision and its associated Strategic Action Plan, as anticipated by Decision 19.27 and Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, paragraph 20.

38.3 Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species

(Decision 19.91) SC78 Doc. 38.3 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced SC78 Doc. 38.3 (Rev. 1), which provides a summary of the work undertaken by Parties to implement the measures and activities outlined in the *Outcome document of the CITES Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of listed tree species*.

There were no interventions.

The Committee:

- a) noted the information provided by Parties in their responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/079;
- b) agreed to propose the renewal of Decision 19.89 as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 38.3 (Rev. 1) to the Conference of the Parties;
- c) agreed to submit draft decisions 20.AA and 20.BB as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 38.3 (Rev. 1), to the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) agreed Decisions 19.90 and 19.91 can be deleted.

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON
TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED TREE SPECIES**

Directed to Parties

19.89 Parties are encouraged to fully implement the measures and activities outlined in the [*Outcome document of the CITES Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of listed tree species*](#), as relevant to them, to prevent and combat illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, and to report on the implementation of this Decision to the Secretariat.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) organize a workshop on illegal trade in timber species to facilitate the exchange of experiences, promote collaboration, and advance the implementation of the measures and activities outlined in the outcome document of the *CITES Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of listed tree species*;
- b) work with the UNODC and the World Customs Organization to provide training in regions affected by illegal trade in CITES-listed tree species, on physical inspection of timber shipments and to support the undertaking of risk assessments to develop national risk indicators specific to this illegal trade; and
- c) report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decisions 19.89 and 20.AA, together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall consider the report and recommendations of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.AA and make recommendations to the Parties or the Secretariat, as appropriate.

39. Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa (Decision 19.88)

39.1 Report of the intersessional working group..... SC78 Doc. 39.1

Nigeria, as Chair of the working group on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa, introduced document SC78 Doc. 39.1 and proposed that the Secretariat reach out to donors to encourage increased funding for combatting wildlife crime. The intersessional working group also concluded that a questionnaire directed to Parties, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement was not needed.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Benin and Gabon supported the recommendations. Benin proposed an additional decision to evaluate whether the measures proposed were sufficient or whether supplementary financial mechanisms should be considered; this was supported by Gabon and Senegal but opposed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and Environmental Investigation Agency UK (also on behalf of ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Alliance of Canada, Animal Welfare Institute, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Species Survival Network, and World Wide Fund for Nature), feeling that an analysis of the extent to which existing mechanisms were being used would be a fruitful first step at this stage.

The Committee:

- a) noted the conclusions reached by the working group as presented in paragraph 9 a) and b) of document SC78 Doc. 39.1, as well as the limited participation of Parties as members of the working group, in working group discussions;
- b) agreed to submit to CoP20 draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 39.1; and
- c) agreed that Decision 19.88, paragraph b), has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
WILDLIFE CRIME ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Directed to Parties and donor organizations

20.AA Parties and donor organizations are encouraged to:

- a) notify the Secretariat of any funding opportunities that should be included on the CITES website in accordance with Decision 20.BB paragraph a); and
- b) explore the possibility to make available additional funding for activities to support Parties with CITES implementation and efforts to combat wildlife crime.

Directed to the Secretariat:

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) make information available on the CITES website about initiatives, projects and funding opportunities, to bring to the attention of Parties available funding sources they can reach out to for support in their efforts to implement CITES and combat wildlife crime; and

- b) organize a forum, in collaboration with relevant initiatives, partners and donors, focused on how Parties can access funds in support of their efforts to implement CITES and combat wildlife crime.

Directed to Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities

20.CC Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations and other entities are encouraged to support CITES Parties in their efforts to implement the Convention and combat wildlife crime, in particular with the implementation of CITES Decisions relevant to them, national or regional strategies developed and being implemented by Parties and, as appropriate, consider such support in the development of work programmes or initiatives.

39.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 39.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 39.2, reporting on work under the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC), as outlined in Information document SC78 Inf. 1, and on responses by Parties to Notification 2024/045 inviting Parties to submit information on the implementation of the Decisions on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa*.

The Committee:

- a) welcomed the activities undertaken by Parties in West and Central Africa and the support provided to these Parties as outlined in document SC78 Doc. 39.2;
- b) agreed to submit draft decision 20.AA in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 39.2 to the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) recommended to the Conference of the Parties that:
 - i) Decisions 18.90 (Rev. CoP19), 19.84, 19.85, 19.86, 19.87 and 19.88 can be deleted as they have been implemented or are already incorporated in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*; and
 - ii) Decision 18.91 (Rev. CoP19) can be deleted, as it has been incorporated in the draft decisions prepared by the Standing Committee working group on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa*.

DRAFT DECISION ON *WILDLIFE CRIME ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA*

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall work with its ICWC partners to continue providing targeted support to Parties in West and Central Africa, to combat wildlife crime.

40. Illegal trade in cheetahs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) (Decision 19.106)..... SC78 Doc. 40

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 40, which contains information submitted by Parties on their implementation of Decisions on *Illegal trade in cheetahs*. In light of the limited responses, the Secretariat proposed new draft decisions to continue the work, taking into account outcomes of the *2023 CITES Big Cats Task Force meeting*.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, expressed concern about the continued high levels of illegal trade in cheetahs, especially cubs, and invited Parties to step up their efforts to reduced demand. Niger, highlighting the poaching threat to the cheetah and the subspecies in the North-East of the range in particular, similarly urged Parties involved in trade in cheetahs to implement relevant CITES recommendations and Decisions. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Benin, Senegal and the Big Cat Alliance echoed this call.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Benin, Niger, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Zimbabwe and the Big Cat Alliance

supported the recommendations and draft decisions in the document. The United States, speaking as a Party, proposed that a reference to specific sections of the Big Cats Task Force outcome document be added as concrete examples of collaboration. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed that draft decision 20.AA be amended to encourage Parties to make every effort to fully implement the recommendations.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) regretted the lack of response from consumer countries, feeling that it undermined the ability of Parties to make informed progress to curb cheetah smuggling. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested that it would be helpful to understand the reasons behind the limited responses received, and that the illegal trade reports could be used to identify Parties affected and which might need support.

Noting the overlap with agenda item 42, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), urged the Secretariat to align the work under both items, to avoid duplication of effort and reduce the burden on Parties.

Saudi Arabia outlined the measures taken in the country to protect cheetahs, including a ban on the import of live big cats for commercial or personal use; the tightening of controls at ports and on the internet and strict penalties imposed on offenders; and a national strategy to protect cheetahs, including a programme to return cheetahs to the wild in Saudi Arabia.

The Committee:

- a) noted the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/097, and that these responses were limited;
- b) encouraged Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, and donors, to take note of the need for support to Somalia and Yemen and, where possible, to provide assistance based on identified needs of these Parties;
- c) agreed to submit draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 40 as amended by Poland and the United States of America to the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) agreed that Decisions 19.104 to 19.106 can be deleted.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON *ILLEGAL TRADE IN CHEETAHS* (ACINONYX JUBATUS)

Directed to Parties affected by illegal trade in cheetahs

20.AA Parties affected by illegal trade in cheetahs are encouraged to ~~pursue~~ make every effort to fully implement the recommendations outlined in the [CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document](#), particularly to:

- a) if they have not already done so, review their national legislation, taking into consideration the relevant provisions in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev.CoP20) on *Compliance and enforcement* and, where needed, revise such legislation to ensure that it adequately addresses illegal wildlife trade, including illegal trade in cheetahs;
- b) ensure that adequate resources and capacities to enforce legislation addressing illegal trade in cheetahs are in place;
- c) strengthen regional and international collaboration to address illegal trade in cheetahs as recommended in Section 3.1 e) through f) and Section 5.1 a) through i) of the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document;
- d) scale up activities to address illegal online trade in cheetah specimens, including by drawing upon the support available through INTERPOL, the [Wildlife Crime Linked to the Internet: Practical Guidelines for Law Enforcement Practitioners](#), and as appropriate, reviewing their implementation of the provisions under “Regarding wildlife crime linked to the Internet”, in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP20); and
- e) report to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decision 20.AA, together with any recommendations it may have.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.BB and make recommendations to the Parties by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

41. Marine turtles (Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.)
[Decision 18.217 (Rev. CoP19); Resolution Conf. 19.5] SC78 Doc. 41

The United States of America, as Chair of the intersessional working group on marine turtles introduced document SC78 Doc. 41 and proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 19.5 on *Conservation of and trade in marine turtles*, based on the review of study information document CoP18 Inf. 18 on legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported the recommendations in the document. Poland proposed minor textual additions to reflect resource limitations, which were supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe).

The Committee:

- a) agreed to the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 19.5 on *Conservation of and trade in marine turtles*, as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 41 and as amended by Poland, for submission to CoP20 for consideration; and
- b) agreed to recommend to CoP20 that Decision 18.217 (Rev. CoP19) has been implemented and can be deleted.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 19.5 ON
CONSERVATION OF AND TRADE IN MARINE TURTLES

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~.

RECOGNIZING that marine turtles face significant threats, including bycatch in commercial and recreational fisheries; loss and degradation of nesting and foraging habitats; climate change; entanglement in marine debris; vessel strikes; and illegal take and trade for their meat, shells, and eggs;

RECOGNIZING that the conservation and recovery of marine turtles require international cooperation to ensure the survival of these highly migratory species;

RECALLING that all species of marine turtles are included in CITES Appendix I, and as such, international trade for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited for these species;

RECALLING that these species are included in Appendices I and II of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) (except for *Natator depressus*, which is only in Appendix II), which requires CMS Parties to strictly protect these species by prohibiting take and controlling other factors that endanger them, and enhance their conservation status;

RECALLING that the Inter-American Convention (IAC) for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles promotes the protection, conservation, and recovery of populations of six marine turtle species (all except *N. depressus*) in the Western Hemisphere;

RECALLING that the Protocol for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) of the Convention for the

Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (the Cartagena Convention) prohibits the taking of and commercial trade in marine turtles, their eggs, parts or products;

RECALLING the Indian Ocean–South-East Asian (IOSEA) Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a non-binding intergovernmental agreement that aims to protect, conserve, and recover sea turtles and their habitats in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia;

RECALLING also that Resolution Conf. 17.4 (Rev. CoP19) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* urges Parties where there is a significant market for illegally traded wildlife products to develop strategies to reduce the demand for illegal products of wild animals and plants through demand reduction campaigns and to enhance, as appropriate, policy, legislation and law enforcement in this regard, and EMPHASIZING the importance for Parties to develop such plans for illegally taken marine turtles parts, products and derivatives;

CONCERNED that the illegal take and trade of marine ~~turtles~~ turtle parts and derivatives is contributing to their decline and poses a significant threat to their survival;

WELCOMING studies commissioned by CITES, IAC, and IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU to help determine the extent of illegal take and trade in marine turtles and provide recommendations on needed actions;

WELCOMING the Single Species Action Plan for the Hawksbill Turtle in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific Ocean Region, developed under the auspices of CMS and its IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU;

WELCOMING projects aimed at uncovering illegal trade routes from source through to end user, and factors driving marine turtle use, supply, and demand, which can be used to inform policies aimed at marine turtle conservation; and

FURTHER WELCOMING initiatives to help combat the illegal trade in marine turtles by transferring genetic techniques, technologies, and building greater capacity for marine turtle genetic studies;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. RECOMMENDS Parties collaborate ~~and assist in building~~ strengthening their financial and technical capacity ~~in developing countries~~ to implement and enforce CITES and other related international obligations that apply to protect marine turtles, including protection from unsustainable use and illegal trade;
2. INVITES Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities to provide financial or technical assistance for, *inter alia*:
 - a) training and capacity-building of relevant authorities at the national and regional level, including on the implementation and enforcement of national regulations and international measures that apply to marine turtles, identification, monitoring, reporting, and wildlife and fisheries enforcement; and
 - b) building community and political awareness on the conservation status of marine turtles and the importance of compliance with CITES at the national level to promote conservation of these species;
3. URGES Parties to:
 - a) if not yet in place, develop and enact legislation to prevent and address unsustainable harvest of and trade in marine turtles;
 - b) conduct a thorough review of existing domestic legislation that protects marine turtles to ensure its effectiveness and implementation of relevant international obligations and commitments;
 - c) actively seek to strengthen national legislation and international obligations and commitments to protect marine turtles across their full life history;
 - d) regularly conduct a review of national measures that protect marine turtles to ensure that they remain effective and are adapted as needed, to respond to any newly identified trends; and
 - e) actively pursue enforcement of all provisions regulating the take and trade of marine turtles;

24. RECOMMENDS Parties affected by illegal trade in marine turtles; ~~provide capacity-building interventions,~~
- a) take all necessary actions to prevent the illegal trade in marine turtles, including through addressing its drivers and developing and implementing evidence-based strategies, in engagement with indigenous peoples, local communities, and other stakeholders;
 - b) provide capacity-building assistance for national enforcement agencies and the judiciary, including (as appropriate) identification manuals or contact information for experts to identify marine turtle species in trade, raise awareness about the importance and benefits of addressing and preventing the illegal trade in marine turtles, and integrate training on illegal wildlife trade into national enforcement curricula of relevant training academies as appropriate;
 - c) ascertain key illegal trade routes, methods, volumes, and 'hot-spots' of marine turtles, and scale up efforts to address illegal harvest and other illegal activities at key locations in domestic markets associated with illegal trade, ~~and take action to decrease consumer demand for illegal marine turtle parts, products and other derivatives;~~
 - d) take action to decrease consumer demand for illegal marine turtle parts, products, and other derivatives; and
 - e) promote public understanding (including among vendors, tourists, and others) of the legal provisions and implications of engaging in the illegal take, use, and trade of marine turtles;
35. RECOMMENDS Parties ~~improve:~~
- a) enhance monitoring, detection, and law enforcement ~~activities-efforts~~ at all key transaction points (e.g., including markets, online platforms, ports) ~~to help and landing sites to~~ combat the illegal take and trade of marine turtles; and ~~enhance~~
 - b) strengthen cooperation and collaboration in the control of trade in marine turtles amongst between wildlife-law enforcement agencies at national and international levels to address illegal take and trade in marine turtles, including in through the exchange of information and actionable intelligence ~~regarding the illegal take and trade of marine turtles;~~
46. URGES Parties ~~whose national legislation is not sufficient to control~~ put in place mechanisms to collect data on the unsustainable harvest of and illegal trade in marine turtles, ~~to enact legislation in a standardized manner from different governmental agencies to protect and manage these species appropriately facilitate comprehensive and accurate submissions of data on illegal trade in marine turtles by Parties in their annual illegal trade reports to the Secretariat;~~
57. RECOMMENDS Parties collect samples from seized marine turtles for ~~scientific-genetic~~ analysis to determine the species involved and populations of origin, and as appropriate ~~provide these to,~~ collaborate with forensic and research institutions capable of reliably determining the species and geographic origin of the samples in support of research, investigations, and prosecutions;
68. RECOMMENDS Parties develop and follow best practice protocols for safe handling, care and rehabilitation, and release back into the wild of confiscated live marine turtles and marine turtles caught as bycatch;
9. URGES Parties, **as far as possible**, to coordinate efforts at the regional level, including working closely with Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs), Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and other relevant regional ~~bodies-organizations~~, to identify and address ~~illegal trade, use, and other~~ threats, ~~including to marine turtles, such as fisheries bycatch, use, and illegal trade;~~
710. URGES RECOMMENDS Parties, **where relevant**, to address the fisheries related threats that contribute to illegal trade in marine turtles by working with ~~fisheries-fishing~~ communities and ~~fisheries-bodies-RFBs~~ to ensure effective fisheries management measures are in place, ~~and capture in fisheries is not undermining efforts to tackle the illegal trade, including by: implementing best practice-such as:~~
- a) measures to reduce and ~~document sea-catch~~ of marine turtles ~~catches whether~~ (targeted or bycatch; ~~assessing~~) and improve post release survival rates;
 - b) measures requiring documentation of fisheries interactions with marine turtles;

- c) measures to assess assessing catch rates and mortality based on reported interactions and the best scientific data available, continuing improving the;
- d) measures that continue to strengthen observer programme-programmes through the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)/RFB's framework in Organization (RFMO)/RFB frameworks to increase data collection in fisheries and improve our understanding of fisheries where bycatch of related impacts on marine turtles is not adequately addressed; and
- e) measures that are enforceable and effectively addressing-address Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing that is a threat to threatens marine turtles.

811. ENCOURAGES Parties to share information and provide training to fishers on bycatch mitigation strategies, such as turtle exclusion devices, selective fishing gear, and safe handling and release practices, that have proven effective at reducing bycatch or bycatch and associated mortality;

912. ENCOURAGES Parties to undertake, as appropriate, research that can support the development of protection and conservation measures for the protection of marine turtle foraging, nesting and migratory areas;

103. ENCOURAGES Parties, where marine turtles-turtle hatchery establishments exist, to develop science-based operational protocols for marine turtle hatchery establishments to and ensure that they provide conservation value to marine turtle populations;

144. RECOMMENDS that:

- a) any Party seeking to allow international trade in products of sea turtle ranches satisfy all the requirements of the Convention and Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) on Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II;
- b) any Party seeking to transfer a marine turtle population from Appendix I to Appendix II pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) provide information in accordance with the guidelines contained in Annex to the present Resolution; and
- c) any Party whose population of marine turtle is transferred to Appendix II pursuant to the present Resolution and Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) ensure that procedures for regular adequate reporting to the Secretariat exist and are implemented. Failure to satisfy this requirement and to demonstrate conservation benefit to the population or compliance with other requirements of Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) may result in the application of paragraph 5 d) of that Resolution.

125. ENCOURAGES Parties to share holistic regional marine turtle survival probability models and their output and other information to assess the sustainability of current harvest and bycatch levels while taking into account other threats to the populations across their range (number of turtles of different age classes taken from populations), reproductive success (number of turtles recruited per year), natural survival probabilities, and marine turtle biology; and for any Party that intends to engage in sustainable use of marine turtles, develop robust frameworks for the sustainable use of marine turtles that are based on the best scientific advice available taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;

136. DIRECTS the Secretariat to maintain close collaboration with RFBs, CMS, its the CMS Secretariat and the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU, and the IAC on the management and conservation of marine turtles to ensure the compatibility of activities, optimization of resources, promotion of research to address information gaps, and enhancement of synergies;

147. DIRECTS the Secretariat, subject to support available resources, to provide capacity-building assistance to Parties, especially developing countries and small island developing states, upon request, with the CITES-relevant aspects of the development and/or implementation of the Convention for marine turtles, including building financial and technical capacity the development, review, or revision of national legislation to help ensure compliance with CITES obligations for the conservation and regulation of international trade in marine turtles;

18. DIRECTS the Secretariat to, based on analyses of annual illegal trade reports, bring to the attention of the Standing Committee, as appropriate, any significant changes in the illegal trade of marine turtles;

- ~~159~~. DIRECTS the Animals Committee to make recommendations, if necessary, to ensure the conservation of marine turtles;
- ~~16~~20. DIRECTS the Standing Committee to provide guidance on compliance with and enforcement of the marine turtle listings in Appendix I, including but not limited to, use of forensic sampling of seized specimens and exchange of information on the illegal trade in marine turtles;
- ~~17~~21. DIRECTS the Animals Committee and Standing Committees to report progress on the conservation of marine turtles at meetings of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate; and
- ~~18~~22. REPEALS Resolution Conf. 9.20 (Rev.) on *Guidelines for evaluating marine turtle ranching proposals submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)*.

NOTE: No amendments are proposed to the Annex on
*Guidelines for evaluating marine turtle
ranching proposals submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)*

42. CITES Big Cats Task Force (Felidae spp.) (Decision 19.93) SC78 Doc. 42

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 42 and recommended that the development of a resolution on illegal trade in big cats, or the revision of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to extend its applicability to all big cat species, not be undertaken, as the strategies, measures and activities identified and presented in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document provided a solid basis for efforts aimed at combatting illegal trade in specimens of big cat species.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Peru, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania supported the recommendations and draft decisions in the document. India expressed support for the recommendations but suggested that the possibility of a resolution on illegal trade in big cats should continue to be explored to strengthen collaboration. The United Republic of Tanzania, echoed by Senegal, considered that a resolution would not resolve the challenges on the ground, and the focus should be on putting in practice the mechanisms and strategies already identified. TRAFFIC (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free, Center for Biological Diversity, Environmental Investigation Agency, Fauna and Flora International, Four Paws, International Fund for Animal Welfare, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Panthera, Species Survival Network, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature and Zoological Society of London) considered that a single resolution would complicate implementation, as the factors influencing the illegal trade depended on the specific species and their geographical contexts, necessitating tailored solutions.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, considered that, given the substitution of different species in the illegal trade, trends and developments in the illegal trade in big cats should be taken into account in implementation of the actions in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document, and stressed the importance of reporting by Parties on illegal trade to inform implementation. India invited all stakeholders to consider partnerships with the Big Cat Alliance to strengthen global conservation efforts.

The Committee:

- a) agreed not to pursue, at this time, the development of a resolution on illegal trade in big cats, nor to consider revising Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to extend its applicability to all big cat species;
- b) agreed to submit draft decisions 20.AA to 20.CC presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 42 to CoP20 for consideration; and
- c) recommended to CoP20 that Decisions 19.92 and 19.93 on the *CITES Big Cats Task Force* have been implemented and can be deleted.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON ILLEGAL TRADE IN BIG CATS

Directed to Parties

- 20.AA** Parties affected by illegal trade in specimens of big cat species are encouraged to make every effort to fully implement the strategies, measures and activities outlined in the [CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document](#), as relevant to them, and to report on the implementation of this Decision to the Secretariat.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 20.BB** The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decision 20.AA, together with any recommendations it may have.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 20.CC** The Standing Committee shall:
- a) consider the report and recommendations of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.BB and make recommendations to the Parties or the Secretariat as appropriate; and
 - b) report on the implementation of the present Decision to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties together with any recommendations it may have.

43. Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

[Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19); Decision 18.109 (Rev. CoP19)]

43.1 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 43.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 43.1, which summarizes responses to Notification No. 2024/086 inviting Parties to report on the implementation of Decisions relating to Asian big cats (Felidae spp.).

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and India supported the recommendations in the document and encouraged Parties to further strengthen efforts and implement the strategies outlined in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document to tackle illegal trade.

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Environmental Investigation Agency, Four Paws, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Panthera, Pro Wildlife, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoological Society of London) considered that the document did not contain an adequate review of the conservation status or illegal trade in Asian leopards and suggested the renewal of Decision 18.105 and suggested amendment to Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to include an independent review mechanism to monitor implementation of the Convention for Asian big cats.

The Committee:

- a) noted the information provided by Parties in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/086;
- b) recommended to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 18.100, 18.101, 18.103 (Rev. CoP19), 18.105, 18.106, and 19.109, as they are incorporated in Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*, the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document and the draft decisions proposed in document SC78 Doc.42; and
- c) recommended to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 18.107 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.109 (Rev. CoP19), as they have been implemented.

The Secretariat introduced SC78 Doc. 43.2 (Rev. 1), reporting on activities undertaken since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee, including missions to two Parties with facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity that may be of concern, namely China and the United States of America.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, appreciated the recommendations to facilities in the country, and stated that it would work with relevant federal partners to take these into account, where practicable. China also appreciated the observations in the report, finding that the conclusions were fair and demonstrated that China had a robust legal framework in place, with well-regulated captive-breeding which did not contribute to poaching and illegal trade.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) supported the recommendations in the document with amendments to the draft decisions to address the risks of inbreeding by requiring genetic monitoring and to ensure that handling of carcasses, including their destruction, be added to the activities in draft decision 20.AA. The United Kingdom suggested an amendment to draft decision 20.AA to include a request to Parties that are subject to Standing Committee recommendations to report. Those two amendments were supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region.

China opposed the amendment proposed by the United Kingdom and suggested amendments to draft decision 20.AA: to replace 'urged' with 'encouraged', to stipulate that the approach outlined in the decision should be undertaken in accordance with domestic laws, regulations and circumstances, and to delete 'fully' in subparagraph b). These views were supported by Indonesia, Japan and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe but opposed by Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Secretariat suggested a compromise to the amendments proposed by Poland and China.

The Environment Investigation Agency (UK) (also on behalf of several other organizations), suggested that all facilities, not just those breeding large numbers of tigers, be covered by the draft decisions and requested clarification on the purpose of keeping significant stockpiles of skins and bones of deceased tigers. They also suggested that the United States and China be urged to restrict breeding to levels supportive of conserving wild tigers only and to prohibit the establishment of new facilities, in line with other countries.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report provided by Czechia relating to the inspection of the facility that the Secretariat could not visit during its mission;
- b) noted the recommendation by the Animals Committee that the IUCN SSC [Guidelines on the use of ex situ management for species conservation](#) provide guidance to Parties on how to evaluate the conservation aspects of tiger captive-breeding facilities;
- c) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the draft decisions in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 43.2 as read out by the Secretariat in plenary and as amended by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- d) encouraged **China** to consider:
 - i) granting a special exemption for the transport of individual live South China tigers (*Panthera tigris amoyensis*) identified as part of the conservation breeding programme, facilitating their transfer to respective facilities based on proposed pairings;
 - ii) developing standardized procedures for the handling of tiger carcasses, maintaining registers, and reporting to relevant authorities to further strengthen the existing provisions;

- iii) establishing a central database to consolidate information from all facilities keeping tigers in captivity, including standardized data reported to the relevant authorities (provincial and the National Forestry and Grassland Administration) covering births, deaths and secured carcasses/ stockpiles of tiger specimens); and
 - iv) developing standard operating procedures for inspections and audits of facilities keeping tigers in captivity to ensure all relevant aspects are comprehensively inspected, particularly stockpile management and reconciliations of records of deaths and number of carcasses (that could include conversion factors to ensure all bones are kept secure).
- e) encouraged the **United States of America** to consider:
- i) establishing a central database containing information on facilities keeping tigers in captivity;
 - ii) developing standardized registers based on a minimum or standardized set of information, including marking, sex and age classes, births and deaths, and disposal;
 - iii) developing standardized procedures for the handling of carcasses, including their destruction;
 - iv) addressing the concerns raised regarding the interim regulations published to implement the Big Cat Public Safety Act, as outlined in paragraph 50; and
 - v) conducting a follow-up inspection at the facility that could not be visited by the Secretariat.
- f) agreed that Decisions 18.102 (Rev. CoP19), 18.108 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.109 (Rev. CoP19) have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON *TIGERS (PANTHERA TIGRIS) IN CAPTIVITY*

Directed to Parties in whose territories there are facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and facilities housing large numbers of tigers

20.AA All Parties in whose territories there are facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and facilities housing large numbers of tigers are ~~urged~~ encouraged to consider taking the following methodical approach regarding these facilities to improve their conservation and educational value, as well as to put an end to the activities of facilities that do not have conservation or educational value, fail to comply with regulations and pose a risk regarding parts and derivatives from these animals entering illegal trade, in accordance with their domestic legislation:

- a) identify facilities keeping tigers of genetic and conservation value and engage these facilities in coordinated conservation breeding for such animals;
- b) identify facilities keeping tigers in captivity that are suitably located to ensure public access and that meet husbandry and welfare conditions based on national and international guidelines, and implement support programmes where needed (for example providing guidance on development of educational materials, signs and posters), for these facilities to ~~fully~~ transform into facilities with educational value that are raising awareness benefitting conservation of tigers in the wild, including bringing the attention of the public to illegal trade and the need to combat it;
- c) implement and enforce measures to reduce the number of tigers in facilities that are not contributing to conservation of wild tigers or have limited educational value, by restricting breeding of tigers (e.g., by separating male and female tigers, sterilization or other disposal measures, including euthanasia) within these facilities and addressing the risks of inbreeding by requiring genetic monitoring, as well as restricting these facilities from acquiring any new animals;
- d) taking into consideration Decision 14.69 that directs Parties to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers and that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives, prohibit the establishment of new facilities keeping tigers in captivity with narrow exemptions where warranted;

- e) assess the need for rescue centres, sanctuaries, or other disposal measures, including euthanasia, etc. as may be required due to the phase-out of intensive tiger operations;
- f) review management practices and controls to regulate activities of facilities keeping tigers in captivity to ensure that they are adequate to prevent tiger specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities, including licensing of such facilities, accurate record keeping of individual tigers, regular inspections and well-regulated disposal of tigers that die in captivity and handling of carcasses; and
- g) report on the implementation of this approach and, in the case of relevant countries, report on the implementation of the country-specific recommendations made by the Standing Committee at its 77th and 78th meetings, in their response to the Notification to the Parties issued by the Secretariat on Asian big cats (Felidae spp.) to facilitate reporting as required in Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*.

Directed to governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations

20.BB All governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations are encouraged urgently provide funds and other assistance to Parties with facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and those housing large numbers of tigers to support the implementation of Decision 20.AA.

44. Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) (Decisions 19.113 and 19.114)

44.1 Report of the intersessional working group..... SC78 Doc. 44.1

and

44.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 44.2

Brazil, as Chair of the intersessional working group on jaguars, introduced document SC78 Doc. 44.1 and the recommendations developed by range, transit and destination countries, which were informed by the first meeting of jaguar range States held in Brazil in September 2023. Brazil highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts to implement these recommendations and that it would be beneficial to include them in a resolution.

The Secretariat introduced SC78 Doc. 44.2, presenting progress made by the Secretariat in the implementation of CoP19 Decisions on jaguars. This included the first draft of a situational analysis, as well as the first draft of a *Programme of work for a range-wide Jaguar initiative* prepared by the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). The Secretariat invited the Standing Committee to provide guidance on next steps, including on the development of an intergovernmental platform.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) noted that it had facilitated informal meetings with jaguar range States and the CITES and CMS Secretariats. Brazil drew attention to information document SC78 Inf. 48 reflecting a compromise among concerned range States with regard to the next steps. Brazil proposed some further minor editorial changes during the plenary session. Mexico, supported by Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), emphasized that the recommendations in information document SC78 Inf. 48 resulted from intensive work by range States and would strengthen cooperation and conservation efforts. Mexico offered to host the second meeting of jaguar range States, pending the availability of resources through CITES, CMS, and other partners. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the results of the collaboration of jaguar range States and welcomed close cooperation among CITES and CMS. Argentina thanked the regional representative, the CITES and CMS Secretariats, and range States for their efforts. The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) welcomed and stressed the importance of cooperation among CITES and CMS, and supported information document SC78 Inf. 48.

Uzbekistan (Next Host Country) drew attention to the Central Asian Mammals Initiative, which it considered to be a key intergovernmental platform and could provide a useful example for other species and geographies.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) congratulated range States for their commitments to jaguar conservation, and noted financial resources would enable implementation of the activities under the initiative.

Wildlife Conservation Society, also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Animal Alliance of Canada, Born Free, Center for Biological Diversity, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Environmental Investigation Agency, Four Paws, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Panthera, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Zoological Society of London, welcomed a unified jaguar initiative and urged the Standing Committee to request Parties to consider a joint CITES-CMS jaguar initiative as a platform for transboundary cooperation, drawing on the Jaguar 2030 Roadmap.

The Committee:

- a) noted documents SC78 Doc. 44.1 and SC78 Doc. 44.2 and the recommendations of SC77;
- b) requested the Secretariat to issue a notification with the CMS Secretariat as soon as possible to request comments from jaguar Range States and other partners, including CBD and Coordination Committee for the 2030 Jaguar Conservation Roadmap for the Americas, on:
 - i) the draft situational analysis;
 - ii) the draft included in Annex 3 of document SC78. Doc. 44.2; and
 - iii) elements for a possible resolution on jaguar, taking into account the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 44.1 of the intersessional working group on jaguar, which took up the results of the meeting of Range States in Cuiabá, Brazil;
- c) invited the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat to propose a schedule of activities, identifying next steps on jaguars in preparation for CITES CoP20 in Uzbekistan and CMS CoP15 in Brazil and to support the organization of a virtual meeting between the jaguar range countries and other partners in second quarter of 2025 to:
 - i) review the outcomes of recommendation b);
 - ii) identify elements for a joint work programme between CITES and CMS, taking into consideration Annex 3 of document SC78 Doc. 44.2;
 - iii) review the progress of the implementation of Decisions 19.111 and 19.112 and the outcomes of SC77; and
 - iv) define details for preparing a second in-person meeting of the jaguar range countries, subject to availability of external funding.
- d) invited the Secretariats of CITES and CMS, and other partners to seek financial resources to organize the second in-person meeting of the jaguar range States in September or October 2025 to discuss the outcomes of the virtual meeting, together with other developments in the implementation of Decisions 19.111 and 19.112 and the recommendations of SC77.
- e) requested the Secretariat to incorporate the outcomes of the virtual and in-person meetings in an addendum to its report for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20).

45. Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.) (*Decision 19.121*) SC78 Doc. 45

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 45, which summarizes information provided by Parties on measures implemented to address the illegal killing of rhinoceroses and trafficking of rhinoceros horn. The Secretariat highlighted the need for Parties to actively scale up efforts to collect samples from rhinoceros horn seized within their territories for forensic analysis. The Secretariat reported that the meeting of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force was paused due to a lack of co-funding.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, urged Parties to step up efforts to address poaching and trafficking, and to provide written reports in a timely manner.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Namibia, Niger, Senegal and Zimbabwe supported the recommendations in the document. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed an additional recommendation to encourage the relevant Parties to report on any activities conducted to the Secretariat for inclusion in its report to CoP20. This was supported by Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Niger and Senegal. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) recognized the steps taken by end-use countries to reduce demand but considered that work on demand reduction and consumer behaviour change should continue and proposed the renewal of Decision 18.116 on demand reduction. This was supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Niger and Senegal.

Namibia drew attention to information document SC78 Inf. 44 and reported that illegal killing had declined in the second half of 2024 following the revision of antipoaching measures. Namibia committed to reviewing the trends associated with the illegal killing of, and illegal trade in, rhinoceroses.

China provided an oral update on its implementation, including a strict prohibition for the import, export and transportation of rhinoceroses and their products; continued education of Chinese overseas travellers, local Chinese and Chinese-funded enterprises in southern Africa on regulations; and prioritizing law enforcement cooperation with other Parties, INTERPOL, World Customs Organization (WCO) and other organizations to promote joint cross-border law enforcement. China reported that this had resulted in a significant drop in seizures in recent years.

Botswana and Congo reiterated their commitment to implementing CITES measures to protect rhinoceroses. Congo appealed for enhanced activities in Central Africa to ensure that the region had proper monitoring systems, capacity-building and legislation, stressing the need for solidarity and international cooperation. Zimbabwe reported that, as a result of effective implementation of its Rhinoceros Strategic Plan, the rhinoceros population in its country was growing and poaching was decreasing. Zimbabwe encouraged Parties and supporting partners to continue providing implementation support.

The Environmental Investigation Agency (USA) (also on behalf of other organizations) supported the recommendations as amended by Kenya and Poland, expressed concern for the development of a domestic market for worked rhinoceros horn products in South Africa in contradiction with demand reduction aims, and urged the convening of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force.

The Committee:

- a) requested the Parties to which Decisions 19.117, 19.118 and 19.119 are directed to take the observations and conclusions of the Secretariat into consideration in their implementation of these respective Decisions;
- b) encouraged Angola and Viet Nam to strengthen their engagement and to pursue information and intelligence exchange, as well as joint operations, to address rhinoceros specimen trafficking affecting them and report on any activities conducted in this regard to the Secretariat for inclusion in its report to the 20th meeting to the Conference of the Parties;
- c) requested Namibia to continue reviewing trends associated with the illegal killing of rhinoceroses and illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens affecting it, and the measures and activities being implemented to address these crimes, to ensure they are effective and adapted to respond to any newly identified trends;
- d) requested Parties to actively scale up efforts to collect samples from rhinoceros horn seized within their territories for forensic analysis and to fully implement Decision 19.115;
- e) requested the Secretariat to take into consideration the outcomes of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force to be convened in its report to CoP20;

- f) recommended to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 19.121 and 19.122, as they have been implemented; and
- g) agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the renewal of Decision 18.116.

46. Tortoises and freshwater turtles (Testudines spp.) (Decision 19.127)..... SC78 Doc. 46

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 46 and proposed draft decisions, contained in the Annex to the document, to replace the existing Decisions.

Madagascar provided an oral update. Acknowledging that tortoises faced a range of threats from human consumption to habitat degradation to international trafficking and poaching, Madagascar emphasized that one of the main driving forces behind increased illegal harvesting and trafficking was international demand. Madagascar reported that it had set up an intervention brigade which focuses on the fight against wildlife trafficking and gave preliminary reports on seizures and prosecutions, including that a network of traffickers had been dismantled at the beginning of 2025 thanks to effective inter-agency coordination, and another operating in South-East Asia was dismantled in collaboration with the Thai authorities in May 2024. Madagascar stressed that the fight against trafficking required international collaboration and requested aid and cooperation with other nations, particularly in South-East Asia, to protect its species.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), while noting the information provided by Madagascar, urged the Party to rapidly update and action its national implementation strategy. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the Central African Republic noted the oral update by Madagascar and encouraged the Party to submit the information in writing.

Congo expressed its commitment to support efforts being made and to implement all measures that will protect turtle species, including improving institutional and legal frameworks, strengthening national measures against organized crime in collaboration with international partners.

The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the recommendations in the document. Poland proposed a decision directed at Parties affected by the illegal trade in turtles and tortoises from Madagascar. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, while supporting the draft decisions, suggested that the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) could be a more effective alternative to renewing the Decisions, if Madagascar was willing to participate in the CAP and the Secretariat had capacity to support. Wildlife Conservation Society, while supporting the draft decisions, considered that the efforts were not enough to stem the trafficking feeding the pet and hobbyist trade and urged consumer States to make significant efforts to change consumer behaviour.

The Committee:

- a) agreed draft decisions 20.AA to 20.EE presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 46, for onward submission to CoP20;
- b) invited Poland to work with Madagascar on the submission to CoP20 of an additional draft decision directed to Parties affected by illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles from Madagascar;
- c) invited Madagascar to submit its update on the implementation of Decision 19.125 in writing to the Secretariat;
- d) noted the suggestion by the United States of America, on behalf of the North American region, that the activities proposed in the draft decisions be undertaken under the Compliance Assistance Programme; and
- e) recommended to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 19.125, 19.126 and 19.127.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON *TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES (TESTUDINES SPP.)*

Directed to Madagascar

20.AA Madagascar is requested to:

- a) provide an update on its Global Action Plan for the Conservation of Madagascar's endemic tortoises and freshwater turtles, including species-specific strategies, for the critically endangered tortoise and freshwater turtle species (*Astrochelys radiata*, *A. yniphora*, *Pyxis arachnoides* and *P. planicauda*);
- b) report on recent activities undertaken to implement the Global Action Plan and to finalize and implement the species specific strategies, taking into consideration the multifaceted threats of collection for local consumption and international trade compounded by habitat loss; and
- c) submit a report covering the aspects in sub-paragraphs a) and b) of Decision 20.AA to the Secretariat 90 days in advance of the 34th meeting of the Animals Committee, for it to be made available to the Committee.

20.BB Madagascar is requested to:

- a) report on recent activities undertaken to:
 - i) gather information and intelligence on the criminal networks operating within and from the Madagascar and pursue investigations targeting those individuals managing and organizing the illegal activities;
 - ii) facilitate information and intelligence exchange with Parties that seize and confiscate tortoises and freshwater turtles originating from Madagascar, with the aim of initiating investigations to bring criminals involved across the illegal trade chain to justice;
 - iii) strengthen enforcement of existing laws and regulations, as well as any activities that might be undertaken to consider reviewing and amending Madagascar's legislation as needed, taking into consideration paragraphs 6. c), d) and f) of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, and associated recommendations resulting from the implementation of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit in the country; and
 - iv) inform and sensitize the public about endemic tortoise and freshwater turtle species of Madagascar and the importance of their conservation and protection, as well as to sensitize and raise awareness among its national law enforcement agencies regarding illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles and the importance of scaling up law enforcement efforts to address this illegal trade and analyse the outcomes of these activities.
- b) submit a report to the Secretariat 90 days in advance of the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee, for it to be made available to the Committee.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.CC The Secretariat shall review the reports from Madagascar in accordance with Decisions 20.AA and 20.BB and make them available to the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee, respectively, together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.DD The Animals Committee shall review the report from Madagascar and any recommendations the Secretariat may have in accordance with Decision 20.AA, and submit its recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.EE The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider the report from the Animals Committee in accordance with Decision 20.DD and the report from Madagascar and any recommendations of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.CC, and agree recommendations directed to Madagascar, as appropriate; and
- b) report at the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of Decision 20.EE.

47. Legal acquisition findings (Decision 19.131) SC78 Doc. 47

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 47, containing a summary of progress on digital solutions and capacity-building activities related to legal acquisition findings (LAFs), and proposing two draft guidance documents and draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the recommendations contained in the document subject to textual amendments, outlined in information document SC78 Inf. 30. These were supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), Switzerland (Depositary Government) and Canada, as well as the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) with further edits. The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) also proposed that the draft guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental/breeding stock be presented to CoP20. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, suggested that the terminology of 'original founding stock' be used to remove any ambiguity relating to 'parental/breeding stock'. The Russian Federation, noting that the framework proposed in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 47 did not align with one in the *Guide to the application of CITES source codes* regarding the procedure to follow if the Management Authority was not satisfied that specimens had been acquired legally, suggested that further work was needed.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, echoed by the Central African Republic and Gabon, supported the production of guidance with respect to LAFs in a timely manner, to allow Parties and observers to be in a position to prepare for CoP20. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking as a Party, supported the *Guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental breeding stock*, considering that establishing criteria for the evaluation of the chain of custody was essential.

The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) informed the Committee that it had been testing the *Rapid guide for making legal acquisition findings* and could provide feedback to the Secretariat. They proposed that draft guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental breeding stock be reviewed by the workshop to be organized under agenda item 62.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) spoke to its ongoing development of "CITES-LEX", an online catalogue of resources to facilitate access to relevant legislation and information to support the development of legal acquisition findings and encouraged Parties to continue to provide feedback on their Party profiles.

The Committee:

- a) noted the work conducted by the Secretariat in the implementation of Decision 19.130;
- b) encouraged Parties to implement Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) and use the *Rapid guide for making legal acquisition findings* when preparing their LAFs;
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.128 to 19.131 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion;
- d) requested Canada, the European Union, New Zealand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to submit their amendments to Annexes 2 and 3 to

document SC78 Doc. 47 to the Secretariat for consideration by the Standing Committee as an in-session document;

- e) noted that the recommendation in paragraph 22 c) of document SC78 Doc. 47 was still pending and would be considered at the same time as the in-session document.

Later in the meeting, the Secretariat introduced document SC78 Com. 12, containing consolidated amendments to Annexes 1 and 3 to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), expressing concern about the significant changes in document SC78 Com. 12 on the draft guidance on the chain of custody and feeling that these should be further discussed in an inclusive manner, supported further consultation on the draft guidance and its submission to CoP20. Its statement was echoed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), Kuwait and Indonesia (Committee Members for Asia), Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United States (Committee Member for North America) and Senegal. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) stressed that the concept of legal acquisition findings, and the chain of custody, were fundamental to the requirement that trade should not be in contravention with the wildlife laws of the State of origin. New Zealand noted that the issue was of particular concern for Oceania, as smuggling of endemics from the region for the pet trade had resulted in some species now appearing in trade despite never having been legally exported.

The Committee:

- a) agree to submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Annexes 1 and 3 to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) contained in in-session document SC78 Com. 12 and set out below;
- b) requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to gather additional feedback and comments on the draft guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental/breeding stock contained in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 47;
- c) requested the Secretariat to prepare a revised draft guidance taking into account comments made during this meeting, in-session document SC78 Com. 12 and feedback received to the Notification, and submit this to the Conference of the Parties for discussion at its 20th meeting;
- d) requested the Chair of the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Secretariat, to prepare draft decisions to be submitted at CoP20, to allow for further consideration of this draft guidance in the next intersessional period.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 18.7 (REV. COP19) ON
LEGAL ACQUISITION FINDINGS

Annex 1

Guidance for making legal acquisition findings

4. Practical tools

- a) For the purpose of establishing the chain of custody, the Parties may make use of information systems and traceability tools.
- b) In verifying legal acquisition, Parties may wish to consult existing international legal databases such as CITES-LEX, ECOLEX, FAOLEX, and the World Legal Information Institute.
- c) Where Parties consider that more certainty is required to establish that a specimen was legally acquired, Parties may have recourse to request verification by the applicant using forensic tools such as DNA testing, stable isotope analysis, and radiocarbon dating.
- d) Management Authorities may use for their convenience the rapid guide for verifying legal acquisition below.

(...)

Annex 3

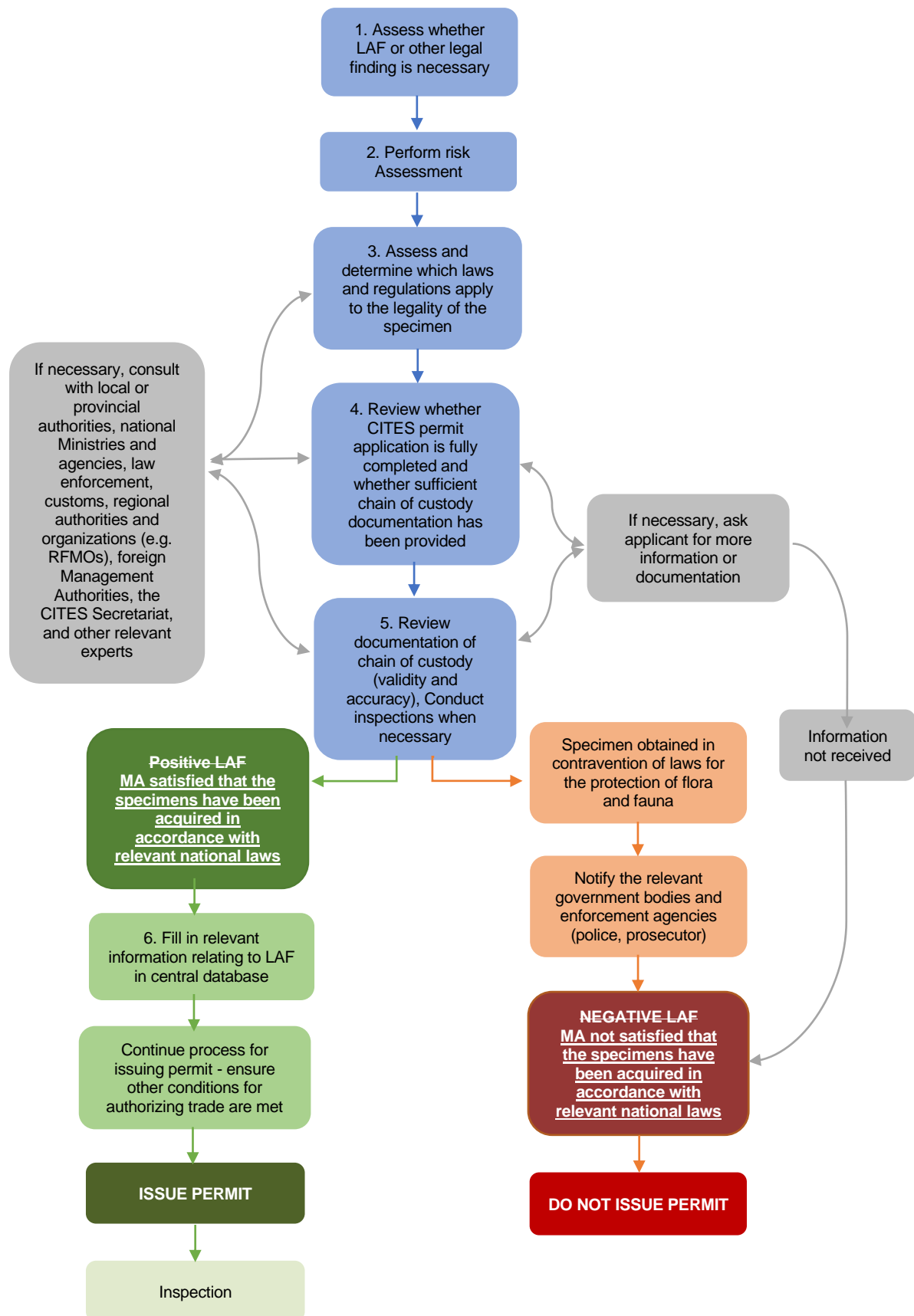
Rapid guide for making legal acquisition findings

3. What laws and regulations apply to the legality of the specimen?

The Management Authority might identify, review and assess relevant national laws, regulations, policies, and management plans for the protection of flora and fauna to determine the relevant rules governing activities along wildlife supply chains. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and building upon FAOLEX, has developed the database “CITES-LEX” to provide a catalogue of instruments and resources aimed at facilitating Parties’ access to legislation and related information relevant to CITES implementation, and materials and resources to support the making of legal acquisition findings.
~~is collaborating with FAO to design a tool to assist the CITES Management Authorities and the regulated community in responding to this question.~~

(see proposed amendments in the next page)

7. Framework for making a Legal Acquisition Finding



48. Non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction (Decision 19.138) SC78 Doc. 48

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 48 and reported on the recommendations made by the Animal Committee, following its discussions of the outcomes of the technical workshop on *Non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction* held in April 2024 in Geneva.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) welcomed the recommendations in the document and proposed that reference to the recommendations contained in paragraph 7 of document SC78 Doc. 48 be added to the draft decisions contained under agenda item 49. This was echoed by Japan (Committee Member for Asia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and Ecuador.

The Russian Federation considered that the definition of ‘international scientific authorities’, as contained in paragraph 7 of document SC78 Doc. 48, should be clarified; while it was understood that this was deliberately flexible, it was unclear in how such bodies would function and interact with the Scientific Authorities of Parties, and thus could lead to confusion in decision-making.

Mozambique agreed with the suggestion in document SC78 Doc. 48 that non-detriment findings be undertaken at stock level.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report of the Animals Committee including the recommendations in paragraph 7 of document SC78 Doc. 48;
- b) agreed that the draft decisions on *Introduction from the sea* in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 49 will allow the Standing Committee to address the relevant implementation matters raised at the technical workshop on *Non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction*; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.135 to 19.139 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

49. Introduction from the sea (Decision 19.141) SC78 Doc. 49

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 49 and presented a detailed analysis of the synergies between CITES and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement).

The European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, agreed with the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 49, but proposed specifying in the draft decisions that the implementation challenges to be considered from paragraph 8 of document SC78 Doc. 48 should only cover those in subparagraphs a) to i), as the element in subparagraph j) was not an implementation challenge. This was supported by Panama and Senegal.

Argentina considered that some views of the analysis of the synergies between CITES and the BBNJ Agreement were beyond the scope and mandate of the Secretariat and cautioned that the BBNJ Agreement had not yet entered into force and that modalities of its implementation were still to be decided. The Russian Federation agreed that a way forward on potential synergies was in the remit of individual Parties. The Russian Federation proposed that the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 49 reflect the fact that not all Parties were signatories to both CITES and the BBNJ Agreement and requested that the reference to the BBNJ Agreement in draft decision 20.BB be deleted. Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in absence of Georgia) echoed concerns regarding the revision of Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16), as several CITES Parties, including Israel, were not a Party to UNCLOS. Israel proposed to prepare a revision to the guidelines on *Introduction from the Sea* rather than a revision to the Resolution, which was supported by Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member

States. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and Switzerland (Depositary Government) highlighted that any decision to revise the Resolution would be made at the CoP. As a compromise, Israel suggested to include text in draft decision 20.BB for the Committee to “consider the need” to prepare a revision of the Resolution.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, stated that because it was under new administration, it was not able to take a position at SC78, noting this was without prejudice to its ability to take a position in future.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) looked forward to continuing to support work on introduction from the sea and highlighted the need for synergies between CITES and the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, as the Annex of the PSMA explicitly refers to CITES.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report provided by the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 19.140 on *Introduction from the sea*;
- b) noted the updated status and detailed analysis of the synergies between CITES and the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement);
- c) noted that the BBNJ Agreement has not yet entered into force and that not all CITES Parties are Parties to the BBNJ Agreement ;
- d) noted the updated set of most frequently asked questions and responses to introduction from the sea available on the CITES website;
- e) agreed to submit the draft decisions contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 49 and as amended by the Chair of the Standing Committee for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and
- e) agreed that Decisions 19.140-141 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) monitor the implementation of Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea* and report as appropriate to the Standing Committee;
- b) issue a Notification to the Parties asking them to submit information on the legislation and regulations in place, and relevant applicable procedures to implement Resolution Conf.14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea*, as well as any important challenges faced, and ways used to overcome them;
- c) support Parties which are active in the trade in CITES marine species, particularly from areas beyond national jurisdiction, and assist them to effectively implement the Convention; and
- d) consider the guidelines on introduction from the sea on the CITES website.

Directed to the Standing Committee, with support from the Secretariat,

20.BB With support from the Secretariat, the Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider the need to prepare a revision of Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea* with the aim to provide clarifications where required, as well as to integrate, as appropriate, additional elements, including:
 - i) reflection of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), in the preambular part, noting that the BBNJ Agreement has not yet entered into force and that not all CITES Parties are Parties to the BBNJ Agreement;
 - ii) responses to the recommendations and implementation challenges noted at the technical workshop on non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction, and contained in document SC78 Doc. 48, paragraph 7 and paragraph 8 a) to i);
 - iii) key elements derived from the document on most frequently asked questions on introduction from the sea; and
- b) submit the proposed amendments to the Resolution for consideration by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

50. Purpose-of-transaction codes (*Decision 19.149*) SC78 Doc. 50

Canada, as Chair of the intersessional working group on purpose-of-transaction codes, introduced document SC78 Doc. 50 and noted that no changes to the resolutions in paragraph 12 of the document were proposed. The primary focus of the working group was on defining purpose code 'P' and clarifying that code 'T' should be used by default if a more appropriate code is not available. While a definition for code 'T' was not considered necessary at this stage, the working group emphasized the need for clear definitions for other codes as a priority.

Regarding the definition of purpose-of-transaction code 'P', the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) proposed the removal of elements already covered by Resolution Conf. 10.20 on *Frequent cross-border movements of personally owned live animals*. These amendments were supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), and Peru. The Russian Federation considered the definition of code 'P' in the document to be a good basis for discussion.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by Georgia (Committee Member for Europe) and Switzerland (Depositary Government), did not agree with the proposed definition for purpose-of-transaction code 'P' on the basis that more discussion was needed to consider the implications of the definition together with Resolution Conf. 13.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Control of trade in personal and household effects*. Belgium therefore proposed the working group could be tasked with continuing to consider the definition of code 'P' as a priority in the next intersessional period.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) and the United States (Committee Member for North America) supported using code 'T' as a default if a more appropriate code is not available.

Concerning the draft decision on further work on purpose-of-transaction codes, Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) requested that purpose-of-transaction codes 'Z' and 'B' be prioritized for discussion in the next intersessional period. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United States (Committee Member for North America), Argentina, and the Russian Federation supported the prioritization of code 'B', and Peru of code 'Z'. Association of Zoos and Aquariums, also on behalf of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and European Association of Zoos and Aquaria and echoed by Belgium, Switzerland and the United States, expressed concern at the possible re-opening of discussions on purpose-of-transaction code 'Z', noting that the code had been defined and had been subject to exhaustive discussions. Brazil, as a compromise, suggested to prioritize discussions on code 'B' only, but to maintain code 'Z' in the list of codes that could be discussed by the working group. New Zealand agreed

with this way forward, as changes to code 'Z' may be needed in the course of discussions on code 'B'. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed additional amendments to the draft decision, which included flexible wording to allow the working group discretion in how it would conduct its work.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the following draft definition for purpose-of-transaction code 'P', noting the comments made in plenary on the definition:

Purpose code 'P' (personal) should be used for the non-commercial movement of personal property of the person trading the specimen, not intended for commercial trade after the import/export/reexport. Not for the initial movement of personal property sold, purchased, or otherwise transferred outside the individual's State of usual residence.

Including for cross-border movement of a musical instrument in accordance with Resolution Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17) on Frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments or for cross border movement of personally owned live animals in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.20 on Frequent cross-border movement of personally owned live animals.

- b) agreed that the default purpose-of-transaction code is 'T', unless another purpose-of-transaction code clearly predominates. Therefore, a definition for purpose-of-transaction code 'T' may not be required once all other purpose-of-transaction codes are defined.
- c) agreed to submit to the Conference of Parties draft decision 20.XX to replace Decision 19.149 that has been implemented.

DRAFT DECISION ON PURPOSE-OF-TRANSACTION CODES

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.XX The Standing Committee shall re-establish an intersessional joint working group to review the use of purpose-of-transaction codes by Parties, with the following terms of reference:

- a) the working group shall be composed of Parties from as many of the six CITES regions as possible, and appropriate intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, when possible, with expertise in the issuance of CITES documents and use of purpose-of-transaction codes for evaluation within the permit issuance process and trade data analysis;
- b) the working group shall, ~~communicating through electronic media~~, focus on clearly defining purpose-of-transaction codes, other than those adopted as of CoP20, to encourage their consistent use, and consider the possible elimination or amendment of current codes or the inclusion of new ones. In particular the working group shall continue the discussions on purpose codes 'Q', 'B', 'G', 'P', and 'S' and 'Z', with purpose code 'B' as a priority;
- c) the working group shall also consider any Resolution related to or affected by purpose-of-transaction codes, to ensure coherent interpretation; and
- d) the working group shall submit a report and any recommendations for amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates*, or to any revision thereof, and recommendations for amendments to any other Resolution identified under paragraph c) above to the 82nd meeting of the Standing Committee, which shall report, with its recommendations, at the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

51. Electronic systems and information technology (Decision 19.151) SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat and Switzerland as Chair of the intersessional working group on electronic systems and information technology introduced document SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1). They drew attention to the guidelines on 2D barcodes on CITES permits and certificates and outlined their advantages and disadvantages. The document also discusses the use of HS-codes, traceability and national data protection laws in relation to e-permitting.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion and supported by the Central African Republic, welcomed the e-CITES initiative and highlighted the significant operational resources required to develop and implement such systems. They requested that partners consider providing support to ensure positive outcomes from these initiatives.

The European Union and its Member States stressed the importance of considering e-permitting based on the multiple users “hub” model, with which the e-CITES BaseSolution is not yet compatible. They reiterated the call from the previous SC meetings to also adapt the Electronic Permit Information Exchange (EPIX) guidelines to take into account the hub-based solutions.

The United Arab Emirates recognized the importance of advancing e-permitting to strengthen CITES enforcement and its benefits in reducing fraud.

Nigeria supported the recommendations in the document.

The Committee:

- a) noted of the progress made in the implementation of Decisions 19.151 and 19.152;
- b) agreed that Decisions 19.150 to 19.152 have been implemented, and can be proposed for deletion to the Conference of the Parties, noting that Decision 19.151, paragraph g), which has been integrated into the new draft decisions contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1);
- c) agreed to submit the draft decisions contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1) with the correction to the cross-references on reporting in draft decisions 20.BB, paragraph g) should refer to paragraphs a) to f) and 20.CC, paragraph h) should refer to paragraphs a) to g) and to the Conference of the Parties;
- d) agreed on the *Guidelines on the use of two-dimensional (2D) barcodes on CITES permits/certificates* contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1); and
- e) noted the comments made in plenary about the need to mobilize resources for e-permitting.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) use the *eCITES Implementation Framework*, the latest edition of the CITES electronic permitting toolkit, Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) of CITES permits and certificates, and the *Guidance on CITES electronic signatures*, and the *Guidelines on the use of two-dimensional (2D) barcodes on CITES permits/certificates* in planning and implementing electronic CITES systems;
- b) consider the implementation of electronic CITES systems in a manner designed to meet CITES requirements, including those provided in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates* to increase transparency and efficiency of the permit issuance and control process, to prevent use of fraudulent permits, and to provide quality data for reporting and improved sustainability assessment;
- c) work with the customs, National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and other relevant agencies to ensure that trade in CITES-listed specimens is in compliance with CITES requirements and, where appropriate, in line with, or integrated into, other relevant national cross-border trade systems and procedures;
- d) share experience, challenges and know-how with other Parties on the development and implementation of electronic CITES permit management systems and use of the electronic equivalent of paper-based permits and certificates, and provide inputs to the Secretariat for continuous improvement of eCITES reference materials;

- e) take note of the *eCITES BaseSolution* as an automated permit management system option that is now available to Parties for implementation;
- f) call upon donor countries and agencies to provide financial support towards the implementation of electronic CITES permit management systems in developing countries;
- g) submit to the Secretariat information on the use of HS codes for risk-based control procedures;
- h) maintain reliable back-up systems for ensuring continuity of electronic permits systems;
- i) plan the electronic permitting system in a holistic manner considering the interoperability and integration between the CITES systems and other national, regional or global solutions, as appropriate; in particular explore opportunities for integrating National Single Windows systems in their respective countries;
- j) follow a phased approach for implementation of the e-permitting systems;
- k) consider designating specific ports of entry and exit for streamlining trade controls of CITES species;
- l) recognizing the importance of the requirement for endorsement of permits and certificates at export, consider implementing pilot projects on possible alternatives to the physical endorsement of CITES permits/certificates based on the *Guidelines on the use of 2D barcodes on CITES permits/certificates*; and
- m) notify the Secretariat when QR codes are used in electronic permits and certificates, the security features implemented and the standards being used in them.

Directed to the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Secretariat

20.BB The Standing Committee shall, in consultation with the Secretariat, undertake the following tasks:

- a) work with relevant partners and Parties on the further development of standards and solutions for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permit and certificate data and the improvement of the validation of CITES permit data by CITES Management Authorities and customs officials;
- b) recognizing the importance of the requirement for endorsement of permits and certificates at export, monitor Parties' pilot projects on possible alternatives to the physical endorsement of CITES permits/certificates based on the *Guidelines on the use of 2D barcodes on CITES permits/certificates*;
- c) monitor and advise on Parties' work related to the development of traceability systems for specimens of CITES-listed species to facilitate their harmonization with CITES permits and certificates;
- d) continue to monitor the use of HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures in different Parties;
- e) support building capacity of Management Authorities, especially those with the greatest needs, in line with the guidance developed, to electronically collect, secure, maintain, and transmit data, using e-permitting systems compatible with the technical specifications of the Secretariat and other Management Authorities;
- f) consider ways in which electronic CITES permitting systems can simplify procedures for the non-commercial movement of musical instruments; and
- g) submit reports on activities undertaken under paragraphs a) to f) of the present Decision and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.CC Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) finalize the study on the information used by different Parties in a risk-based approach for CITES trade controls;
- b) collect information from Parties on any issues encountered with regard to the application of national data protection laws that affect implementation of Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permits and certificates;
- c) support the work of the Standing Committee under Decision 20.BB through the organization of workshops, consultations, preparation of studies and guidance materials on relevant topics as identified by the Standing Committee;
- d) provide capacity-building and advisory services including feasibility studies to support Parties interested in implementing electronic solutions for the management and control of CITES permits and certificates and support Parties in establishing electronic permit systems and information exchanges;
- e) work with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and other relevant partners, to continue the exchange of information and the development and implementation of joint projects that would facilitate Parties' access to advance the implementation of the electronic permitting systems that comply with CITES requirements and where appropriate are aligned with international trade standards and norms;
- f) continue to exchange information with relevant partners and participate in relevant fora for contributing to the use of HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures.
- g) in accordance with the *Guidelines on the use of 2D barcodes on CITES permits/certificates*, continue to work with Parties and relevant partners to advance the use of 2D bar codes, in particular with the view of ensuring security aspects to prevent fraudulent use of electronic permits and certificates and developing standards for their use; and
- h) report to the Standing Committee on the activities undertaken under paragraph a) to g) of the present Decision.

52. Risk assessment and analysis for border control of CITES-listed species

(Decision 19.155)..... SC78 Doc. 52

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 52 and provided an update on the development of a study and accompanying guidance on risk assessment and inspection for CITES trade controls. To advance the completion of the guidance, the Secretariat planned to hold an online consultation meeting on 17 March 2025, with the final guidance to be presented for endorsement at the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee.

There were no interventions.

The Committee:

- a) noted document SC78 Doc. 52;
- b) encouraged Parties to participate in the online consultation for the finalization of the guidance on risk assessment and inspections for CITES trade controls; and
- c) agreed to propose to the Conference of Parties the renewal of Decisions 19.153 to 19.155.

Directed to Parties

19.153 *Where this has not yet been done, Parties are encouraged to undertake risk assessments to develop risk profiles specific to CITES-listed specimens frequently exported and imported by the Party, and to reach out to the World Customs Organization for support in this regard, where needed.*

Directed to the Secretariat

19.154 *The Secretariat shall, subject to available resources, work with the World Customs Organization and other partners to develop guidance, including a specific guidance for a risk-based analysis related to the process of analysis and inspection under CITES permit issuing systems, and elements for a national policy on physical inspections and present its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.155 *The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat and endorse any guidance, as appropriate.*

53. Stocks and stockpiles [Decision 17.170 (Rev. CoP19)] SC78 Doc. 53

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 53 that proposes a definition of stockpiles and to not use the term “stock” in the context of accumulated dead specimens.

The Standing Committee and observer Parties expressed differing views regarding the definition of stockpiles. Benin presented several amendments in information document SC78 Inf. 46, which were supported by Kenya (Committee Member for Africa). These edits proposed to exclude museums from the definition; specify that the exemption for specimens from scientific institutions and individuals should be for non-commercial purposes and as personal or household effects, respectively; and to clarify that disposal of Appendix I specimens should be non-commercial. These edits were supported by Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Niger and Nigeria, as well as the Center for Biological Diversity, also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free Foundation, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Environmental Investigation Agency, Fondation Franz Weber, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, Pro Wildlife, and Species Survival Network. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) did not support the edits proposed by Benin.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) proposed further amendments that were consistent with Benin’s suggestions to specify that specimens held by scientific institutions or individuals should be for non-commercial purposes or as personal or household effects. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and the United States (Committee Member for North America) expressed reservations regarding excluding museums from the definition. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, noted that many museums would consider themselves scientific institutions and would therefore still fall under the exemption within the definition.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed that seized and confiscated specimens still under an enforcement procedure should be explicitly excluded in the definition, which was supported the United States (Committee Member for North America) and the Russian Federation.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), supported by Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), suggested to replace ‘accumulated’ with ‘stored’ in the proposed definition, as stockpiles can represent a one-off seizure or acquisition rather than a consolidation of specimens over time.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), speaking on behalf of the region, requested that the Spanish “existencias” be used instead of “reservas” when referring to stockpiles. Brazil also requested that the proposed definition for stockpiles be specific to legally stored specimens. This was not supported by Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union

and its Member States, and Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia). Japan (Committee Member for Asia), with support from Botswana and China, preferred to delete the term “privately held stockpile” in the proposed definition, raising concerns that any reference to stockpiles in a Resolution would automatically also refer to privately held stockpiles. The Russian Federation noted that the definition of stockpiles should specify the purposes for which stockpiles are held and verification of their origin.

IWMC-World Conservation Trust noted that the definition of stockpiles did not need to refer to “parts and derivatives” as these are included in the definition of specimens in the Convention.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) agreed with the recommendation to use the term “stockpiles” instead of “stocks” for accumulated or stored specimens throughout CITES Resolutions.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported using existing guidance on managing stockpiles. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, considered that this guidance was less relevant to the distinct challenges presented by commercially held stockpiles of non-perishable products, particularly marine clamshells, dried sea cucumbers, and dried seahorses and invited Parties to consider if a new decision to development guidance on stockpiles of marine species could be beneficial.

The Russian Federation requested that paragraph 12 b) of document SC78 Doc. 53 be updated to reflect information submitted by the Russian Federation in information document SC77 Inf. 16 on management of saiga antelope stockpiles.

The Committee:

- a) noted the work conducted in past intersessional periods as summarized in paragraphs 3 to 11 of document SC78 Doc. 53;
- b) noted the review of existing provisions on stocks/stockpiles in Resolutions and Decisions and the information on their implementation contained in paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 53 and the comment made by the Russian Federation indicating that they had reported on their saiga stockpiles;
- c) noted the comment made by Brazil about the use of ‘existencias’ as the proper translation for stockpiles in Spanish;
- d) agreed to submit the following definition of stockpiles for consideration by CoP20 for possible inclusion in the CITES Glossary, along with the comments made by Parties on the definition during SC78:

'Stockpiles' refer to any quantity of legally stored dead specimens, including parts and derivatives, of CITES-listed species held by public or private entities. Specimens included in permanent collections held by scientific institutions for non-commercial purposes or by individuals as personal or household effects, as well as seized or confiscated specimens still under an enforcement procedure, are excluded from the definition. In general, provisions related to stockpiles in CITES Resolutions and Decisions are intended to ensure that these are secured, managed and disposed of in such a way that the specimens would not enter or re-enter illegal trade and for specimens of species listed in Appendix I not to be used commercially.

- e) agreed to not use the term stock in the context of accumulated dead specimens as defined and therefore agreed to submit the amendments to the five Resolutions as set out in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 53 for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- f) encouraged Parties to use the Practical Guidance and Ensuring Effective Stockpile Management: A Guidance Document as needed for the management of stockpiles of rhino horn, elephant ivory, pangolin scales and saiga horn, as well as stockpiles of other species where the guidance can be applied and provide feedback to the Secretariat on the use of the guidance; and
- g) agreed that Decision 17.170 (Rev. CoP19) has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

RESOLUTIONS TO BE AMENDED TO REFER TO “STOCKPILES” INSTEAD OF “STOCKS” (new text is <u>underlined</u> ; deleted text is in strike through)

**Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP19) on
Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses**

Preambular paragraph

CONCERNED that threats to rhinoceros populations and demand for rhinoceros horns and other parts and derivatives still exist, and that the cost of ensuring adequate security for rhinoceroses and rhinoceros horn ~~stocks~~ stockpiles is increasing and cannot easily be met by many range States;

Operative paragraphs 2, 7 and 9:

2. URGES

- a) all Parties that have ~~stocks~~ stockpiles of rhinoceros horn to identify, mark, register and secure such ~~stocks~~ stockpiles, and declare these to the Secretariat each year before 28 February, in a format to be defined by the Secretariat;
- b) the Secretariat and other appropriate bodies, where possible, to assist those Parties with inadequate legislation, enforcement, or control of ~~stocks~~ stockpiles, by providing them technical advice and relevant information;

7. DIRECTS the Secretariat, prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and pending external funding, to commission the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC to submit a report to the Secretariat on:

[...]

- c) ~~stocks~~ stockpiles of specimens of rhinoceros and ~~stock~~ stockpile management,

9. DIRECTS the Secretariat to:

- a) make an aggregated summary of the rhinoceros horn ~~stock~~ stockpile declarations of Parties available to the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC for analysis and inclusion in their reporting to the Secretariat pursuant to the Resolution;

**Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP 19) on
Trade in elephant specimens**

Preambular paragraph

RECOGNIZING also that the theft of ivory, including from inadequately secured government ~~stocks~~ stockpiles, further adds to illegal trade and wildlife crime;

Paragraph 7:

7. FURTHER URGES those Parties in whose jurisdiction there is an ivory carving industry, a legal domestic trade in ivory, an unregulated market for or illegal trade in ivory, or where ivory stockpiles exist, and Parties designated as ivory importing countries, to ensure that they have put in place comprehensive internal legislative, regulatory, enforcement and other measures to:

[...]

- c) introduce recording and inspection procedures to enable the Management Authority and other appropriate government agencies to monitor the movement of ivory within the State, particularly by means of:
 - i) compulsory trade controls over raw ivory; and
 - ii) comprehensive and demonstrably effective ~~stock~~ stockpile inventory, reporting, and enforcement systems for worked ivory;

[...]

- e) maintain an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and, where possible, of significant privately held stockpiles of ivory within their territory, and inform the Secretariat of the level of this ~~stock~~ stockpile each year before 28 February, inter alia to be made available to the programme Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) and the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) for their analyses, indicating the number of pieces and their weight per type of ivory (raw or worked); for relevant pieces, and if marked, their markings in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution; the source of the ivory; and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year;

**Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17) on
*Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope***

Paragraph 1

1. RECOMMENDS that

- d) all Parties and non-Parties in whose territory ~~stocks~~ stockpiles of Tibetan antelope parts and raw materials exist, adopt a registration system and national measures to prevent such ~~stocks~~ stockpiles from re-entering into trade;

**Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on
*Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species***

Paragraph 1

1. URGES

[...]

- i) those Parties and non-Parties on whose territories there exist ~~stocks~~ stockpiles of parts and derivatives of tiger and other Asian big cat species (such as tiger bone ~~stocks~~ stockpiles), but not including pre-Convention specimens, to consolidate and ensure adequate control of such ~~stocks~~ stockpiles, and where possible destroy the same, with the exception of those used for educational and scientific purposes;

**Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on
*Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species***

Annex 2 CITES guidelines for the disposal of confiscated live plants

OPTION 1 – MAINTENANCE IN CULTIVATION, last paragraph

Where plants are transferred by the confiscating authority but not sold, ownership by the Management Authority should be specified as one of the terms and conditions of the transfer. Where the country of origin may desire return of the plants, this desire should be respected, so long as the condition of the plants is such that they will survive the return voyage. The custodian (botanic garden or other organization) of confiscated plants should only move confiscated ~~stocks~~ plants to another facility for legitimate propagation purposes with the authorization of the administrative authority.

**Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on
*Conservation of and trade in pangolins***

Paragraph 3

3. ENCOURAGES Parties on whose territories ~~stocks~~ stockpiles of parts and derivatives of pangolins exist, to take urgent steps to establish and apply, where not yet done, strict control measures to secure and monitor these ~~stocks~~ stockpiles, and inform the Secretariat of the level of ~~stocks~~ stockpiles each year, indicating the type and number of specimens, the species, the source of the specimens, management measures, and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year;

54. Stocks and stockpiles (elephant ivory)
[Decision 18.185 (Rev. CoP19)]..... SC78 Doc. 54 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 54 (Rev. 1), noting that, as requested, it had published updated summary data on ivory stockpiles based on inventories submitted by Parties, disaggregated by region rather than by country. It reported that the highest number of Parties to date had submitted stockpile data. Going forward, the Secretariat proposed incorporating certain existing Decisions into Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*, as well as new draft decisions on stockpiles. Finally, the Secretariat highlighted that, despite multiple attempts to obtain information from Burundi on the status of its ivory stockpiles, Burundi was still consulting internally on the matter.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) and Zimbabwe supported the recommendations with the United Kingdom proposing minor amendments to recommendations a) and b) to reflect non-binding language, which were supported by the United States.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, was supportive of the proposed changes to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) and the new draft decisions, with one addition to the Resolution to clarify the methods of reporting aggregated country-level stockpiles. Benin drew attention to information document SC78 Inf. 47, which made amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) and proposed to renew, rather than delete, Decisions 18.184 and 18.185. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), the Central African Republic, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal supported the amendments proposed by Benin. Zambia and Zimbabwe considered Benin's proposed amendments to be problematic and supported the original recommendations in the document.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, encouraged Parties to inform the Secretariat of any capacity-building needs to improve stockpile management, and thanked the Elephant Protection Initiative Foundation for its support in ivory stockpile management.

The Committee:

- a) encouraged Parties, in particular African elephant range States, to step up their efforts to implement paragraph 7 e) of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* concerning stockpiles, with a view of submitting the information to the Secretariat every year;
- b) invited its regional Members and Alternate regional Members, as part of their regular contact with Parties in their region, to remind Parties of the activities they are urged to take in paragraph 7 e) of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19);
- c) agreed to submit the amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 51.1 (Rev. 1) as amended by the Chair of the Standing Committee and Belgium to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting;
- d) agreed to submit the draft decisions on contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 51 (Rev. 1) to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting;
- e) invited the Secretariat to include the Elephant Protection Initiative's [Gold Standards Assessments](#); [Procedures for the Transfer of Wildlife Products](#); and [Storeroom Management Procedures for Wildlife Products](#) in the "Practical guidance on ivory stockpile management" and publish it on the [Elephants page of the CITES Website](#); and
- f) requested the Secretariat to continue to engage with Burundi on the status of its ivory stockpile and, if invited, conduct a technical mission to verify the current status of the Burundi stockpile and to report to the Committee on its findings.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 10.10 (REV. COP19) ON
TRADE IN ELEPHANT SPECIMENS

7. FURTHER URGES those Parties in whose jurisdiction there is an ivory carving industry, a legal domestic trade in ivory, an unregulated market for or illegal trade in ivory, or where ivory stockpiles exist, and Parties designated as ivory importing countries, to ensure that they have put in place comprehensive internal legislative, regulatory, enforcement and other measures to:
- [...]
- e) maintain an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and, where possible, of significant privately held stockpiles of ivory within their territory, and inform the Secretariat of the level of this stock each year before 28 February, *inter alia* to be made available to the programme Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) and the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) for their analyses, indicating the number of pieces and their weight per type of ivory (raw or worked); for relevant pieces, and if marked, their markings in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution; the source of the ivory; and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year; and
 - f) ensure that adequate funding, capacity building and training are available to ensure ivory stockpiles are inventoried, secured, and when appropriate, disposed of consistently with the Convention;
8. DIRECTS the Secretariat to annually publish updated summary data based on the inventories submitted by Parties disaggregated to regional but not country level, including the total ivory stockpiles by weight;*

DRAFT DECISIONS ON MANAGEMENT OF STOCKPILES

Directed to Parties

- 20.AA** Parties are encouraged to inform the Secretariat if they need training support in managing and securing their stockpiles of CITES-listed specimens.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 20.BB** Subject to extrabudgetary resources and upon request, the Secretariat shall:
- a) provide training support to Parties for the secure management of stockpiles of CITES-listed specimens; and
 - b) inform the Standing Committee of any lessons learned on stockpile management, as appropriate.

55. Transport of live specimens (*Decisions 19.158 and 19.159*) SC78 Doc. 55

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 55 and announced that, with support from Germany, it had secured digital single-user licenses for the 2025 edition of the IATA Live Animal Regulations in English, French, and Spanish. It noted access codes were available to CITES Management Authorities of developing country Parties, with priority for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and Small Island Developing States.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, recognized the achievement of gaining access to 160 IATA licenses and proposed two new draft decisions to continue the work to make the regulations available to all relevant Parties. This proposal was supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) and the Dominican Republic (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean).

* Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, introduced an additional amendment to this paragraph during the tenth session that was accepted by the Committee. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), also speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, withdrew that additional amendment during the adoption of the executive summaries after the meeting. The withdrawal of the additional amendment was agreed by the Standing Committee.

The Secretariat informed the Committee that, to date, only six or seven Parties had requested a license, and suggested the Committee reconsider continuation of the decisions. Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) and Switzerland (Depositary Government) supported the original recommendations in the document.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums, also on behalf of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, Wildlife Conservation Society and Zoological Society of London, encouraged the retention of Decisions to make progress on making IATA regulations available to non-Parties such as exporters and importers.

The Committee encouraged regional representatives to reach out to Parties in their region to make them aware of Notification to the Parties No. 2025/004 that indicates that the Secretariat had secured 160 single-user access licenses for the IATA LAR 2025 edition In English, French and Spanish, specifically for developing country Parties.

The Committee agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the following draft Decision to replace Decision 19.159.

Directed to the Secretariat, in consultation with the Standing Committee

20.AA The Secretariat shall in consultation with the Standing Committee work with IATA to make available at nominal cost or for free on an annual basis to authorized representatives of the management authorities and enforcement authorities as electronic or hard copies, depending on the needs of the Party those sections of the *IATA Live Animal Regulations* and *IATA Perishable Cargo Regulations* relevant for authorities to meet CITES obligations.

56. Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments
(Decision 19.160)..... SC78 Doc. 56

Australia, as Chair of the working group, introduced document SC78 Doc. 56, noting that the group had a dual mandate to consider the movement of two distinct types of products but that discussions revealed similar challenges for both. While mechanisms for the rapid movement of musical instruments and diagnostic samples exist under CITES, users struggled with understanding what guidance was available, and where it is located. To address this, the document includes draft decisions, including an information-gathering exercise by the Secretariat on existing mechanisms. The working group further proposed to use this information to create two dedicated web pages on musical instruments and diagnostic samples to provide a single-window approach for practitioners along with simplified guidance.

Japan (Committee Member for Asia) noted the challenges faced by exporters using musical instrument certificates when reaching destination countries. Japan welcomed the proposal for a dedicated webpage and simplified guidance materials and urged Parties to provide clear information to customs authorities and to eliminate overlapping domestic regulations.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported the recommendations in the document with some edits to the draft decisions in the Annex.

The Secretary General, noting that there was no core budget line for website updates, requested that the website updates be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

The League of American Orchestras, also on behalf of Chambre Syndicale de la Facture Instrumentale, Confédération des Industries Musicales Européennes, International Pernambuco Conservation Initiative (IPCI), International Society of Violin and Bow Makers, and Taylor Guitars, highlighted ongoing challenges musicians face when using CITES permits for non-commercial movements, including difficulties in identifying Parties that honour these certificates and navigating complex border procedures.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) reminded Parties of the vital importance of the rapid movement of diagnostic samples that may have impact on public and animal health, as well as biodiversity, stressing the importance of the One Health approach.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit the draft decisions in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 56 as amended by the United States of America (North American region) and the CITES Secretary-General for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- b) agreed that Decision 19.160 has been implemented and should be deleted.

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON RAPID MOVEMENT OF WILDLIFE DIAGNOSTIC SAMPLES
AND OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties, requesting that Parties:
 - i) describe their individual implementation arrangements (including relevant website links) for existing exemptions and simplified procedures for the rapid movement of wildlife samples for diagnostic and/or conservation purposes, and the rapid efficient non-commercial movement of musical instruments for purposes of performance, display or competition;
 - ii) identify and describe any specific challenges facing Parties in implementing the existing exemptions and rapid efficient movement arrangements available to them under Resolution Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP18) on *Non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic and forensic research specimens*, Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates* and Resolution Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17) on *Frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments*;
 - iii) advise, for Parties that are not implementing the existing exemptions and rapid movement arrangements, why that is the case;
 - iv) if they did not communicate updates to the Register of scientific institutions at the end of December 2024, consider providing updated or more detailed information on registered scientists and scientific institutions for inclusion that are included in the Register of scientific institutions published on the CITES website in advance of the 5-yearly request by the Secretariat called for under Resolution Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP18); and
 - v) invite other affected stakeholders to comment on specific challenges faced when trying to access or utilise existing implementation arrangements.
- b) make the results available to the Standing Committee for their information and consideration in undertaking Decision 20.DD.

20.BB Subject to extrabudgetary resources, The Secretariat shall, taking into account the responses received to the Notification issued under Decision 20.AA, develop for publication on the CITES website

- a) a new 'rapid movement of wildlife samples for diagnostic and/or conservation purposes' webpage to ~~bring together~~ provide information on relevant exemptions and special trade provisions for the rapid movement of wildlife samples, including the scientific exchange arrangements under Resolution Conf 11.15 (Rev. CoP18) and the simplified procedures under Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19), and including hyperlinks to relevant Resolutions, meeting documents and guidance materials.
- b) a register of individual Parties' existing rapid wildlife sample movement arrangements and links to further information.
- c) a new 'rapid efficient non-commercial movement of musical instruments for purposes of performance, display or competition' webpage to ~~bring together~~ provide information on relevant exemptions and special trade provisions for the rapid efficient movement of musical instruments, including the arrangements under Resolution Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17), musical instrument certificates and travelling exhibition certificates, and personal and household effects arrangements, and including hyperlinks to relevant Resolutions, meeting documents and guidance materials.

- d) a register of individual Parties' existing ~~rapid~~ efficient musical instrument movement arrangements and links to further information.

20.CC The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding and in consultation with Parties and stakeholders, develop 'one-page' or simplified guidance materials on the rapid movement of wildlife samples for diagnostic and/or conservation purposes, and the ~~rapid~~ efficient non-commercial movement of musical instruments for purposes of performance, display or competition, for review, appropriate amendment and endorsement by the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.DD The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 20.AA; and
- b) review the 'one-page' or simplified guidance materials on the rapid movement of wildlife samples and of musical instruments prepared under Decision 20.CC, agree appropriate amendments, and request publication of endorsed guidance on the relevant CITES webpage.

57. Specimens produced through biotechnology (Decision 19.161) SC78 Doc. 57

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 57 and proposed the renewal of Decisions 19.161 to 19.163.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) and Peru supported the renewal of the Decisions, noting the rapid development of technology in this area.

The Committee agreed to propose the renewal of Decisions 19.161 to 19.163 to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

Directed to the Standing Committee, in close collaboration with the Animals and Plants Committees

19.161 (Rev. CoP20) *The Standing Committee, in close collaboration with the Animals and Plants Committees, shall:*

- a) *continue to discuss trade in products of biotechnology, which might potentially affect international trade in CITES-listed specimens in a way that would threaten their survival, including enforcement of CITES provisions. The Committee's discussion shall consider the need for new guidance material or updates to existing guidance material on the following issues, in relation to trade in specimens produced through biotechnology:*
 - i) *whether an update is needed in the Guidance on the use of the scientific exchange exemption and the simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates, endorsed by the Standing Committee at SC73 (online, May 2021), to include a section on specimens produced through biotechnology;*
 - ii) *whether there is a need for additional guidance on making legal acquisition findings in relation to specimens produced through biotechnology;*
 - iii) *whether there is a need for guidance on the application of source codes to specimens produced through biotechnology;*
 - iv) *whether guidance is needed to improve permitting and enforcement of trade in specimens produced through biotechnology in order to address the risk of natural specimens of illegal origin being passed as synthetic and thereby entering the market with a valid CITES permit;*
 - v) *whether guidance is needed on traceability issues to improve permitting and enforcement of trade in specimens produced through biotechnology in order to ensure a clear link (e.g.,*

marking, other means of identification) between a specimen produced through biotechnology and CITES documentation in order to prevent misuse;

- vi) *whether biotechnology issues concerning animals and plants should be addressed distinctly; and*
- vii) *any emerging issues or cases not considered in the document AC31 Doc. 17/PC25 Doc. 20, such as hirudin and squalene;*
- b) *continue to communicate to the Animals and Plants Committees any matters that may require scientific advice and guidance, as appropriate; and*
- c) *make recommendations for consideration at the 20th 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including appropriate updates to existing guidance materials, the development of new guidance materials on trade in specimens produced from biotechnology or changes to any pertinent Resolutions.*

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

19.162 (Rev. CoP20) *The Animals and Plants Committees shall inform implementation of Decision 19.161 (Rev. CoP20) and provide any relevant scientific advice and guidance on matters relevant to international trade in specimens produced through biotechnology and communicate it to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

Directed to the Secretariat

19.163 (Rev. CoP20) *Subject to the availability of external funds, the Secretariat shall convene and organize a meeting to facilitate the discussions mentioned in Decision 19.161 (Rev. CoP20) and develop guidance on the implementation of the amendment to Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19) on Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives. The Secretariat shall extend invitations to concerned Parties as well as relevant entities, including the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other relevant organizations as appropriate.*

58. Disposal of confiscated specimens (Decisions 19.173 and 19.174) SC78 Doc. 58

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 58, providing an update on existing practices for disposal of seized live animals and its review of Question 7 of the “Decision Tree Analysis – Captivity” in Annex 1 to Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species confiscated specimens*.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, and Israel agreed with the recommendations in the document. New Zealand, supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), suggested to move the location of the proposed new paragraph 5 of the Resolution in the Annex to reflect a more logical order. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, while generally supportive of the recommendations, suggested an amendment to remove “otherwise undesired” from the proposed changes to the Resolution which was supported by the United Kingdom, and raised whether the term “irregular trade” was needed. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), with support from the United Kingdom and the United States, preferred to retain the term “irregular”. Israel suggested editorial amendments to the draft resolution to avoid a double negative, which was supported by the United Kingdom.

Senegal emphasized that implementation of the Convention depends on effective seizure processes and proper stockpile management.

The Association of Zoos and Aquariums, also speaking on behalf of San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance and Wildlife Conservation Society, highlighted a pilot programme which facilitated the placement of nearly 4,000 live animals trafficked through illegal wildlife trade since October 2023. AZA aimed to expand the network

nationwide to improve efficiency in animal placement and ensure high-quality care and supported the development of a dedicated webpage to assist Parties in this effort.

Born Free, also on behalf of ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Alliance for Canada, Animal Welfare Institute, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Fondation Franz Weber, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Pro Wildlife, Species Survival Network and Whale and Dolphin Conservation, expressed disappointment regarding the limited responses to the Secretariat's Notifications and raised concerns about the possible placement of confiscated live animals in commercial breeding facilities, which could risk illegally traded specimens entering commercial trade.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the two amendments of Annex 1 to Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species* as contained in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 58 and as amended by Belgium, Israel and New Zealand;
- b) recommended to maintain Decisions 19.169, 19.171 and 19.173 to the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) recommended the deletion of Decisions 19.170, 19.172 and 19.174 as they have been implemented.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 17.8 (REV. CoP19) ON *DISPOSAL OF ILLEGALLY TRADED AND CONFISCATED SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES*

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike~~through.

New paragraph 3 a) under ***Regarding the disposal of confiscated live specimens:***

3. RECOMMENDS:

- a) Parties to make use of the information and materials on the disposal of live confiscated specimens made available on the CITES website;

Annex 1 CITES guidelines for the disposal of confiscated live animals.

Question 7: Is there a commercial facility breeding this Appendix-I species, is that facility interested in the specimens, and are there ~~no~~ grounds for concern that transfer will stimulate further illegal or irregular trade?

As discussed above, captive-bred offspring of Appendix-I species offer the potential for commercial breeders to breed animals in captivity to replace wild-caught animals as a source for trade. These breeding programs must be carefully assessed and approached with caution. It may be difficult to monitor such programs, and they may unintentionally, or intentionally, stimulate trade in wild animals. ~~The conservation potential of this transfer, or breeding loan, must be carefully weighed against even the smallest risk in stimulating trade which would further endanger the wild population of the species.~~ Answer: Yes: Execute agreement and transfer. No: Destroy and dispose of carcass as described above. In all circumstances, the confiscating authority should be satisfied that: 1) those involved in the illegal or irregular transaction that gave rise to confiscation cannot obtain the animals or their offspring; 2) the transfer does not compromise the objective of confiscation; and 3) the transfer will not increase illegal or irregular or otherwise undesired trade in the species. The conservation potential of this transfer, or breeding loan, must be carefully weighed against even the smallest risk in stimulating trade that would further endanger the wild population of the species. As in the preceding instances, such transfer should be subject to terms and conditions agreed with the confiscating authority; in addition to those already suggested, it may be advisable to include terms that stipulate the types of record keeping the authority considers permissible.

Answer: Yes: Destroy and dispose of carcass as described above.
 No: Execute agreement and transfer, if legally permitted.

Directed to Secretariat

19.169 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *continue to collect information on existing networks and resources on the management of seized and confiscated live animals and make it available to Parties on the CITES website.*
- b) *subject to the availability external funding, develop and make available materials that may assist Parties in implementing Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species, as needed; and*
- c) *report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of this Decision.*

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders.

19.171 *Parties and relevant stakeholders that have not already done so are invited to share with the Secretariat information on existing networks and resources on the management of seized and confiscated live animals in place in their country, including any action plans, protocols, regulatory measures, standard operating procedures developed to coordinate actions among public authorities, and guidelines for the management of specific species or genera.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.173 *The Standing Committee shall consider the report submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 19.169 and make recommendations, as appropriate.*

59. Labelling system for trade in caviar (Decision 19.176) SC78 Doc. 59

Georgia, as Chair of the working group on labelling system for trade in caviar, introduced document SC78 Doc. 59 and presented a study on the benefits and drawbacks of QR codes available in the Annex to the document. While the results of the report were useful, logistical concerns meant there was no overwhelming support for replacing the current system in favour of QR codes.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported the recommendations in the document and remarked that the study failed to provide enough information for the working group to fully consider the risks and benefits of implementation of QR codes for caviar labelling. The United States further considered that identification of the shortcomings of the caviar labelling system highlighted domestic issues that should be addressed by the CITES authorities of those Parties. The World Wide Fund for Nature aligned with the comments of the United States and did not support the changing of “country of origin” to “country of processing or repackaging”.

The Russian Federation shared its own positive experiences with the use of QR codes for caviar labelling, which it piloted in February 2024 for salmon and sturgeon caviar and became a requirement in May 2024. The Party noted that the system had ensured transparency and encouraged other Parties to introduce similar systems. IWMC expressed support for the use of QR codes in caviar labelling and highlighted that there was virtually no trade in wild caviar.

The Committee:

- a) noted document SC78 Doc. 59;
- b) encouraged Parties interested to use the QR codes to carry out a pilot to test the use of QR codes for caviar labelling and present the information on the results to the Standing Committee at its 81st meeting to facilitate further discussions; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.175 and 19.176 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

60. Trade in stony corals (Decision 19.178) SC78 Doc. 60

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 60, noting that its aim was to provide advice on Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Trade in stony corals*, including recommendations to

revise the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* and to advise on conversion factors used for trade in stony corals.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) supported the amendments to the *Guidelines* and to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Trade in stony corals* and to Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives*. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported the amendments to the *Guidelines*, but proposed an additional amendment to the definition of live coral in Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15).

Regarding the revised draft decisions, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) proposed amendments to the draft decisions to include references to coral reef nations and experts. These changes were supported by the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe). The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, proposed two additional draft decisions focused on collecting feedback on the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP19).

The Committee requested the United States of America and New Zealand to send to the Secretariat their proposed edits to the recommendations in document SC78 Doc. 60 for publication as an in-session document.

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 3 containing the consolidated draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Trade in stony corals*.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, did not support the extended definition of 'live coral' as contained in document SC78 Com. 3 and proposed to amend the current in document SC78 Com. 3. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) believed that any further amendments would require consultation with coral experts and suggested that, rather than reopening discussions on definitions at this stage, Decision 19.178 be amended to include making recommendations on possible amendments to the definition of live coral in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15). This was supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America) and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe). Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, sought clarification that other relevant Parties, not just coral reef nations, would be able to participate in the consultations.

The Committee noted the comments made by Poland and the North American region about the definition of live coral and agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 3 as amended by New Zealand and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as follows:

The Committee:

- a) agreed to the amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* and *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report* as outlined in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 60; and

In section 3 “**Regarding stony corals**” of the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*, add a final paragraph as follows:

Live corals should be reported as 'LIV' with the unit 'number of specimens'. Coral rock (as live rock) and dead corals should be reported using the trade term code 'COR' with the unit kilograms (kg). Coral rock (as substrate) should be reported as 'COR' with the unit 'number of specimens'.

In section 6a) of the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*, and section 4 a) of the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report*, update the explanations of 'live' and 'corals (raw)' in the terminology table:

Description	Trade term code	Preferred unit	Alternative unit	Explanation
Live	LIV	no.	kg	live animals and plants, excluding live fingerling fish – see FIG. NB: live stony corals should be recorded as 'number of specimens';

Description	Trade term code	Preferred unit	Alternative unit	Explanation
				all coral rock (live rock and substrate) should be reported as 'COR'.
coral (raw)	COR	no. kg (for live rock and dead corals); <u>no.</u> (for substrate)	kg	raw or unworked coral and coral rock (also live rock and substrate) [as defined in Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15)]. Coral rock (live rock and substrate) should be recorded as 'Scleractinia spp.' NB: the trade should be recorded by number of pieces only if the coral specimens are transported in water. Live rock (transported moist in boxes) and dead corals should be reported in kg; coral substrate should be reported as number of pieces (since these are transported in water as the substrate to which non-CITES corals are attached).

- b) agreed to submit the following revised draft decisions in Annex 3 to document SC78 Doc. 60 for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and

DRAFT DECISIONS ON TRADE IN STONY CORALS

Text proposed to be deleted is indicated with ~~strikethrough~~. Proposed new text is underlined.

Directed to the Animals Committee

19.177 (Rev. CoP20) The Animals Committee shall:

- a) ~~taking into account document CoP19 Doc. 46 and its Annex, provide advice on possible amendments to Resolution Conf 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Trade in stony corals, in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts, and report with recommendations to the Standing Committee;~~
- b) ~~make recommendations, as necessary, to revise the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports and Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report, to ensure that they provide sufficient clarity on the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals; and~~
- b) consider the information in the Annex to document AC33 Doc. 24 and in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts, provide advice on the conversion factors used to analyse trade in corals for the CITES Review of Significant Trade process and report to the 21st20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.178 (Rev. CoP20) The Standing Committee shall:

- a) ~~review any proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Trade in stony corals from the Animals Committee; and~~
- b) ~~review any recommendations from the Animals Committee with regard to Decision 19.177, paragraph a), and make its own recommendations, as appropriate.~~
- a) taking into account the progress made at AC33 and in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts, make further recommendations, as necessary, on possible amendments to the definition of live coral in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Trade in stony corals and to revise the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual

reports and Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report, to ensure that they provide sufficient clarity on the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals; and

b) report their findings to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) implement the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports; and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports on illegal trade adopted at CoP20 regarding the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals, when issuing CITES documents and drafting their CITES annual reports and CITES annual reports on illegal trade; and
- b) respond to the Notification to Parties under Decision 20.BB, particularly those involved in the trade in stony corals.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to share experiences and challenges in implementing the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports; and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports on illegal trade regarding the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals.

- c) agreed to submit amendments to Resolution Conf 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Trade in stony corals*, and the consequential amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives* for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as follows;

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 11.10 (REV. COP15) ON *TRADE IN STONY CORALS*

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~.

**Conf. 11.10
(Rev. CoP15)**

Trade in stony corals

AWARE that stony corals ~~in the orders~~ Scleractinia, as well as non-scleractinian corals within the genera *Distichopora*, *Heliopora*, *Millepora*, *Stylaster* and *Tubipora*, ~~Helioporaceae, Milleporina, Scleractinia, Stolonifera, and Stylasterina~~) are in international trade as live or dead specimens ~~intact specimens for aquaria and as curios;~~

RECOGNIZING that coral rock, skeleton fragments, sand and other coral products are also traded;

NOTING the unique nature of corals, namely that their skeletons are persistent, that they may become mineralized in time and that they are the foundation of reefs, and that, following erosion, fragments of coral may form part of mineral and sedimentary deposits;

NOTING also that coral rock may act as an important substrate for the attachment of live corals and that the removal of rock may have a detrimental impact on coral reef ecosystems;

AWARE, however, that coral rock can ~~not only~~ be readily identified ~~other than~~ to the order Scleractinia, or in the case of non-scleractinian corals, to the genus level (*Distichopora*, *Heliopora*, *Millepora*, *Stylaster* or *Tubipora*), and that accordingly non-detriment findings under Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), of the Convention cannot be readily applied;

NOTING however, that for practical purposes of implementing the Convention, all coral rock can be reported in trade as "Scleractinia spp." irrespective of whether the coral rock contains scleractinian corals, non-

scleractinian corals, or a mixed composition, for ease of identification and reporting.

NOTING that Article IV, paragraph 3, requires the monitoring of exports of specimens of each species in Appendix II, in order to assess whether the species is being maintained at a level consistent with its role in the ecosystem;

NOTING that assessments under Article IV, paragraph 3, of the impacts of harvesting corals on the ecosystems from which they are derived cannot be adequately made by monitoring exports alone;

ACCEPTING that coral skeleton fragments and coral sand cannot be readily recognized;

RECOGNIZING also that it is ~~frequently~~ usually difficult to identify live or dead corals to the species level owing to the lack of a standard nomenclature and the lack of comprehensive and accessible identification guides for the non-specialist;

RECOGNIZING that stony corals that are fossilized are not subject to the provisions of the Convention;

NOTING that it has been difficult to apply and enforce the provisions of the Convention to trade in corals;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ADOPTS the working definitions of coral sand, coral skeleton fragments, coral rock, live coral and dead coral provided in the Annex to this Resolution;
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties give much greater emphasis to the implementation of Article IV, paragraph 3, when permitting the export of corals and that they adopt the principles and practice of an ecosystem approach, rather than relying on the monitoring of exports alone; and
3. URGES:
 - a) interested Parties and other bodies from range and consumer States to collaborate and provide support, coordinated by the Secretariat, to produce as a priority accessible and practical guides to recognizing corals and coral rock in trade and to make these widely available to Parties through appropriate media; and
 - b) Parties to seek synergy with other multilateral environmental agreements and initiatives to work for the conservation and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems.

Annex

Definitions

Coral sand – material consisting entirely or in part of ~~fine sediments finely crushed fragments~~ of dead coral origin no larger than 2 mm in diameter and which may also contain, amongst other things, the remains of Foraminifera, mollusc and crustacean shell, and coralline algae. Not identifiable to the level of genus. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives, coral sand is not considered readily recognizable, and is therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention.

Coral skeleton fragments (including gravel and rubble) – unconsolidated fragments of ~~broken finger-like~~ dead coral and other material between 2 and 30 mm measured in any direction, which is not identifiable to the level of genus. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives, coral skeleton fragments are not considered readily recognizable, and are therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention.

Coral rock¹ is ~~(the collective term used for also live rock and substrate)~~ –hard consolidated material, >3 cm in diameter, formed of fragments of dead coral and which may also contain cemented sand, coralline algae and other sedimentary rocks. The term 'coral rock' should not be used on permits; which should instead refer to 'live rock' and 'substrate'.

'Live rock' is the term given to large pieces of coral rock (usually > 0,5 kg each) to which are attached live

¹ Rock that does not contain any corals or in which the corals are fossilized is not subject to the provisions of the Convention.

specimens of invertebrate species and coralline algae not included in the CITES Appendices. Live rock should not have live specimens of CITES-listed coral species attached. Live rock is used as decoration and habitat in aquariums and is usually and which are transported in moist condition, but not in water, in crates. Live rock is subject to the provisions of the Convention and should be reported as *Scleractinia* spp.

'Substrate' is the term given to small pieces of coral rock (usually < 0.5 kg each), to which are attached invertebrates (of species not included in the CITES Appendices). Substrate is used as pedestal (base) for attached invertebrates, such as sea anemones or soft corals and is therefore and which are transported in water to keep these organisms alive, like live corals. Substrate should not have live specimens of CITES-listed coral species attached. Coral rock is not identifiable to the level of genus but is recognizable to the level of order. The definition excludes specimens defined as dead coral. Substrate, when readily recognizable as coral, is subject to the provisions of the Convention and should be reported as *Scleractinia* spp.

Dead coral – pieces of coral that are dead when exported, but that may have been alive when collected, and in which the structure of corallites (the skeleton of the individual polyp) is still intact; specimens are therefore identifiable to the level of species or genus.

Live coral – pieces of live coral transported in water and that are identifiable to the level of species or genus.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 9.6 (REV. COP19) ON
TRADE IN READILY RECOGNIZABLE PARTS AND DERIVATIVES

New text is underlined.

RECALLING Resolutions Conf. 1.5, paragraph 3², Conf. 1.7³, Conf. 2.18², Conf. 4.8, Conf. 4.24², Conf. 5.9, Conf. 5.22, paragraph c), Conf. 6.18², Conf. 6.22, last paragraph, and Conf. 7.11², adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its first, second, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh meetings (Bern, 1976; San José, 1979; Gaborone, 1983; Buenos Aires, 1985; Ottawa, 1987; Lausanne, 1989), relating to readily recognizable parts and derivatives;

RECOGNIZING that Article I of the Convention defines a 'specimen' as including readily recognizable parts and derivatives of animals and plants but does not define the term 'readily recognizable', which is therefore subject to differing interpretations by the Parties;

NOTING that the trade in parts and derivatives regulated by one Party is therefore not always subject to regulation in others;

ACKNOWLEDGING that, under Articles III, IV and V of the Convention, Parties may allow import of CITES specimens from other Parties only upon presentation of CITES documentation;

CONSIDERING that proper monitoring of and reporting on trade in ranches specimens are only possible if all importing countries consider all products of the operation to be readily recognizable;

RECOGNIZING that the species or genera of coral from which coral sand and coral skeleton fragments [as defined in the Annex of Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15)⁴] are derived cannot be readily determined;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. AGREES that the term 'readily recognizable part or derivative', as used in the Convention, shall be interpreted to include any specimen which appears from an accompanying document, the packaging or a mark or label, or from any other circumstances, to be a part or derivative of an animal or plant of a species

² Note from the Secretariat: repealed by Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev.), itself replaced by Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18).

³ Note from the Secretariat: repealed by the adoption of document Com. 9.14.

⁴ Corrected by the Secretariat following the 12th, 14th and 15th meetings of the Conference of the Parties: originally referred to Resolution Conf. 11.10, later corrected to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP12), then to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP14).

included in the Appendices, unless such part or derivative is specifically exempted from the provisions of the Convention;

2. RECOMMENDS that:

- a) Parties consider all products of ranching operations to be readily recognizable;
- b) Parties consider all specimens produced through biotechnology that meet the criteria in paragraph 1 to be readily recognisable unless specifically exempted from the provisions of the Convention; and
- c) importing Parties that require that CITES export permits or re-export certificates accompany imports of parts and derivatives do not waive that requirement when such parts and derivatives are not considered to be readily recognizable by the exporting or re-exporting Party;

3. AGREES also that:

- a) coral sand and coral skeleton fragments [as defined in the Annex of Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15)³] are not considered readily recognizable and are therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention; and
- b) urine, faeces and ambergris that has been naturally excreted are waste products and are therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention; and

4. REPEALS the Resolutions, or parts thereof, listed hereunder:

- a) Resolution Conf. 4.8 (Gaborone, 1983) – *Treatment of Exports of Parts and Derivatives without Permit from a Party to Another which Deems them Readily Recognizable*;
- b) Resolution Conf. 5.9 (Buenos Aires, 1985) – *Control of Readily Recognizable Parts and Derivatives*;
- c) Resolution Conf. 5.22 (Buenos Aires, 1985) – *Criteria for the Inclusion of Species in Appendix III* – recommendation c); and
- d) Resolution Conf. 6.22 (Ottawa, 1987) – *Monitoring and Reporting Procedures for Ranching Operations* – the paragraph under RECOMMENDS.

61. Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on
Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes

61.1 Review of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) (Decision 19.181) SC78 Doc. 61.1

The United States of America, as the Chair of the intersessional working group on review of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, introduced document SC78 Doc. 61.1. The working group's proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) included, *inter alia*, to provide illustrative examples of what constitutes a major change in the nature of an operation; to provide direction to the Secretariat to update the register when it receives updated information from a Management Authority; clarification on the information to be included in the register; and to request Parties to specify products excluded from an operation where applicable. The United States indicated that items that working group members were unable to reach consensus on were indicated in the document.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) supported the recommendations in the document.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), the European Union and its Member States, supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), and India, supported by Israel, proposed several textual amendments to the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) in the Annex to the document. The Chair suggested the creation of an in-session drafting group to consolidate the suggested amendments for later consideration by the Standing Committee. Mexico, supported by China, highlighted there were a number of paragraphs in the document for which

consensus had not been reached. In particular, Mexico disagreed with the amendments to the Resolution that referenced the Standing Committee excluding products for sale.

The Russian Federation considered that it remained unclear what constituted a major change in the nature of an operation and requested legal advice from the Secretariat so that Management Authorities could be in full compliance.

The Committee established an in-session drafting group to discuss the additional edits proposed by the European Union, India, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 61.1. Membership was agreed as follows: Belgium, the European Union, India, Israel, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (Chair).

Later in the meeting, the United States of America, as Chair of the drafting group, introduced document SC78 Com. 10, containing consolidated proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I species in captivity for commercial purposes*, and proposed additional editorial changes orally.

Mexico pointed out that its amendment to remove reference to the Standing Committee where the text specified which products were covered by the register, presented in plenary, had not been considered by the drafting group. While Honduras (Committee Member for South America), Japan (Committee Member for Asia), and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) considered that this was in line with what had been agreed in the drafting group and should be deleted, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United States (Committee Member for North America) disagreed, stating that this aspect was at a different point in the process of registering operations to what had been discussed in the drafting group and suggested that Mexico bring this up at the Conference of the Parties. Canada, supported by Mexico, suggested removing the text until the pathways for registration were discussed at the Conference of the Parties, but this was opposed by the United States (Committee Member for North America). Mexico explained that no consensus on this matter had been reached in the intersessional working group, so the language, which had been put forward after the working group discussions, should not have been included in document SC78 Doc. 61.1, and the text should be clearly marked as not having reached consensus when it is put forward to the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee invited Mexico to submit to the Conference of the Parties its proposal to delete “or Standing Committee” in new paragraph 5 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15).

The Committee agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decision 19.181.

The Committee agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes* in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 61.1 and in in-session document SC78 Com. 10 as amended by the United States of America as follows:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 12.10 (REV. COP15) ON
REGISTRATION OF OPERATIONS THAT BREED APPENDIX-I ANIMAL SPECIES
IN CAPTIVITY FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 8.15, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting (Kyoto, 1992) and Resolution Conf. 11.14, adopted at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000);

RECOGNIZING that Article VII, paragraph 4, of the Convention provides that specimens of Appendix-I animal species bred in captivity for commercial purposes shall be deemed to be specimens of species included in Appendix II;

RECOGNIZING also that the provisions of Article III of the Convention remain the basis for permitting trade in specimens of Appendix-I species of animals that do not qualify for the exemptions of paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article VII;

NOTING that import of wild-caught specimens of Appendix-I species for purposes of establishing a commercial captive-breeding operation is precluded by Article III, paragraph 3 (c), as explained further in Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP19)⁵, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting (Buenos Aires, 1985) and amended at its 15th and 19th meetings (Doha, 2010; Panama City, 2022);
RECALLING that Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19)⁶, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997) and amended at its 11th and 19th meetings (Gigiri, 2000; Panama City, 2022), establishes the definition of 'bred in captivity' and provides the basis for determining whether or not an operation is eligible to be considered for registration;

NOTING that, in accordance with Article VII, paragraph 5, the import of specimens of Appendix-I species bred in captivity not for commercial purposes that are covered by a certificate of captive breeding does not require the issuance of an import permit and may therefore be authorized whether or not the purpose is commercial;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. DETERMINES that the term 'bred in captivity for commercial purposes', as used in Article VII, paragraph 4, shall be interpreted as referring to any specimen of an animal bred to obtain economic benefit, whether in cash or otherwise, where the purpose is directed toward sale, exchange or provision of a service or any other form of economic use or benefit;
2. AGREES that the exemption of Article VII, paragraph 4, should be implemented through the registration by the Secretariat of operations that breed specimens of Appendix-I species in captivity for commercial purposes;
3. AGREES to the following procedure to register a captive-breeding operation for each Appendix-I listed animal species bred for commercial purposes;
4. AGREES also that determination of whether or not to apply the exemptions in Article VII, paragraph 4, for the export of specimens of Appendix-I animals bred in captivity for commercial purposes remains the responsibility of the Management Authority of the exporting Party on the advice of the Scientific Authority that each operation complies with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19);
5. RESOLVES that:
 - a) an operation may only be registered according to the procedure in this Resolution if specimens produced by that operation qualify as 'bred in captivity' according to the provisions of Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19);
 - b) the first and major responsibility for approving captive-breeding operations under Article VII, paragraph 4, shall rest with the Management Authority of each Party, in consultation with the Scientific Authority of that Party;
 - c) the Management Authority shall provide the Secretariat with appropriate information to obtain, and to maintain, the registration of each captive-breeding operation as set out in Annex 1;
 - d) the Secretariat shall notify all Parties of each application for registration following the procedure set out in Annex 2;
 - e) Parties shall implement the provisions of Article IV of the Convention with respect to specimens of species included in Appendix I originating from operations that breed such specimens in captivity for commercial purposes;
 - f) registered captive-breeding operations shall ensure that an appropriate and secure marking system is used to clearly identify all breeding stock and specimens in trade, and shall undertake to adopt superior marking and identification methods as these become available;
 - g) the Management Authority, in collaboration with the Scientific Authority, shall monitor the management of each registered captive-breeding operation under its jurisdiction and advise the Secretariat in the

⁵ Corrected by the Secretariat following the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

⁶ Corrected by the Secretariat following the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

event of any ~~major~~ significant change in the nature of an operation (such as a significant change in the composition of the breeding stock; change in marking methods; significant change in breeding methods; etc.) or in the type(s) of products being produced for export;

h) the Secretariat shall publish the Register of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes on the CITES website including the following information: code; name of operation; contact details reported by the Management Authority consistent with domestic law; date of establishment; date of CITES registration for each Appendix-I species registered; Appendix-I species registered; type(s) of products being produced for export reported by the Management Authority; any exclusions of products from the registration for the operation by the Management Authority or Standing Committee; origin of breeding stock; and marking methods;

h_i) any Party within whose jurisdiction an operation is registered may unilaterally request the removal of that operation from the Register or amendment to exclude products from the registration for that operation without reference to other Parties by so notifying the Secretariat, and, in this case, the operation shall be removed or amended immediately;

i) the Secretariat shall note in the Register updated information received from a Management Authority pursuant to paragraph 5 g);

k) any Party, based on documented, evidence-based concerns, believing that a registered operation does not comply with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) or the original conditions for registration of the operation may, after consultation with the Secretariat and the Registering Party concerned, propose to the Standing Committee that the operation be deleted from the Register. At its following meeting, the Standing Committee shall, considering the concerns raised by the objecting Party, any other relevant information (documented evidence), and any comments from the Registering Party and the Secretariat, determine whether the operation should be deleted from the register, if the objection is justified; or whether to reject the objection. If so deleted, such an operation may only be reinstated in the Register by satisfying the procedure outlined in Annex 2; and

j_l) the Management Authority shall satisfy itself that the captive-breeding operation will make a continuing meaningful contribution according to the conservation needs of the species concerned;

6. URGES that:

a) Parties, prior to the establishment of captive-breeding operations for exotic species, undertake an assessment of the ecological risks, in order to safeguard against any negative effects on local ecosystems and native species;

b) Management Authorities work closely with captive-breeding operations to prepare the information required in Annex 1 of this Resolution, or establish a support group with members representing breeders and government in order to facilitate the procedure; and

c) Parties provide incentives to their captive-breeding operations to register, such as faster processing of permit applications, issuance of a formal certificate of approval as an internationally registered breeding operation, or possibly reduced export permit fees;

7. ENCOURAGES:

a) Parties to provide simple application forms and clear instructions to operations that wish to be registered (a sample application form is provided in Annex 3); and

b) importing countries to facilitate import of Appendix-I species from registered captive-breeding operations;

8. AGREES further that:

a) Parties shall restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes, as defined in Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP19), of captive-bred specimens of Appendix-I species to those produced by operations included in the Secretariat's Register and shall reject any document granted under Article VII, paragraph 4, if the specimens concerned do not originate from such an operation and if the document does not describe the specific identifying mark applied to each specimen; and

- b) comparable documentation granted in accordance with the Convention by States that are not Parties to the Convention shall not be accepted by Parties without prior consultation with the Secretariat; and

9. REPEALS the Resolutions listed hereunder:

- a) Resolution Conf. 8.15 (Kyoto, 1992) – *Guidelines for a procedure to register and monitor operations breeding Appendix-I animal species for commercial purposes*; and
- b) Resolution Conf. 11.14 (Gigiri, 2000) – *Guidelines for a procedure to register and monitor operations that breed Appendix-I animal species for commercial purposes*.

**Changes to Annex 1 on Information to be provided to the Secretariat
by the Management Authority operations to be registered**

11. Type of product exported (e.g. live specimens, skins, hides, other body parts, etc.) and any products specifically excluded from export for the operation.

[NO CHANGES PROPOSED TO ANNEX 2]

Changes to Annex 3 – Sample application form

11. TYPE OF PRODUCT EXPORTED

Indicate the type of product exported (e.g. live specimens, skins, hides, other body parts, etc.) and any products specifically excluded from export for the operation.

61.2 Implementation of paragraph 5 j) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) SC78 Doc. 61.2

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 61.2, which contains draft elements of guidance for Management Authorities to determine the continuing meaningful contribution of a captive-breeding operation to the conservation needs of the species concerned.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) proposed edits to the draft elements of guidance to specify that there should be documentation of direct linkages to the conservation of wild populations. However, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, expressed concerns this would be very difficult to measure, and reminded the Standing Committee that the seven strategies in the document had been deemed sufficient by the Animals Committee. The Russian Federation proposed edits to specify that two or more of the conservation strategies are expected to be implemented by Parties, and to clarify that financial contributions to a conservation fund should be directed to the species bred by the facility.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, agreed with the recommendations in the document with the exception of some proposed additional text to recommendation c) to reflect that appropriate conservation measures should be according to the needs of the species; this amendment was supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe).

TRAFFIC, also on behalf of the World Wide Fund for Nature, expressed concerns that some strategies may not meet the threshold of a meaningful contribution, particularly strategies 2, 3, and 4. Furthermore, TRAFFIC cautioned that the assumption that captive breeding reduces demand on wild populations (strategy 1) should not be generalized across all species and circumstances.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit the following draft amendment to paragraph 5 j) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes* supported by the Animals Committee to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting:
 - j) the Management Authority, in collaboration with the Scientific Authority, shall satisfy itself that the captive-breeding operation will make a continuing meaningful contribution according to the conservation needs of the species concerned;

- b) agreed that the following provide guidance to Parties to implement the requirement stated in paragraph 5 j) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) that the Management Authority shall satisfy itself that the captive-breeding operation will make a continuing meaningful contribution according to the conservation needs of the species concerned:
- i) implementation of one or more of the seven conservation strategies referred to in registration applications received to date or others that could appear in the future along with adequate details and explanations on the specific strategy/-ies used, including how it is intended to benefit the conservation of populations of the species in the wild: reduction of the pressure on wild populations; contribution to the genetic diversity of the captive-bred population; potential reintroduction into the wild; contribution to research on the species; financial contribution to a conservation fund intended for the species bred by the facility; public awareness; and contribution to capacity building;
 - ii) the [*IUCN Guidelines for reintroductions and other conservation translocations*](#);
 - iii) Resolution Conf. 13.9 on [*Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes*](#);
 - iv) [*Non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether “the trade would promote in situ conservation”*](#); and
 - iv) the IUCN/SSC [*Guidelines on the Use of Ex Situ Management for Species Conservation*](#); and
- c) encouraged Parties to implement Resolution Conf. 13.9 on *Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes*, as appropriate, according to the conservation needs of the species; and
- d) established an in-session drafting group to discuss the additional edits to the recommendation in paragraph 15 b) i) of document SC78 Doc. 61.2 proposed by the Russian Federation and the United States of America. Membership was agreed as follows: Belgium, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, as well as the Secretariat.

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 5, prepared by the drafting group.

Mexico, noting that the seven conservation strategies referred to may not be the only ones used, suggested expanding the possibilities by adding ‘among others that could appear in the future’. This was supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America), and the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) suggested replacing ‘among’ with ‘or’ for ease of reading.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 5 as amended by Mexico and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland [inserted above under paragraph b) i)]. The other recommendations on this item remain unchanged from executive summary SC78 Sum. 3.

62. Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source (Decision 19.179)..... SC78 Doc. 62

Belgium, as co-Chair of the intersessional working group on the review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source, introduced document SC78 Doc. 62 that proposes a draft decision to continue the work in a workshop in the next intersessional period.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) supported the recommendations in the document, with the addition of a subparagraph instructing the Secretariat to share the draft terms of reference and *modus operandi* of the workshop via Notification for input from Parties prior to finalization. This addition was supported by Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America). Poland suggested that the use of the terms ‘founder stock’ and ‘breeding stock’ in Resolutions relevant to specimens not of wild source, as raised under agenda item 35.1, also be reviewed in the proposed workshop.

The European Pet Organisation (also on behalf of Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association, Pet Advocacy Network, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Parrot Breeders Association of Southern Africa and Sustainable Users Network), supported the holding of a technical workshop, and urged that input from all stakeholders

be sought on the terms of reference and *modus operandi*. Pro Wildlife (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, Animal Welfare Institute, ADM Capital Foundation, Born Free Foundation, Four Paws International, Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, and Species Survival Network) did not feel that a workshop would solve the ongoing disagreement on whether to ease trade requirements for specimens traded as non-wild and/or to limit the application of the registration system for operations breeding Appendix-I species for commercial purposes.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report of the working group and relevant background documents;
- b) noted the analysis and conclusions from the Animals and Plants Committees as found in document PC27 Doc. 21 / AC33 Doc. 25 (Rev. 1) including those referenced in paragraph 5 of document SC78 Doc. 62; and
- c) agreed to submit to CoP20 new draft decisions found in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 62, as amended by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to replace Decision 19.179 and 19.180.

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON REVIEW OF CITES PROVISIONS
RELATED TO TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF ANIMALS AND PLANTS NOT OF WILD SOURCE**

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources and taking into consideration documents SC74 Doc. 56, PC27 Doc. 21 / AC33 Doc. 25 (Rev. 1), SC78 Doc. 62, Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*, Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, as well as any other Resolutions concerning provisions on trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animals and plants not of wild source, and relevant committee reports, the Secretariat shall:

- a) consult the Chairs of the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees and develop specific terms of reference and a *modus operandi* for a technical workshop on the review of trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animal and plants not of wild source in order to address the following:
 - i) possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) and Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP19), as well as any amendment to other Resolutions concerning provisions on trade in specimens of both CITES-listed animals and plants not of wild source, taking into account findings and suggestions in document SC74 Doc. 56 and any related comments and recommendations from the Standing Committee, Parties, the Secretariat or other stakeholders;
 - ii) review issues and challenges in the application of the Convention for trade in non-wild specimens of both CITES-listed animal and plant species, in particular key elements that may contribute to the uneven application of Article VII, paragraphs 4 and 5, and consider the scientific advice and guidance from the Animals and Plants Committees in document PC27 Doc. 21 / AC33 Doc. 25 (Rev. 1) and the summary records of the meetings on the need for implementing these Articles differently for either animal specimens from species bred in captivity or plant specimens that are artificially propagated; and
 - iii) develop draft recommendations for addressing these issues and challenges, including draft amendments to existing Resolutions or development of a new Resolution or Decisions to address these issues and challenges, for consideration by the Standing Committee;
- b) share the draft terms of reference and *modus operandi* for the technical workshop by Notification for comments from Parties to be considered by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee and the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees before finalization;
- ~~c~~b) prepare workshop documents and organize the technical workshop taking into consideration regional and gender representation; and

de) submit findings and recommendations of this workshop to the Standing Committee for their consideration.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the workshop referred to in Decision 20.AA and submit recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

63. Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade (Decision 19.186) SC78 Doc. 63

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the intersessional working group on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade, introduced document SC78 Doc. 63 and informed the Committee that a decision on whether to recommend an amendment to Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity building*, as presented in paragraph 7 of the document, could not be reached.

Japan (Committee Member for Asia) considered it premature for the Secretariat to develop a dedicated webpage, as proposed under draft decision 20.BB, expressing concerns about the difficulties to ensure that the information was credible and accurate, and that such a webpage would divert human and financial resources. Japan stressed that if such a webpage were to be developed, the quality should be regularly reviewed by the Secretariat, the Animals and Plants Committees. These concerns were shared by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Switzerland (Depositary Government), China, and Peru.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), Nigeria and TRAFFIC supported the draft decisions. Nigeria considered that the information would particularly support Parties which had capacity challenges in identifying species that needed protection.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, drew attention to information documents SC78 Inf. 45 and SC78 Inf. 36 that contain amendments to the draft decisions, and proposed that discussion be deferred to the 79th meeting of the Standing Committee. Deferment was also supported by China and Peru.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, did not support the possible amendment to Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity building*. Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) and Nigeria supported the possible amendment.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 63 and that there was no support to submit the amendment to Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building* included in paragraph 7 of document SC78 Doc. 63 to CoP20.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare an in-session document with the edits that Belgium and the North American Region wished to make to the draft decisions in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 63 for later consideration by the Committee.

Later in the meeting, the Secretariat introduced document SC78 Com. 15, presenting oral corrections to draft decision 20.BB, to include the name of the Party having provided information and the date of submission in the information to be gathered, and to draft decision 20.DD, to remove 'is requested to'.

Japan (Committee Member for Asia) and the United States (Committee Member for North America) supported the recommendations in document SC78 Com. 15 as amended by the Secretariat.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 15 as amended by the Secretariat as follows:

The Committee agreed to submit the following draft decisions to the Conference of the Parties:

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON IDENTIFYING INFORMATION ON SPECIES
AT RISK OF EXTINCTION AFFECTED BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall, subject to external resources:

- a) update and expand the materials in the Virtual College relating to the preparation and submission of proposals to amend the CITES Appendices as a capacity-building measure with the goal of providing more comprehensive and useful advice to Parties who may wish to prepare such proposals;
- b) develop a dedicated page, where Parties can upload material such as:
 - i) methodologies used for identifying species at risk of extinction that are or may be threatened by international trade and are either not yet regulated under CITES or may receive insufficient CITES regulation;
 - ii) information or analyses on the status of species (or other taxonomic groups) at risk of extinction that are or may be threatened by international trade and are either not yet regulated under CITES or may receive insufficient CITES regulation; and
 - iii) information in regards to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17), specifically in Annex 2.b, on species (or other taxonomic groups) that may be considered as look-alikes of taxa referenced in paragraph b) ii).
- c) update the page described in paragraph b) with information derived from activities implemented by the Secretariat based on Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
- d) report on progress with the implementation of paragraphs a) to c) above to the Standing Committee when appropriate.

Directed to Parties

20.BB Parties are invited to:

- a) upload information for inclusion on the dedicated page described in Decision 20.AA, paragraph b), relating to methodologies, information or analyses on species or other taxonomic groups at risk of extinction that are or may be threatened by international trade, plus their look-alikes, including the name of the Party or Parties that submitted the information and the date of submission;
- b) thereby prioritise the best available scientific data and technical information, including peer-reviewed materials or publications, government reports or reports from other official bodies and relevant stakeholders and state whether the information has been peer-reviewed. Parties are encouraged to consider utilising the IPBES four-box model for the qualitative communication of confidence or other appropriate methods where possible; and
- c) provide feedback to the Secretariat on their experiences with the approaches in Decisions 20.AA and 20.BB, once implemented.

Directed to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other experts

20.CC Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other experts are invited to share with Parties the information referred to in Decision 20.BB.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.DD The Standing Committee, in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees, will review, as appropriate, the progress on the implementation of Decisions 20.AA to 20.CC as reported by the Secretariat.

64. Spix's macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*)..... SC78 Doc. 64

Brazil introduced document SC78 Doc. 64 and underlined that the future of the Spix's macaw (*Cyanopsitta spixii*) relied heavily on *ex situ* breeding facilities, and affirmed its commitment to coordinated actions among breeding facilities as part of the Spix's macaw reintroduction programme to increase the likelihood of successful reintroduction into the wild. Brazil reported that it had faced challenges with communication with some private breeding facilities, underscoring the importance of the maintaining dialogue among Management Authorities. Since the publication of the document, Brazil noted that productive rounds of dialogue had been held with relevant countries and the Secretariat. In light of these discussions, and in the spirit of cooperation, Brazil informed the Committee that it had prepared a new draft recommendation to replace the existing recommendations in document SC78. Doc. 64.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the Dominican Republic and Honduras (Committee Members for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Japan (Committee Member for Asia), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, Argentina, China, Ecuador, Germany (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), India, Mexico, and Zimbabwe supported the recommendation as amended by Brazil. Belgium and Germany thanked Brazil for engaging in constructive dialogue.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, considered the topic significant for the Oceania region, with relevance for different life forms such as reptiles. Mexico drew attention to Resolution Conf. 13.9 on *Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes*.

The Green Zoological Rescue & Rehabilitation Center (GZRRC) reported that it had partnered with the Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots e.V. (ACTP) since 2023 to support the reintroduction of the Spix's macaw to Brazil. ACTP shared that, together with GZRRC, forty-one Spix's macaw's had been successfully transferred to Brazil and will be prepared for release.

The Wildlife Conservation Society, while appreciating the consensus reached, highlighted broader concerns that more efforts were needed to ensure that trade in critically endangered and endemic Appendix-I species is conducted in full consultation with and support of the relevant range State.

The Committee noted the information provided in document SC78 Doc. 64 and invited Brazil, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, India, Switzerland and other relevant Parties to engage in a dialogue to enhance exchange of information with respect to the specimens of *Cyanopsitta spixii* held in captivity in their territory, in support to the Spix's Macaw Population Management Programme, and to report back to the Standing Committee at its 79th meeting.

65. Elephants (*Elephantidae* spp.)

65.1 Report on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)
[Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19); Decision 19.37]..... SC78 Doc. 65.1

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.1, which contains three main parts. The first part summarizes data on levels of illegal killing of elephants, human elephant conflict, illegal and legal trade in elephant specimens, the status of elephant populations and the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan, including the election of a new steering committee. The Secretariat drew attention to the decline of the Proportion of illegally killed elephants (PIKE) in Africa, while the PIKE remained stable in Asia. On the second part of the document, the Secretariat reported that the funds secured for the MIKE and ETIS programmes were not sufficient and would lead to the reduction of dedicated staff positions in the CITES MIKE team and a shortfall for the ETIS programme. On the third part of the report, the Secretariat indicated that the MIKE and ETIS subgroup would meet in the margins of the meeting and report to plenary.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Zimbabwe, and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), supported the recommendations in the document.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, took note of the results in the report but wished for socio-economic issues linked to human elephant conflict, a key part of the African Elephant action plan, to be given more prominence and resources. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), echoed by Niger and Senegal, questioned whether a decline in poaching combined with high levels of seizures did not indicate the possibility of leakage from ivory stockpiles and mismanagement of remaining ivory markets. Sudan welcomed the downward PIKE trend, but urged continued efforts, in particular a focus on developing a strategic plan for funding and increased technical support to range States to reduce illegal ivory trade and poaching. Zimbabwe, stressing the important role of the MIKE programme in the observed downward PIKE trend, urged donor Parties and institutions to continue to support the programme.

Singapore stressed that data should be accurate and verified, as this affected analyses and the determination of Parties to be included in the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process. Singapore suggested further amendments to the ETIS collection form to ensure that the trade route information was verified and supported by official documentation. These changes were supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and China. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) suggested amendments to those proposed by Singapore, to ensure that non-verified data would still be collected. The Chair proposed that verification of the trade route be added as a separate question.

TRAFFIC thanked Parties that regularly contributed to the ETIS programme and stressed that financial support was needed to ensure that objectives were met. TRAFFIC also noted that the question around verification would have ramifications for analyses with historical data.

The African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) reported that it was working to update the distribution range maps of the species, which it expected to publish by the end of 2025, and urged cooperation between governments and organizations to prioritize data collection at sites that had not been surveyed for over 10 years. The AfESG also emphasized that increased border security issues were affecting important elephant populations in transboundary areas, and that retaliatory killing and habitat degradation were also ongoing threats requiring attention.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as host to the African Elephant Fund Secretariat, encouraged range States to submit proposals for projects under the African Elephant Fund, with a call for proposals currently open with a deadline of March 2025. UNEP urged Parties and organizations to continue contributing to the fund.

The Committee:

- a) noted the downward PIKE trend in Africa and commend the efforts of African elephant range States and other Parties and partners, in supporting actions to maintain this positive trend;
- b) noted the increase in the number and total weight of ivory seizures reported compared to 2022 and urge Parties to maintain their enforcement efforts as well as anti-poaching measures to sustain the positive downward trend observed in previous years;
- c) agreed the proposed changes to the ETIS data collection form as contained in Annex 1 d) to document SC78 Doc. 65.1 and as amended by the Chair of the Standing Committee to include an additional question to Parties to indicate if the trade route information is verified;
- d) noted the funding needs for ETIS as indicated by TRAFFIC and the reduced budget allocated to the MIKE component under the new project funded by the European Union, which will limit the MIKE Programme ability to maintain the same level of support to MIKE sites as in previous years;
- e) noted the new project funded by the European Union that will include a feasibility study and voluntary testing of data collection and reporting methods to monitor illegal killing for other CITES-listed species in Africa; and future funding from the European Union would be contingent on the inclusion of data collection and reporting of multiple species; and
- f) noted the new elected African Elephant Fund Steering Committee, which will serve for the period 2024-2026, with Zimbabwe as Chair and Zambia as Vice-Chair.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ETIS DATA COLLECTION FORMS



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



Please fill in one form for each individual seizure. Completed forms should be returned to etis@traffic.org or info@cites.org

This seizure case will be reviewed and entered to the ETIS database by TRAFFIC. For guidance on the ETIS data collection form please consult the Explanatory Notes available with the latest CITES Notification for ETIS data collection. For any further questions or to request training, please contact TRAFFIC at: etis@traffic.org

Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) Data Collection Form

- ☐ Please tick with an "x" to indicate if the seizure record should **not** be made available to the members of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) for global research and analysis (this applies only to this seizure record).

* Required information

1. **Date of Report to ETIS:** Day_____ Month_____ Year _____
2. **Data Provider's reference code**_____
3. **Source of data***_____

Other sources_____

4. **Date of seizure*** Day_____ Month_____ Year* _____
5. **Agency(ies) responsible for the seizure***_____
- Other Agency(ies)** _____

6. **Location of discovery***
Place _____
City, Province, State _____ Country* _____

7. **Trade route information:**

Is trade route known?* (NOTE: new question relating to trade routes)

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please indicate:

- A. **Country(ies) of origin** _____
- B. **Country(ies) of export/re-export** _____
- C. **Country(ies) of transit** _____
- D. **Country of destination/import** _____

Are you able to verify the trade route information for this seizure?⁷ ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Elephant species (Please tick): ☐ African ☐ Asian ☐ Unknown

9. Ivory type* and quantity* (At least one, number of pieces or weight, is required) **NOTE: revised quantity information to better differentiate between types of raw and worked ivory and provide explicit "is this an estimate" question to each section - no. of pieces and weight (previously only one such question so could not differentiate if for pieces or weight)**

A. Raw ivory:

Whole tusk Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(TUS) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Tusks present, but amount unknown

Cut pieces Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(IVP) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Cut pieces present, but amount unknown

Mixed Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(TUS/IVP) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Mixed pieces present, but amount unknown

B. Worked ivory:

Jewellery Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(IJW) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Jewellery present, but amount unknown

Carving Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(IVC) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Carving present, but amount unknown

Piano keys Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____
(KEY) Specify: ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual ☐ Estimate ☐ Actual
☐ Piano keys present, but amount unknown

Further comments on ivory seized _____

☐ Forensic examination (Tick if undertaken)

10. Non-ivory elephant products* (At least one, number of pieces or weight, is required)

Elephant hide/skin: Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____

Manufactured hide products: Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____

Description of manufactured hide products _____

Other elephant products: Number of pieces _____ Weight (kg) _____

Description of other elephant products _____

⁷ "Verified" trade route information should be supported by official documentation such as bill of lading, shipping manifests, customs declaration forms, and cross-checked with control border authorities.

11. Details of other contraband seized _____

12. Estimated value of seized elephant products in country of seizure _____

13. Type of activity(ies) (please tick)
☐ Illegal killing ☐ Export ☐ Transit ☐ Import ☐ Offer for sale
☐ Sale ☐ Possession ☐ Other (Specify) _____

14. Mode of transport (Please tick) ☐ Air ☐ Sea ☐ Land ☐ Post ☐ Other (Specify)

15. Method of concealment _____

16. Method(s) of detection (Please tick) ☐ Routine inspection ☐ Targeting
☐ Investigation ☐ X-ray ☐ Intelligence ☐ Sniffer dog
☐ Other (Specify) _____

17. Nationality of suspect(s) _____

(NOTE: Questions 18– 20 included to facilitate interoperability with AITR)

18. Law under which charges were brought _____

19. Sanction _____

20. Disposal of confiscated specimens _____

21. Additional comments _____

Name and position of person completing this form _____

Name of organisation represented _____ Date _____

65.2 Implementation of the priority recommendations

from the review of the ETIS programme (Decision 19.96) SC78 Doc. 65.2 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.2 (Rev. 1), reporting on the significant progress in implementing recommendations from the review of the ETIS programme relating to improving data governance, validation and online functionalities, and drawing attention to the analysis exploring the application of network models to ETIS data by TRAFFIC.

TRAFFIC thanked the review of the ETIS programme for its recommendations which had led to the improvement of the ETIS programme and requested input on the data validation protocol and welcomed input on the exploratory analysis applying network models to ETIS data.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), supported the continuation of the remaining outstanding recommendations of the review of the ETIS programme but proposed that existing Decisions 19.94 to 19.96 be updated and renewed rather than deleted, to ensure that none of the recommendations of the review of the ETIS programme were lost. Singapore supported enhanced transparency of the ETIS Programme by making the statistical method and underlying code available to Parties.

Regarding the protocol for ETIS data validation, Singapore emphasized that contextual information should be properly considered in addition to the ETIS analysis to assess whether Parties should be subject to the National Ivory Action Plan process. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America) and the World Wildlife Fund, considered that justification should be required when a Party requested removal of data from the ETIS analysis. Benin, stressing that the ETIS data and analysis were reference points used by Parties for the application of laws to bring an end to trafficking in ivory, considered that it was important for Parties to be able to validate their data. Benin encouraged Parties to maintain up-to-date information on stockpiles.

Regarding the application of network models to ETIS data, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America), proposed that it be annexed to the report to CoP20 containing the cluster analysis. The Conference of the Parties could then review and advise further on the methodology to be applied. Japan (Committee Member for Asia), speaking as a Party, considered that, with some bias adjustment, the results from the network models were consistent with those from the cluster analysis and the resulting National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) classification and also indicated that some countries not currently included in the cluster analysis could play a significant role in reducing smuggling. The World Wildlife Fund agreed that the network analysis could be an adequate alternative methodology.

The Committee:

- a) noted the progress made with the implementation of the priority recommendations of the ETIS review, as well as the challenges identified;
- b) requested the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup to consider the protocol for ETIS data validation as contained in Annex 2a to document SC78 Doc. 65.2 (Rev. 1), taking into consideration the comments made in plenary by Standing Committee Members and Parties and the concern raised by TRAFFIC relating to the verification of trade route information of historical data and report back to Standing Committee at the present meeting;
- c) agreed that the network analysis be included as an Annex to the ETIS Report to CoP20, noting that the categorization of the Parties requiring attention in the NIAP process will be based on the cluster analysis; and
- d) agreed to propose the renewal of Decisions 19.94 to 19.96 on the *Implementation of the priority recommendations from the review of the ETIS programme* to CoP20.

Later in the meeting, Belgium, as Chair of the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, introduced document SC78 Com. 9.

There were no interventions.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 9 as follows:

The Committee:

- a) agreed that no data validation will occur in relation to the additional data fields included in the ETIS data collection form (SC78 Sum. 4 – trade route known: Yes/No; Trade route verified: Yes/No) for data that was submitted prior to SC78, as the data validation process will not be applied retroactively to new data elements;
- b) agreed to submit the following draft decision for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties:

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall, in consultation with TRAFFIC and the MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group, revise the draft protocol in Annex 2a of document SC78 Doc. 65.2 taking into consideration the different scenarios associated with the status of records subject to inquiry and their implications for the ETIS analysis.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall, through the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, consider the revised draft protocol prepared under Decision 20.AA.

65.3 ETIS categorization of Parties (Decision 19.98) SC78 Doc. 65.3

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.3 outlining draft criteria to be used in the categorization of Parties to include in the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process, the contextual information to be used and a process for consultation with Parties identified in the categorization.

Regarding draft criteria, Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), welcomed the draft criteria but noted that some remained vague, with no threshold specified, and that bias adjustment variables were no longer mentioned. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and TRAFFIC supported the use of contextual information in the categorization. Japan (Committee Member for Asia) wished for the contextual information to remain context and not inform the categorization.

The United Arab Emirates, supported by Singapore, argued that a country's role in the trade chain should be reflected in the categorization, differentiating transit and destination countries to prevent the inclusion of countries that are not directly involved in the ivory trade in the process. The United Arab Emirates, supported by Singapore, also considered that national enforcement measures, legislative frameworks and proactive efforts undertaken by Parties to combat wildlife crime, should also be taken into account in the categorization.

The Committee:

- a) requested the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup to consider the comments made in plenary by Standing Committee Members and Parties relating to the draft criteria for the categorization of Parties in paragraph 9 a) and b) of document SC78 Doc. 65.3 and make recommendations relating to their adoption of the draft criteria to the Standing Committee at the present meeting; and
- b) agreed that the contextual information in paragraph 10 of document SC78 Doc. 65.3 be used by TRAFFIC as part of the categorization process.

Later in the meeting, Belgium, as Chair of the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, introduced document SC78 Com. 9.

There were no interventions.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 9 as follows:

The Committee agreed to submit the draft criteria for the categorization of Parties in paragraphs 9 a) and b) of document SC78 Doc. 65.3 for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Based on the advice provided by the MIKE-ETIS TAG and after obtaining further clarification from TRAFFIC on the use of the key data elements, the Secretariat proposes the following draft criteria to be used by TRAFFIC in Step 1 paragraph a) of the *Guidelines to the NIAP Process*:

a) *Exclusion criteria – countries NOT to be included in analysis (as established in the ETIS trend analysis):*

Parties that over a 10-year period scored less than 100 based on seizure-in or seizure-out data using the following formula:

1 x number of small-scale seizures (less than 10 kg) +

10 x number of medium seizures (between 10 kg and 100 kg) +

100 x number of large-scale seizure (at least 100 kg)

b) *Categorization criteria – Based on ETIS data (Note: Thresholds per category are not specified):*

i) *Categorization criterion 1): Measure of scale of trade based on seizure-in and seizure-out bias-adjusted variables summarized as:*

A. Number of seizures by ivory type and weight classes

B. Total weight

C. Percentage volume of trade

The above criterion will be used as follows to inform the three NIAP categories:

Category A: A Party with among the highest volume of illegal trade compared to others.

Category B: A Party with large volume of illegal trade compared to others.

Category C: A Party with medium volume of illegal trade that could potentially escalate and become of greater concern if not closely monitored and addressed.

ii) *Categorization criterion 2): Illegal ivory trade links and measure of law enforcement effort [LE ratio of seizure-in/(seizure-in+seizure-out)⁸]*

The above criterion will be used as follows to inform the three NIAP categories:

Category A: Parties regularly associated with ivory seizures made elsewhere and that fail or often fail to detect illegal consignments originating from, transiting through or entering their territories (low law enforcement ratio).

Category B: Parties occasionally associated with ivory seizures made elsewhere, and that successfully intercept most illegal ivory consignments originating from, transiting through or entering their territories (medium to high law enforcement ratio)

⁸ LE ratio of seizure-in/(seizure-in+seizure-out) also abbreviated as LE ratio of sz-in/sz-in+sz-out. Seizures made within country or territory are referred to as seizure in and seizures in which the Party was implicated along the trade chain as a country or territory of origin, re-export, export, or destination are referred to as seizure out.

Category C: Parties that are implicated in ivory seizures for the first time or are part of an emerging trend in terms of implicated records and vary in terms of law enforcement (low or medium law enforcement ratio)

65.4 Domestic ivory markets [Decisions 18.119 (Rev. CoP19) and 19.101] SC78 Doc. 65.4

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.4. Having consulted with the MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group and the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup, the Secretariat concluded that an analysis of ivory seizures connected to each Party with a legal domestic market for commercial trade in ivory was not feasible.

Considering it important that Parties allowing legal domestic trade in ivory continue to work to ensure that domestic trade did not impact global efforts to combat poaching and illegal trade, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) suggested the renewal of the Decisions on *Closure of domestic ivory markets*. This was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Benin, Niger, Senegal and Sudan, as well as the Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, Born Free Foundation, Center for Biological Diversity, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Environmental Investigation Agency, Fondation Franz Weber, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, Pro Wildlife, Species Survival Network and Wildlife Conservation Society).

The Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund (also on behalf of the organizations listed above) considered that the ETIS data available via the public aggregation tool demonstrated that Japan's domestic ivory market contributed to illegal national ivory trade due to its regulatory framework providing a large number of exemptions. Japan (Committee Member for Asia) and IWMC-World Conservation Trust considered that the issue of domestic markets was outside the remit of CITES. Japan stressed that its ivory stockpiles, legally imported in the past, were used in a controlled domestic trade regulated by strict measures, that there was no evidence of involvement in large scale illegal trade and therefore that the country was not included in the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process, and that Japan contributed to elephant conservation through support to the MIKE project.

The Committee:

- a) agreed with the advice provided by the MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group and the MIKE-ETIS Subgroup relating to the feasibility of the analysis proposed in Decision 19.99; and
- b) agreed to propose to CoP20 the deletion of Decisions 19.99 to 19.101 on *Ivory seizures and domestic ivory markets* and the renewal of Decisions 18.117 (Rev. CoP19), 18.118 and 18.119 (Rev. CoP19) on *Closure of domestic ivory markets*.

65.5 Exchange of information between the annual illegal trade report and the Elephant Trade Information System: Report of the intersessional working group..... SC78 Doc. 65.5

Belgium, as Chair of the intersessional working group on the exchange of information between the annual illegal trade report and the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.5 and reported on proposed changes to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* and Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev CoP19) on *National reports*, and on other issues raised during discussions that were not part of the mandate of the working group but that could benefit from further discussion.

The European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, echoed by Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and Niger, supported the amendments to the Resolutions.

On the additional issues raised in the document, Japan (Committee Member for Asia) considered that maintaining two databases was not cost-effective, and that duplicated reporting should be avoided. The European Union and its Member States also favoured minimizing the reporting burden on Parties while promoting data gathering, and therefore felt that streamlining data exchange between the systems should remain a priority. Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), supported by Morocco (Committee

Member for Africa) and the World Wide Fund for Nature, suggested that the submission of ivory seizure data to ETIS should be prioritized out of the two systems to ensure that the ETIS analysis was not compromised, and that information could then be carried over to the illegal trade database, as the data requirements there were lower. Niger considered that the different deadlines for submission of data to ETIS and to the Annual Illegal Trade Report had already been discussed and did not need to be revisited. This was echoed by Morocco (Committee Member for Africa), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), the United States of America (Committee Member for North America) and World Wide Fund for Nature but opposed by Belgium and Poland (Committee Members for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Committee:

- a) agreed the proposed amendments to paragraph 27 g) in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* and paragraph 4 in Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19) on *National reports*, presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 65.5, for submission to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) for consideration;
- b) noted the matters as contained in paragraph 6 of document SC78 Doc. 65.5; and
- c) agreed to submit the following draft decision to CoP20:

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.AA The Standing Committee shall consider the matters contained in paragraph 6 b) to g) of document SC78 Doc. 65.5 on *Exchange of information between the annual illegal trade report and the Elephant Trade Information System*, and make recommendations as necessary, to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 10.10 (REV. COP19) ON TRADE IN ELEPHANT SPECIMENS AND RESOLUTION CONF. 11.17 (REV. COP19) ON NATIONAL REPORTS

NB: Proposed new text is underlined.

Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph 27. g)

- g) summaries and aggregates of data provided to MIKE and ETIS, and the analyses of such data, constitute information that will be considered to be in the public domain once they are published on the CITES website, or otherwise publicly distributed. The detailed data on individual seizure cases, elephant mortalities and law enforcement submitted to MIKE or ETIS are owned by the respective data providers, which in most case are the CITES Parties; any such data relating to a CITES Party will be accessible to that Party, the CITES Secretariat, the members of the MIKE and ETIS Technical Advisory Group for information and review purposes and the members of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) for global research and analysis purposes, unless otherwise specified by the reporting Party as provided for in paragraph 4 of Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19) on *National reports*, and data submitted by the reporting Parties will be shared annually with the CITES Secretariat to supplement the CITES Illegal Trade Database. The detailed data on individual seizure cases, elephant mortalities and law enforcement will not be released to any third party without the consent of the Party concerned; data may also be released to contractors (e.g. statisticians) or other researchers (e.g. MIKE ETIS Subgroup-approved research collaborations) under appropriate nondisclosure agreements;

Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph 4

AGREES that, unless otherwise specified by the reporting Party, data collected in the annual illegal trade report and included in the database under the responsibility of the CITES Secretariat, should be made available to Parties for research and analysis of wildlife and forest crime as it affects them, and to the members of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) for ICWC global research and analysis studies on wildlife and forest crime and any data related to seizures of elephant specimens (as prepared by the Secretariat) to ETIS, on an annual basis to supplement the ETIS database and to support the monitoring the illegal trade in ivory and other elephant specimens as provided for in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) ;

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.6 and presented a list of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants.

India, supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) supported the recommendations in the document. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, proposed amendments to the *List of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants* and to the draft decisions. These were supported by Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) and Senegal, while further clarity on the amendments was sought by India.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), noting that Decisions 18.226 (Rev. CoP19), 19.107 and 19.108 were the only provisions under the Convention to be specifically aimed at protecting Asian elephants, proposed that these Decisions be renewed. Retention of Decision 18.226 (Rev. CoP19) in particular was supported by Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), Senegal and Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA UK) (also on behalf of ADM Capital Foundation, Animal Alliance of Canada, Born Free, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Environmental Forensic Science, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Fondation Franz Weber, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund, Japan Wildlife Conservation Society, Pro Wildlife, Species Survival Network, Wildlife Conservation Society and World Wide Fund for Nature). EIA UK stated that a thriving illegal online trade in parts and derivatives, particularly skins, despite the efforts reported by Parties, pointed to a continuing threat requiring further focus for implementation. The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, and Thailand, supported the deletion of the Decisions.

Nigeria encouraged Parties to step up efforts to address illegal online trade and draw on support available through INTERPOL and the *Wildlife Crime Linked to the Internet: Practical Guidelines for Law Enforcement Practitioners* to review their implementation of CITES provisions relating to wildlife crime linked to the Internet.

IWMC-World Conservation Trust urged the Committee to allow a well-regulated trade in captive-bred elephants, involving local communities and providing technical and financial support for marking and DNA analysis, to mitigate human-elephant conflict and promote sustainable livelihoods.

The Committee:

- a) noted the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/076 and invited Parties to draw upon the information provided in these responses to explore opportunities to further strengthen controls, oversight and monitoring of Asian elephants, including those in international trade, and to address illegal trade;
- b) regarding the recommendation in paragraph 33 b) of document SC78 Doc. 65.6, requested India and the United States of America to prepare an in-session document with amended text for recommendation b) and the *List of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants* in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 65.6:
- c) requested the Secretariat to monitor trade in Asian elephant specimens and to bring any matters of concern that may arise to the attention of the Standing Committee in its reporting as required by paragraph 19 of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*;
- d) agreed to submit draft decision 20.AA, as presented in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 65.6 and as amended by the United States of America, to the Conference of the Parties; and
- e) agreed to recommend to CoP20 that Decision 18.226 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph a) be renewed and that Decision 19.107 and 19.108 on *Trade in Asian elephants* (*Elephas maximus*) be deleted.

DRAFT DECISION ON ASIAN ELEPHANTS (ELEPHAS MAXIMUS)

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) work with its partners in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and relevant experts to provide training to authorities from Asian elephant range States on the identification of ivory and other elephant specimens, sample taking from ivory seizures and seizures of other elephant specimens for forensic analysis and associated chain of custody procedures; and
- b) develop a fact sheet to facilitate consistent interpretation of what constitutes an “captive-bred” Asian elephant bred in captivity in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and relevant Resolutions and make the fact sheet available to Parties to draw upon and use as needed.

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 13.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, supported the text in document SC78 Com. 13, remarking that the text under ‘parentage’ should be underlined as it was new text. Document SC78 Com. 13, as amended by the United States, were supported by Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia) and India.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 13 as amended by the United States of America as follows:

Regarding the *List of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants* presented in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 65.6, the Committee endorsed the following version of the list and encouraged Asian elephant range States where any of the elements in the list are not yet included in their national systems for registering, marking, and tracing captive Asian elephants to include such elements to facilitate strengthened controls and oversight regarding captive elephants, including those in international trade.

LIST OF KEY ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED REGARDING REGISTERING, MARKING AND TRACING SYSTEMS FOR CAPTIVE ASIAN ELEPHANTS

The Standing Committee at its 78th meeting (SC78, Geneva, February 2025), endorsed the following *List of key elements to be considered regarding registering, marking and tracing systems for captive Asian elephants*. Asian elephant range States, when reviewing their existing national systems or considering the establishment of a new national system, are encouraged to where any of these elements are not yet included in their national systems for registering, marking, and tracing of captive Asian elephants, consider inclusion of these elements to facilitate strengthened controls and oversight regarding captive Asian elephants, including those in international trade.

1. National legislation or regulations making the registration of each individual captive Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) mandatory should be implemented.
2. A captive elephant registration database must be established and maintained by an appropriate governmental agency.
3. It should be compulsory to register and record in the database, any elephant born in captivity, within the first year from the date the animal was born.
4. An elephant identification document should be issued for each registered captive elephant, containing as a minimum, the following information:
 - i) a unique identification number;
 - ii) date of birth;
 - iii) sex

- iv) parentage; if parentage of an elephant born in captivity is unknown then the individual is assumed to have been conceived in the wild and is classified as an F1 consistent with the terminology adopted by the Conference of the Parties in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev CoP19) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*;
 - v) a detailed description of unique physical markings;
 - vi) a detailed description of any unique identifying characteristics, to include fixed morphological traits of tusk and ear types;
 - vii) the weight and size of the elephant at the time of registration;⁹
 - viii) photos of the animal¹⁰, to include photographs of fixed morphological traits of tusks and ears, as well as front, back, right and left profile photos; and
 - ix) full details about the owner of the animal, including name, address and contact details, as well as records of any ownership transfer or translocation.
5. The following are elements that all Asian elephant range States should endeavour to include in their registration systems, if not yet done:
- i) microchipping of all captive elephants to facilitate identification through a unique microchip number; and
 - ii) establishing a database containing the DNA profile of each elephant in captivity.
6. Registration systems should make it compulsory for elephant owners to report:
- i) change of ownership;
 - ii) translocation of captive elephants;
 - iii) change of physical characteristics;
 - iv) change of unique markings;
 - v) death of elephants, within one month of the date of death; and
 - vi) for live elephants in international trade, the CITES permit information (purpose and source codes, importer, exporter, permit number, date of issuance and validity date).
7. Legislation or regulations should make provision for strict measures to be taken and penalties to be imposed on elephant owners that do not comply with any of the registration system requirements.

65.7 Trade in mammoth ivory (Decision 19.103) SC78 Doc. 65.7

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.7 and presented a compilation of information relating to the potential contribution of mammoth ivory trade to illegal trade in elephant ivory and elephant poaching, using available information and research studies.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) supported the recommendations in the document, but disagreed with the conclusions that a proposal to list the mammoth in the CITES Appendices fell outside the mandate of the Convention and proposed an amendment to the recommendations to note that listing of extinct species may be acceptable when such a listing would benefit CITES-listed species. The proposed amendment by Israel was supported by Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), Benin and the Animal Alliance of Canada.

⁹ *It should be compulsory to update the registration database and elephant identification document if any significant changes occur, i.e. as the elephant matures.*

¹⁰ *It should be compulsory to update the registration database and elephant identification document with new photos if any significant changes occur, i.e. as the elephant matures.*

Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), echoed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, Switzerland (Depositary Government), Canada, China, the Russian Federation, and Zimbabwe, opposed the proposed amendment by Israel, considering that listing the mammoth would set a precedent, that listing extinct species was not in line with the mandate of the Convention and could complicate implementation, and that other measures should be prioritized by African elephant range States. In light of the opposition, Israel withdrew the proposed amendment.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed deletion of the recommendation on monitoring of domestic ivory markets as this was already covered by Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*. This was opposed by Benin.

The Russian Federation requested the deletion of erroneous information in paragraph 34 of document SC78 Doc. 65.7, stating that the procedures reported were not an accurate representation of the situation in its country and not based on reliable sources, and that mammoth ivory was not exported from the Russian Federation with the exception of paleontological collections of cultural significance, the export of which was strictly regulated at federal levels. The full statement of the Russian Federation is available in the Annex to this summary record.

The Committee:

- a) noted the information and research results compiled regarding the trade in mammoth ivory as presented in document SC78 Doc. 65.7;
- b) encouraged Parties exporting and importing mammoth ivory to strictly apply the domestic regulatory measures they have in place for trade in these specimens;
- c) agreed to recommend to the Conference of the Parties that Decisions 19.102 and 19.103 on *Trade in mammoth ivory* have been implemented and can be deleted; and
- d) noted the intervention by the Russian Federation that will be included in the summary record.

65.8 CITES Dialogue Meeting for African elephant range States (Decision 19.167) SC78 Doc. 65.8

The Chair, as Chair of the CITES dialogue meeting for African elephant range States, introduced document SC78 Doc. 65.8, reporting on the outcomes of the meeting held in Maun, Botswana in September 2024, which proposed an amendment to footnote annotation A10 and some draft decisions, edited by the Secretariat for clarity.

Botswana, as Vice-Chair of the dialogue meeting, stressed that the outcomes had been agreed by consensus and reflected the desire by range States to co-manage African elephant populations. Botswana reiterated the pressing need to mobilize sustainable financing.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the recommendations in the document as amended by the Secretariat, and reminded Parties that the African Elephant Fund was created specifically for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, supported the recommendations with amendments to the draft decisions to take into consideration information document CoP19 Inf. 14 on *Mobilizing sustainable finance for African Elephant conservation* and to invite potential donor Parties and relevant financial institutions to the technical workshop proposed in draft decision 20.AA.

Benin, having not been able to participate in the dialogue meeting, drew attention to its comments in information document SC78 Inf. 28, proposing further clarifications to the draft decisions. Botswana (Vice-Chair of the dialogue meeting), South Africa and Zimbabwe did not support the changes proposed by Benin at this time, variously reiterating that the draft decisions had been achieved by consensus after a long process, expressing the view that the Standing Committee was not the appropriate forum to re-open discussions, as many African elephant range States were not present.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Committee Member for Africa), speaking on behalf of the Central African subregion, Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and Madagascar (Committee Member for Africa, and Vice-Chair of the dialogue meeting) were in favour of allowing the discussion to be continued among the range States. It was proposed that any matters could be raised and deliberated at an upcoming African Union Commission meeting or CITES regional cooperation meeting, which would allow African elephant range States time to engage with the proposed changes.

The Committee:

- a) welcomed the outcome of the African elephant range State Dialogue meeting as set out in the communiqué of the meeting and included in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 65.8;
- b) invited the African elephant range States to consider the draft decisions contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 65.8 and the discussion at SC78 and to submit the draft decisions for the consideration of the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- c) agreed that Decision 19.167 has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion; and
- d) also agreed that Decision 19.168 can be proposed for deletion at CoP20 since the dialogue meeting process will be completed at that time.

66. Great apes (Hominidae spp.):

Report on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18) SC78 Doc. 66

The Secretariat introduced SC78 Doc. 66 prepared in consultation with the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) and the Section on Great Apes (SGA) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission (SSC) Primate Specialist Group. The document reports on recent activities, including the third GRASP council meeting and other projects relevant to great apes, as well as summarizing seizures reported by Parties in their annual illegal trade reports.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, Uganda, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (also on behalf of Animal Alliance of Canada, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free, and Pro Wildlife) supported the recommendations in the document.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, called for providing assistance in the use of identification methods and exploring ways to secure funding to include new forensic tools to identify and trace specimens to their source population and for the re-establishment of the Great Apes Enforcement Task Force. These suggestions were supported by the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party. Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (also on behalf of the organizations listed above) also supported re-establishment of the Great Apes Enforcement Task Force and stressed that strategies and efforts to reduce trafficking should include both transit and destination countries.

UNEP, as the Secretariat for GRASP, invited CITES to consider contributing to the GRASP seizure database.

The Committee:

- a) noted document SC78 Doc. 66 prepared by the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 2e) of Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18);
- b) encouraged all Parties to identify seized great ape specimens at species level and report the seizures at species level in their annual illegal trade reports in a timely manner following the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report* and, as appropriate, consider contributing to the GRASP Apes Seizure database and the IUCN SSC A.P.E.S. database as per Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18);
- c) encouraged Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide assistance in using identification methods in all range States and other Parties affected by illegal trade in great apes and explore way to secure

funding to include new forensic tools to identify and trace great ape specimens to their source population;

- d) encouraged range States affected by illegal trade in great apes to address this issue as part of their implementation of the West Africa Wildlife Crime Strategy (WAWCS) adopted by the Economic Commission of West African States, as well as their respective National Wildlife Crime Strategies and action plans, where appropriate; and
- e) noted the suggestion to re-establish the Great Apes Enforcement Task Force and invited interested Parties from range, transit and consumer States to raise this issue at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

67. Pangolins (*Manis* spp.) (Decision 19.204)

67.1 Report of the Animals Committee..... SC78 Doc. 67.1

and

67.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 67.2

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 67.1 and noted that the Animals Committee had agreed that the conversion factors in paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 67.1 could be used for five pangolin species where required for law enforcement, but that further work was needed for the remaining species, for which draft decisions were prepared in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 67.1.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 67.2 and presented responses from 11 Parties on their stockpiles and annual pangolin reports, as called for in paragraph 4 of Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in pangolins*. Additionally, the Secretariat reported it had received information from China on their pangolin stockpiles. The Secretariat indicated that these responses would be further analysed to inform a comprehensive report on pangolins for CoP20.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa), noting the importance of the comprehensive report on pangolin trade that will be presented at CoP20 suggested some text to allow for the formulation of timebound and measurable recommendations based on the outcomes of the report. New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, supported the recommendations in both documents with the amendment suggested by Kenya.

China highlighted the measures it had undertaken to conserve pangolins, including the implementation of strict regulations and undertaking of extensive research, as detailed in SC78 Inf. 2. China observed that aggregated reporting on stockpiles was not supported by Convention text and was of the view that stockpile management is a domestic issue. Accordingly, China proposed to delete “*to use an aggregated summary of the pangolin stock declarations of Parties*” in paragraph 13 a) of the draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19). Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, preferred to retain the text as presented in the document.

Environmental Investigation Agency UK (EIA UK), also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Fondation Franz Weber, ProWildlife, Center for Biological Diversity, Animal Alliance of Canada, Born Free Foundation, ADM Capital, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Wildlife Conservation Society, expressed concern over the limited Parties’ responses to the Notification and the continued illegal pangolin trade, noting that approximately 15 tonnes of pangolin scales were seized globally in 2024, representing an increase of almost three tonnes since 2023. It strongly supported the suggestion to develop time-bound, measurable recommendations.

Regarding document SC78 Doc. 67.1, the Committee:

- a) supported the recommendation by the Animals Committee relating to the use of the conversion parameters presented in the table in paragraph 12 for *M. gigantea*, *M. javanica*, *M. pentadactyla*, *M. tetradactyla* and *M. tricuspis* by Parties in cases where national legislation demands that such information be provided for law enforcement and court purposes;

- b) encouraged Parties to use the following identification materials to support the identification of seized pangolin specimens at species level:
- https://www.traffic.org/site/assets/files/17352/eng_identification_sea_e.pdf and
 - <https://www.usaidrdw.org/pangolin-guide/>; and
- c) agreed to submit the draft decisions in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 67.1 for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON PANGOLINS (MANIS SPP.)

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding, work with the Species Survival Commission Pangolin Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and other relevant experts and in collaboration with the pangolin range States to further develop conversion parameters for all pangolin species, in particular *M. culionensis*, *M. crassicaudata* and *M. teminckii*, taking into account document AC33 Doc. 35. These conversion parameters should enable the reliable determination of the number of animals associated with any quantity of pangolin scales seized, that can be used by Parties in cases where national legislation demands that such information be provided for court purposes.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.BB The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the conversion parameters for all pangolin species, developed in accordance with the provisions of Decision 20.AA, to enable the reliable determination of the number of animals associated with any quantity of pangolin scales seized, and that can be used by Parties in cases where national legislation demands that such information be provided for law enforcement and court purposes; and
- b) make recommendations as appropriate to the Parties and the Standing Committee.

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders

20.CC Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations are encouraged to support pangolin range States with resources, both financial and technical expertise, to implement *in-situ* pangolin conservation and management programmes developed in response to Decision 18.238.

Regarding document SC78 Doc. 67.2, the Committee:

- a) noted the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2024/096;
- b) requested the Secretariat, in its implementation of paragraph 13 of Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19), to develop time-bound and measurable recommendations based on the most updated information available, directed to Parties (range, transit, and consumer countries), as appropriate, for consideration at CoP20;
- c) agreed for onward submission to CoP20, the proposed amendments to paragraphs 3 and 13. a) in Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in pangolins*, as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 67.2; and
- d) recommended to CoP20:
 - i) the deletion of Decisions 18.238 and 19.202, as the matter of *in situ* pangolin management and conservation programmes and stocks of pangolins specimens are already reflected in paragraphs 3 and 10 of Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in pangolins*; and

- ii) the deletion of Decisions 18.239, 19.200 and 19.203, paragraphs a), b), e) and f), as they have been implemented.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 17. 10 (REV. COP19)
ON CONSERVATION OF AND TRADE IN PANGOLINS

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike~~through.

3. ENCOURAGES Parties on whose territories stocks of parts and derivatives of pangolins exist, to take urgent steps to establish and apply, where not yet done, strict control measures to secure and monitor these stocks, and inform the Secretariat of the level of stocks each year before 28 February, in a format to be defined by the Secretariat, indicating the type and ~~number~~ quantity of specimens, the species, the source of the specimens, management measures, and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year;

[...]

13. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to:

- a) prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and pending external funding, prepare a report in consultation with the pangolin range States and Parties affected by illegal trade in pangolins, on the conservation status of pangolins in the wild, ~~and trade controls measures put in place by in Parties, using information provided by the range States on measures taken to comply with this Resolution and related relevant Decisions and to use an aggregated summary of the pangolin stock declarations of Parties and any other relevant additional information provided by relevant Parties to inform the report;~~ and

DECISIONS ON PANGOLINS (MANIS SPP.) THAT ARE STILL VALID

Directed to Parties

- 19.201** *All Parties are strongly encouraged to identify seized pangolin specimens at species level and report the seizures at species level in their annual illegal trade reports.*

Directed to the Secretariat

- 19.203 (Rev. CoP20)** *The Secretariat shall:*

- ~~a) issue a Notification inviting Parties, international organizations, international aid agencies and non-governmental organizations that developed tools and materials that could assist Parties in the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19) or identification materials concerning pangolin species, their parts and derivatives, to bring such materials to the attention of the Secretariat;~~
- ~~b) bring any materials reported in accordance with paragraph a) of the present Decision to the attention of the Animals Committee or the Standing Committee, as appropriate, together with any recommendations it may have, and taking into account any subsequent recommendations from the Animals Committee or the Standing Committee, make such materials available to the Parties;~~
- ae) *subject to external funding, provide training to Parties on the identification of pangolin specimens;*
- bd) *work with its partners in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to initiate activities and support the efforts of Parties to address illegal trade in Pangolin specimens; and*
- ~~e) report on the implementation of Decisions 18.238 and 18.239 to the Animals Committee, together with any recommendations it may have;~~

~~f) report on the implementation of Decision 19.202 to the Standing Committee, together with any recommendations it may have; and~~

~~cg) report to the 20th 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of the present Decision.~~

68. Saiga antelopes (*Saiga* spp.) (Decision 19.216)

68.1 Report by Kazakhstan..... SC78 Doc. 68.1

and

68.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 68.2 (Rev. 1)

Kazakhstan introduced document SC78 Doc. 68.1 and drew attention to the *CMS Medium Term International Work Programme (MTWIP) for the Saiga Antelope* vision to restore saiga populations to a level where sustainable use can again be considered. Kazakhstan noted the document disclosed information on saiga horn stockpiles, and provided updated data on saiga populations, efforts to combat illegal trade, and measures to address competition between saigas and local communities. Kazakhstan announced plans to host the Fifth Meeting of the Signatories to the CMS Saiga MoU in March 2025. After further consideration and in light of the Secretariat's document SC78 Doc. 68.2, Kazakhstan informed the Committee that it had revised its recommendations to remove potential overlaps.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 68.2 (Rev. 1), containing a summary of progress in implementing decisions on saiga antelope, including updates on legal and illegal trade patterns since the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee.

China noted the significant achievements in saiga antelope conservation in Kazakhstan and reiterated its commitment to restoring and expanding saiga populations. It highlighted the improvement of the species' IUCN Red List status from *Critically Endangered* to *Near Threatened* in 2023, but acknowledged the challenges posed by the species' rapid population growth, including increased human-wildlife conflict.

The Russian Federation thanked Kazakhstan for its report and welcomed ongoing cooperation efforts, including regular regional meetings and joint activities for the conservation of transboundary saiga populations. The Russian Federation stated that saiga have not been hunted in its country since 1999 and has been listed in the Red Book of the Russian Federation. It stated that there are no commercial saiga horn stockpiles in the Russian Federation, no legal domestic market, and strict market monitoring and control measures in place. The Russian Federation raised concerns regarding the use of source code "U" for saiga trade, warning that this could increase the risk of legal trade being misused for illegal activities. It stressed the need to verify the origin of exported saiga specimens, particularly those imported outside range States, such as through genetic analysis and ensuring specimens were not obtained in violation of national laws. Kazakhstan echoed the concerns regarding the use of source code "U", as well as source code "O", and suggested the Standing Committee consider a suspension in international trade in saiga specimens under these source codes.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) commended Kazakhstan's efforts to manage saiga populations and audit and secure saiga horn stockpiles. It expressed concern over the lack of transparency in the management of existing stockpiles in consumer States and joined Kazakhstan in urging range, transit, and consumer States to provide information on stockpiles and management measures.

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) expressed gratitude to Kazakhstan for its engagement on saiga conservation and for hosting the upcoming 5th Meeting CMS Saiga MOU signatories. CMS supported the document's recommendations and drew attention to the CMS report *The Sustainable Use of Saiga Antelopes: Perspectives and Prospects*.

Flora and Fauna International, also on behalf of Wildlife Conservation Society, TRAFFIC, and Environmental Investigation Agency, congratulated Kazakhstan for the remarkable recovery of the saiga population and its transparency in disclosing stockpiles. These organizations encouraged other range States, transit and consumer countries report similar information to the Secretariat.

The Standing Committee:

- a) noted the information in document SC78 Doc. 68.1;
- b) encouraged range States of the saiga antelope (*Saiga* spp.) and important consumer and trading countries of saiga parts and derivatives to put in place measures to effectively manage saiga specimen stockpiles;
- c) invited the Secretariat to submit draft decisions on the saiga antelope based on outcomes of the 5th meeting of Saiga MOU signatories, the status of implementation of Decisions 19.213 to 19.217 on *Saiga antelope* (*Saiga* spp.) and the outcomes of the discussion at SC78 to ensure synergy between CITES and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the joint CMS-CITES work programme
- d) noted the progress on the implementation of Decision 19.214;
- e) noted the concerns expressed by Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation relating to the use of source codes U and O for saiga specimens due to challenges linked to the making of legal acquisition findings; and
- f) invited the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to seek information on stockpile controls and other information concerning the management of and trade in saiga specimens to help inform the preparation of the CoP20 document.

69. Eels (*Anguilla* spp.) (Decision 19.221)

69.1 Report of the intersessional working group..... SC78 Doc. 69.1

and

69.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 69.2

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the intersessional working group on eels, introduced document SC78 Doc. 69.1 and reported that the working group agreed on the benefits of a genus-level resolution for anguillid eels, given commonalities between species, as presented in Annex 2. However, no consensus was reached on how to reflect the appropriateness of the ranching source code for eel aquaculture.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 69.2, providing an update on illegal trade in European eels, and an analysis of seizure data from 2018–2022 and recent enforcement operations. Regarding Decision 19.221 on harmonizing customs codes, the World Customs Organization had informed the Secretariat that 11 different codes are used for eels, classified by product state (e.g. live, frozen, fillets, smoked). The classification system, regularly reviewed, is at the genus level and not species-specific.

There was general support for a genus-wide resolution of eels as proposed in document SC78 Doc. 69.1, including from Indonesia and Japan (Committee Members for Asia), Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region. Poland saw a genus-wide resolution as an important way forward considering large-scale trafficking and trade pressure, and proposed amendments to the draft resolution, which included an additional paragraph to note that source code R is not appropriate for wild harvested specimens raised in aquaculture facilities unless there is sufficient scientific evidence that the three criteria for ranching as defined in Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) on *Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II* are met. Japan noted that, as the advice of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea on ranching related to European eels only, it was premature to determine that source code R is not appropriate for all eel species taken from the wild and placed in aquaculture facilities. The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, had minor editorial suggestions to the draft resolution which were made available in information document SC78 Inf. 37.

Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), speaking on behalf of the Asia region, while supportive of a genus-wide resolution, did not believe that consensus had been reached, noting that most Asian Parties had not yet provided comments on the text. Accordingly, Indonesia, with support from Japan and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia) and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), proposed the establishment of a small drafting group to refine the text.

Regarding the draft decisions in document SC78 Doc 69.1, the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, and New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) proposed some edits.

The Committee agreed to establish a drafting group to review the draft resolution on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*) in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 69.1, taking into account the comments made in plenary, and the draft decisions on *Eels* (*Anguilla spp.*) in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 69.1, taking into account the comments made by New Zealand and the United States of America. Membership was agreed as follows: Canada, China, Dominican Republic, European Union, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Chair), United States of America.

Later in the meeting, the United Kingdom, as Chair of the drafting group, introduced document SC78 Com. 17, highlighting that consensus had not been reached on a set of proposals put forward by China to differentiate some of the activities in the draft resolution between European eels and other anguillid eel species, and on the text in bold in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, proposed an amendment to paragraph b) of draft decision 20.DD, to replace 'farmed' with 'raised in aquaculture'. This was supported by the Dominican Republic (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), the United States (Committee Member for North America), the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) and Canada.

The Republic of Korea proposed removing the text in bold in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, replacing it instead with the specific instruments: the 'International Council for the Exploration of the Seas' and the 'General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean'. This was supported by the United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe).

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Indonesia and Kuwait (Committee Members for Asia), Cambodia, China, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Republic of Korea supported the proposal to differentiate between eel species, considering that it would facilitate implementation of the resolution due to the challenges raised by not having a legal basis for implementing activities for non-listed eel species. The United Kingdom (Committee Member for Europe) considered that this discussion was best left for the Conference of the Parties. The International Union for Conservation of Nature, speaking also on behalf of Zoological Society of London, recommended the adoption of a genus-level resolution to ensure that trade in all anguillid eels was legal and sustainable.

The Committee agreed that consensus could not be achieved on this issue within the Standing Committee and the draft decisions and the draft resolution on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*) in in-session document SC78 Com. 17, as amended by Poland and the Republic of Korea, be submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

The Committee noted the comments made by Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, the Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia, Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Poland, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

The Committee agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 19.218 to 19.221.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON *EELS* (*ANGUILLA SPP.*)

Directed to Parties and relevant stakeholders

20.AA Parties and relevant stakeholders are invited to provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 20.XX on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*).

Directed to Cuba, Egypt and Türkiye

20.BB Cuba, Egypt and Türkiye are requested to submit to the Secretariat up-to-date detailed information on trade in anguillid eels using the templates provided in Notification to the Parties No. 2021/018, to allow it to report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.CC The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification inviting Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide information on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 20.XX on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*);
- ab) subject to extrabudgetary resources, develop a dedicated page on the CITES website to make relevant information on the trade and conservation of anguillid eel species or activities relating to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 20.XX on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*) provided by Parties or others, available; and
- bc) bring any updated information received under Decisions 20.AA and 20.BB and the results of activities under Resolution Conf. 20.XX on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*) to the attention of the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, with recommendations, as appropriate.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.DD The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the potential risks and benefits of reintroducing seized, live European eels to the wild;
- b) explore options to facilitate discerning between European eels raised in aquaculture and wild European eels in CITES trade data;
- bc) consider any information brought to its attention by the Secretariat under Decisions 20.AA and 20.BB, paragraph b); and
- c) make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee or the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.EE The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the comments and recommendations provided by the Animals Committee and the Secretariat under Decisions 20.AA to 20.DD; and
- b) prepare a report with any necessary recommendations for improving the implementation of the Convention for anguillid eels, including possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 20.XX on *Trade, conservation and management of anguillid eel species* (*Anguilla spp.*), for consideration by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON *TRADE, CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT
OF ANGUILLID EEL SPECIES (ANGUILLA SPP.)*

RECOGNIZING there is significant international demand for and trade in specimens of anguillid eels, and this can vary depending on the availability of certain species;

NOTING that anguillid eel species are traded internationally at several life stages, both live and processed - as juvenile/fingerling eels for consumption, restocking and aquaculture, as larger specimens both wild-caught and from aquaculture, and as processed products;

RECOGNIZING the important role anguillid eel species play in their ecosystems and in promoting the long-term conservation and restoration of these ecosystems;

RECOGNIZING that well managed anguillid populations of anguillid eel species can support sustainable fisheries and contribute to sustainable livelihoods, food security and development;

RECOGNIZING the important role that sustainably managed populations of anguillid eel species play in supporting the rights of Indigenous peoples, and local communities, and international trade and the conservation of that does not threaten the conservation status of anguillid eel species;

NOTING common threats to anguillid eel species, including unsustainable and/or illegal fisheries and associated trade, lack of appropriate domestic regulatory measures, habitat degradation or loss, barriers to migration including hydropower, disease and parasites, invasive species, pollution and oceanic and climate change;

CONCERNED that some anguillid eel species have poor conservation status, including low juvenile recruitment, and the aforementioned threats have contributed to this status;

CONCERNED ~~ALSO~~ that CITES-listed anguillid eel species are known to have been trafficked internationally as non-CITES-listed anguillid eel species contrary to the requirements of the Convention, undermining anguillid eel conservation;

RECOGNIZING that anguillid eels are semelparous and panmictic across their natural ranges with multiple life stages often migrating through different jurisdictions and therefore require international collaboration for successful conservation and management, including aligning domestic measures where appropriate;

~~RECOGNIZING the duty of all States to cooperate, either directly or through appropriate sub-regional or regional organizations in the conservation and management of anguillid eels;~~

RECALLING that coastal States in whose waters anguillid eel species spend the greater part of their life cycle have a responsibility for the management of this species in accordance with the paragraph 1, Article 67 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

RECALLING that European eel has been listed in CITES Appendix II since 2009 and in the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) Appendix II since 2015;

ACKNOWLEDGING the difficulties in identification among different anguillid eel species across life stages and specimen types, including parts and derivatives, notably where domestic trade, traceability, and management measures are insufficient to support such identification;

COMMENDING the efforts to date towards improved fisheries management and legal, traceable and sustainable trade of anguillid eels, including national or regional trade restrictions for particular species; and

WELCOMING the availability of updated CITES guidance on the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs) for trade in CITES specimens from the NDF workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya (December 2023), applicable to anguillid eel species;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. URGES Parties, especially range States of anguillid eel species and Parties involved in their trade, to:

- a) strengthen sub-national, bilateral, and multilateral co-ordination and information sharing within and between countries involved in international trade in anguillid eels to improve traceability and the effectiveness enforcement measures;
 - b) identify knowledge gaps that contribute to uncertainty relating to population status and hinder effective conservation and management of anguillid eels, including prioritising species-specific research and data collection in all life stages, trade patterns and volumes and mitigation measures for addressing direct and indirect threats;
 - c) ensure appropriate monitoring of anguillid eel populations, including use of fishery-dependent and fishery-independent methods, and share the results and other relevant data on the status of anguillid eel populations with the appropriate ~~regional fisheries~~ bodies (e.g., regional fisheries or other bodies with management authority) so that a current assessment of the state of anguillid eel stocks can be established and updated on a regular basis.
 - d) collaborate and share information with other Parties regarding any non-detriment finding or other sustainability studies and fisheries management best practice on anguillid eel species they have undertaken, especially where the Parties share catchments or water bodies, and explore the different approaches that might be taken for making non-detriment findings for species traded as fingerlings (FIG) compared with those traded as other live eels (LIV), seeking the review and advice from the Animals Committee or other suitable bodies on any non-detriment findings, where appropriate;
 - e) develop and/or implement adaptive eel management plans with defined and time-bound goals at national, sub-national, or catchment level to enhance collaboration between authorities and other stakeholders with responsibilities for eel management both within and, where water bodies or catchments are shared, between States;
 - f) provide the Secretariat with information regarding new or updated measures, including quotas, that have been implemented to restrict the trade in live anguillid eels or their parts and derivatives at any life stage; and
 - g) report trade in CITES-listed anguillid eels at species-level and differentiated by life stage (as set out in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*) and consider modifying their national customs code system to differentiate between different eel products and life stages;
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties in which illegal harvest or trade of anguillid eels species occurs:
- a) if not yet in place, develop and enact legislation and other enforcement measures to address illegal harvest or trade in anguillid eel species;
 - b) strengthen existing measures that safeguard the effective implementation of the Convention, ensuring that the trade in CITES-listed anguillid eels is legal, sustainable and traceable;
 - c) collaborate with national and sub-national enforcement authorities and fisheries bodies to ensure that measures are in place to adequately address and tackle any illegal trade, such as evaluating the data and cases of illegal trade for anguillid eels and adapting, where appropriate, fisheries management and authorisations to reduce unsustainable and/or illegal harvest and eliminate opportunities for illegal trade; and
 - d) identify opportunities ~~for collaboration to collaborate internationally~~ amongst law enforcement agencies, at the national, sub-national, and international level, on investigative and prosecutorial best practice for addressing illegal trade of *Anguilla* species, to characterise illegal trade routes and share intelligence to support enforcement efforts;
3. RECOGNIZES that due to limited understanding of the stock recruitment relationship for CITES-listed eel species, source code R (Ranching) is not appropriate for wild harvested specimens of CITES-listed anguillid eels raised in aquaculture facilities, unless there is sufficient scientific evidence that the definition of Ranching as included in Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) is met, including requirements for non-detriment findings;
4. ENCOURAGES Parties to improve coordination between the respective national focal points for other relevant international bodies or instruments, such as ~~Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs)~~ the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES),

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, or CMS, where appropriate, and work through the respective mechanisms to strengthen research, training and data collection and harmonize with activities under CITES;

5. ENCOURAGES Parties to engage with relevant stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and sub-national authorities, in the development and/or implementation of conservation strategies and management plans for anguillid eel species;
6. INVITES Parties to share via the Secretariat any additional science-based conservation actions that have been implemented or are being considered to address non-harvest threats and improve the conservation status of anguillid eel species, such as altered hydrology, barriers to migration, habitat loss, pollution, parasites, disease, invasive species or climate change. This should include metrics used to assess the effectiveness of such measures;
7. INVITES Parties to share with other range States any lessons learned or best practices pertaining to the implementation of effective management and population monitoring of anguillid eels, and other relevant aquatic species and encourage Parties to exchange scientific, management, responsible fisheries and enforcement best practices;
8. INVITES Parties to provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Resolution to allow the Secretariat to provide recommendations to Parties via the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.
9. REQUESTS the Secretariat to make relevant information on the trade and conservation of anguillid eel species provided by Parties or others, including any relevant information provided under paragraph 1 of this Resolution, available on the CITES website and provide recommendations to Parties via the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.

70. Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) (Decisions 19.226 and 19.227)

70.1 Report of the intersessional working group..... SC78 Doc. 70.1

70.2 Report of the Animals Committee..... SC78 Doc. 70.2

and

70.3 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 70.3

Addendum..... SC78 Doc. 70 Add.

The United States of America, as Chair of the intersessional working group on sharks and rays, introduced document SC78 Doc. 70.1 that focused on reviewing the rapid guide for Legal Acquisition Findings (LAFs) in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*, recommending amendments to clarify their application to CITES-listed sharks and rays. Whether exporting Parties should be considered the coastal or flag State was a key issue that remained unresolved, so both options were presented for the Committee's consideration. The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 70.2 and noted it should be read alongside documents SC78 Doc. 70.1 and SC78 Doc. 70.3. The Animals Committee's extensive work was detailed in several annexes. The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 70.3 and addendum SC78 Doc. 70 Add., compiling draft decisions from the three related documents to support discussions.

The Chair, noting the scope of recommendations and draft decisions and time constraints, proposed to establish an in-session working group.

The Committee established an in-session working group on sharks and rays with the mandate to:

- a) review paragraphs 8 – 11 and the Annex in document SC78 Doc. 70.1 and paragraph 25 b) of document SC78 Doc. 70.3 on responsibilities of a foreign flagged vessel operating in the EEZ of a different State, make recommendations on the two options, and revise the proposed amendments to Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19);

- b) review recommendation in document SC78 Doc. 70.1 paragraph 19 d) and prepare draft decisions as appropriate;
- c) review paragraph 30 in document SC78 Doc. 70.3 on the eNDF tool and determine if the implementation would be beneficial and make recommendations;
- d) review paragraphs 38-51 in document SC78 Doc. 70.3 on the addition of catch location to reporting requirements and make recommendations;
- e) revise the draft decisions in SC78 Doc. 70 Addendum, as appropriate; and
- f) report back to the Standing Committee.

Membership was agreed as follows: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, European Union, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Maldives, Mexico, New Zealand (co-Chair), Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (co-Chair); Convention on Migratory Species, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre; International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, International Union for Conservation of Nature; Blue Resources Trust; Florida International University, Global Guardian Trust, International Fund for Animal Welfare, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Japan NUS, Save our Seas Foundation, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, Whale and Dolphin Conservation Trust, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, New Zealand, as Co-chair of the working group, introduced document SC78 Com. 14, indicating additionally that, if the draft decisions were adopted, Decisions 19.222 to 227 could be considered implemented and could be deleted.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported document SC78 Com. 14 with additional language to invite the Secretariat to propose practical guidance on how Parties could collect the information for all relevant trade, to add reference to the information collected through implementation of draft decision 20.BB, and to replace 'in accordance' with 'consistent with' in draft decision 20.BB. These changes were supported by New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania).

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 14 as amended by the United States of America as follows:

With regards to responsibilities of the exporting State

The Committee:

- a) agreed to the proposed amendments in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings* to CoP20, with option 1 as the preferred option;

Rapid guide for the making of legal acquisition findings

[...]

3. What laws and regulations apply to the legality of the specimen?

The Management Authority should, in consultation with other relevant authorities, as appropriate, identify, review and assess national laws, regulations, policies, and management plans for the protection of flora and fauna to determine the relevant rules that establish the requirements applicable to the CITES-listed species that are subject of an application for a CITES permit or certificate. To ensure a practical assessment, the Management Authority should ensure, as a minimum, that all legal requirements for obtaining a CITES-listed specimen pursuant to national laws, regulations, policies, and management plans for the protection of flora and fauna are fulfilled prior to the issuance of the CITES permit or certificate. For specimens of CITES-listed species being re-exported it should be established that prior trade was in accordance with the provisions of CITES governing activities along wildlife supply chains. The Secretariat, in collaboration with

FAO, to design has developed 'CITES-LEX',¹¹ an information system that provides national catalogues and comprehensive search capabilities of policies and legislation relevant to CITES and its implementation, ~~tool~~ building upon existing legal databases managed by FAO (for example, FAOLEX¹² and the 'Shark Measures Database'¹³) to assist the CITES Management Authorities and the applicants of CITES permits or authorizations ~~the regulated community in identifying national laws, regulations, policies, and management plans for the protection of flora and fauna.~~ responding to this question.

[...]

5. Review validity, accuracy, and completeness of documentation of the chain of custody

The complexity and specific elements of the chain of custody will vary from taxa to taxa, and depend on the circumstances. The tables below provide an overview of elements that may be considered for (i) flora and fauna, (ii) timber, and (iii) marine species, and can be used to help identify relevant evidence.

Note that the columns containing "examples of possibly relevant documentation" are ~~merely~~ intended as illustrations of what documents an applicant could provide to demonstrate compliance with national laws. The applicability of these examples will depend on national regulatory/management regimes, including operational guidelines national legal frameworks. The lists of examples are not intended to be used as complete or exhaustive checklists. Rather, they are a set of options and examples of documentation which an applicant might provide to demonstrate compliance with applicable laws at each step of the chain of custody.

Table 1: Evidence of legality along the chain of custody for flora and fauna

This table also contains elements that may apply to timber and marine species, depending on applicable legal frameworks.

The applicant could be asked to provide evidence on:	Type of Activity/Specimen	Type of Legal Finding	Examples of possibly relevant documentation
1. Sourcing	Wild-sourced Specimens	LAF	Records, such as permits, <u>certificates</u> , licenses, and tags, records of quotas, harvest locations, and capture means, that demonstrate the specimen was legally removed from the wild under relevant wildlife or forestry laws or regulations; evidence of firearms license where restricted and relevant; invoices related to the hiring of guides or professional hunters, where required; salvage permits.
	Ranched specimens	LAF	Records, such as permits, licenses, and tags, that demonstrate that the specimen was legally removed from the wild under relevant wildlife conservation laws or regulations. Records that document the rearing of specimens at the facility, including signed and dated statement by the owner or manager of the facility that the specimens were reared at the facility in a controlled environment; marking system, if applicable; and photographs or video of the facility.

¹¹ CITES-LEX is a non-binding research tool that provides national catalogues and comprehensive search capabilities of legislation and policies relevant to the implementation of CITES to assist Parties and regulated individuals and entities engaged in trade provides.
<https://citeslex.fao.org>

¹² <https://www.fao.org/faolex/en>

¹³ <https://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en/>

	Confiscated specimens	LAF	Copy of remission decision, legal settlement, or disposal action after forfeiture or abandonment that demonstrates the applicant's legal possession.
	Bred in captivity	In accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on <i>Specimens of animal species bred in captivity</i>	Records that identify the breeder or propagator of the specimens that have been identified by birth or hatch date, sex, size, band number, or other marks. <u>Records, such as permits and licenses, that demonstrate that the breeder has authorization under relevant wildlife conservation laws or regulations.</u> <u>Any relevant management plans for the species.</u>
	Artificially propagated	In accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18) on <i>Regulation of trade in plants</i>	Records that identify the nursery or propagator of the specimens that have been identified by the propagation date.
	Captive-born (F)	LAF	Records that identify the breeder or propagator of the specimens that have been identified by birth or hatch date, sex, size, band number, or other marks.
	Assisted production plant (Y)	LAF	Records that identify the propagator of the specimens that have been identified by propagation date.
	Previously imported specimens	Re-export	Copy of the previous CITES document that accompanied the shipment into the importing country.
2. Ownership and transfers			Certificates of ownership, and documentation of legal transfers, such as sales bills, receipts, and registrations. In the case of older specimens, in particular, those benefiting from pre-Convention status, this documentation may not exist. If the level of risk is low, an affidavit of ownership that explains the circumstances might be permissible. Additionally, for ivory and rhinoceros horn benefiting from pre-Convention status, the use of reliable methods to verify the date of acquisition, such as carbon-14 dating, may be possible in cases where documentation does not exist.
3. Transport			Licenses, waybills relating to transport of specimens of fauna and flora from place of capture or harvest to place of provisional storage prior to export, packing lists established by the applicant which clearly describe the specimens to be dispatched and inspection records.

4. Processing – taxidermy, meat processing, leather or fur processing, cosmetic, medicinal and food processing		Facility registrations, facility licenses, receipts, invoices, other official transaction documents, sanitation, <u>last inspection reports</u> and health code records.
5. Payment of taxes, duties and fees		Proof/receipt of payment of taxes, duties and fees applicable to trade in fauna and flora within the specific national context.

[...]

Table 3: Evidence of legality along the chain of custody for marine species

The Convention regulates international trade in specimens as well as including trade in specimens taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

When a specimen is taken from ABNJ by a vessel flagged in one State, and landed in a different State, this qualifies as export and import under the Convention. The flag State of the vessel is the exporting State and the State where the specimen is landed is the importing State, and the provisions of Articles III, IV and V concerning legal acquisition findings apply. If, after landing, the State where the specimen was landed (importing State, in such case) exports the same specimen to another State, this qualifies as a re-export under the Convention. In this scenario, the State where the specimen was landed becomes the State of re-export, and the provisions of Articles III, IV and V concerning legal acquisition findings apply.

When a specimen is taken from ABNJ by a vessel flagged in one State, and landed in the same State, this is known as an introduction from the sea. Such State is the State of introduction, and the provisions of Article III and IV concerning legal acquisition findings apply. Resolution. Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea* states that Parties involved in such a transaction should satisfy themselves that the specimen was acquired and landed in accordance with applicable measures under international law for the conservation and management of living marine resources. For further details, see Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16). If, after landing, the State of introduction exports the specimen to another State, this qualifies as an export and import under the Convention. The State of introduction becomes the State of export, the other State receiving the specimen is the State of import, and the provisions of Articles III, IV and V concerning legal acquisition findings apply.

If a specimen is taken from ABNJ by a chartered vessel and transported to the chartering State, the transaction may be treated as either an introduction from the sea, or as an import-export, as mutually agreed in writing by the States in question (i.e. the State where the vessel is registered and the chartering State). This applies regardless of whether the specimen is of an Appendix-I or Appendix-II species. However, when the specimen is of an Appendix-II species, and the specimen is transported to a third State, the trade should be treated as export-import. For further details, see Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16).

When a specimen is taken from the jurisdictional waters of a coastal State and landed in a different State, this qualifies as export and import under the Convention. That coastal State is the exporting State and the State where the specimen is landed is the importing State, and the provisions of Articles III, IV and V concerning legal acquisition findings apply.

It is therefore important, as a preliminary step, to identify where the catch will occur (e.g. ABNJ, a State's exclusive economic zone or a State's territorial waters) and all States involved in the trade transaction to determine the requirements that may apply to each State. , including if the vessel is chartered and it is useful to identify whether the State is a port State and Party to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA).

Additionally, it is pertinent to identify:

- i) the State under whose flag the vessel (that has harvested the specimen of a CITES-listed species) is operating;

- ii) the State where the specimen is landed;
- iii) whether the vessel involved is chartered by another State;
- iv) whether, after landing, the specimen is subject of another international trade transaction involving a different State;
- v) whether the States involved in the trade transaction are members of or participants in a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) and whether such RFMO has applicable obligations, including conservation and management measures (CMMs) that apply to regional port State measures; and
- vi) applicable measures under international law for the conservation and management of living marine resources, including those of any other treaty¹⁴, convention or agreement with conservation and management measures for the marine species in question.

It is also important to note that for the authorization of trade in marine species under the Convention, it is irrelevant whether the caught specimen was targeted or bycatch. Both targeted catch and bycatch should be documented and reported. The provisions of the Convention fully apply to bycatch.

The applicant could be asked to provide evidence on:	Examples of possibly relevant documentation
1. Legal authority to capture a specimen	Quotas, Licenses, Fishing agreements, Fishing permit, Ministerial agreement or regulation, or fishing record.
2. Timing and location of the catch	Digital positioning data, including Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data, Navigation system data (e.g., GPS data), or Automatic Identification System (AIS) data (for larger vessels). <u>Harvest location(s) such as fishery management areas, including regional management areas.</u> <u>Physical and/or electronic catch report forms, when available.</u> <u>Port of landing.</u> Observer data or logbooks; physical and/or electronic catch report forms.
3. Gear/technique employed	License/permit, Fishing agreements, Observer data or logbooks, when available, Physical and/or electronic catch report forms, when available.
4. The name of the vessel that captured the specimen	Vessel registration, flag State, License, authorization, permit.
5. Identification of vessel captain/master	Captain's certificate/license.
6. Transshipment occurrences	Authorisation issued by the national competent authority to engage in transshipment, Observer data relating to transshipment, when available, Transshipment entries in logbooks, Transshipment authorization by the competent national authority, VMS, AIS, or GPS data showing transshipment activity. <u>Compliance with relevant RFMOs obligations and/or national regulations related to transshipment including:</u>

¹⁴ For instance, as applicable, the Agreement on Port States Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), whose Annex B explicitly refers, among the documentation to be reviewed during port inspection procedures, the documents required under CITES.

	<u>Authorisation issued by the national competent authority to engage in transshipment,</u> <u>Observer data relating to transshipment, when available,</u> <u>Transshipment entries in logbooks,</u> <u>Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), Automatic Identification System (AIS), or navigation system data (e.g. GPS data) showing transshipment activity</u>
7. Compliance with measures relating to processing and handling of catch	Records or other information showing compliance with <u>safe handling guidelines and the requirements to land sharks with or without their fins naturally attached, as fin-to-carcase ratios and/or fins-attached rules (in case of shark fishing) established under domestic measures or any applicable RFMO Conservation and Management Measures,</u> Observer data, Logbooks, Records showing compliance with <u>national regulations, including measures consistent with individual National Action Plans for the conservation and management of sharks adopted by the country,</u> Records showing compliance with regulations on prohibition to take and land certain species, Records showing compliance with regulations <u>including those that establish time and/or area closures for temporary bans to fish certain species.</u>
8. Compliance with bycatch ¹⁵ and discard measures	Records showing compliance with <u>obligations domestic measures or RFMO Conservation and Management Measures related to bycatch and discards, such as time and/or area closures, specific gear requirements, retention prohibitions, safe handling guidelines; as established under domestic measures or to demonstrate for compliance with RFMO obligations, where relevant,</u> Observer data or logbooks, <u>Physical and/or electronic catch report forms, when available,</u> Catch report forms.
9. Payment of taxes, duties and fees	Proof or receipt of payment of taxes, duties and fees applicable to marine species within the specific national context.
10. Landing at a port or beach	Fishing permit or fishing records, Certificate of monitoring and control and landing (identification and quantification of species; inspection of fishing methods, Authorization and distribution of permits for movement of fishing products, Documents/regulations <u>demonstrating compliance with requirements to land sharks with or without their fins naturally attached, or finning.</u> For artisanal fisheries: a Review of authorized ports for landing; review of formats which include a certificate of the landing of marine species; the information gathered is registered in the country database (Fisheries Ministries or Agencies).

b) invited the Secretariat to propose edits to wording in option 1 to be in line with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to CoP20 noting that the intention is to refer to all areas that are not areas beyond national jurisdiction; and

c) noted that certain Parties were in favor of option 2 in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 70.1.

With regards to the eNDF tool

d) The Committee invited the Secretariat to propose draft decisions to host the eNDF tool on the CITES website with the most cost-efficient and effective method, which would be subject to external funding, to CoP20.

¹⁵ *Bycatch is understood by the FAO as being a 'component of the catch which represents non-targeted fish associated with the catch of the target species or group towards which fishing effort is directed, or other aquatic organisms taken incidentally during the course of fishing (e.g. birds, mammals, reptiles, invertebrates).'*

With regard to the addition of catch locations to reporting

The Committee

- e) invited the Secretariat to propose the inclusion of catch location information, by expanding source code X for specimens taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any state and source code W for specimens taken from the wild, using FAO Major Fishing Areas in the *Guidelines for preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* and practical guidance on how Parties can consistently and accurately collect this information for all relevant trade; and
- f) noted that there are practical concerns regarding the implementation and certain Parties expressed preference for expanding source codes X and W using Ocean Basins; and

With regards to draft decisions

- g) The Committee agreed to submit the draft decisions in Annexes 1 and 2 to document SC78 Com. 14 to CoP20 and agreed to propose for deletion Decisions 19.222 to 19.227:

CONSOLIDATED DRAFT DECISIONS ON SHARKS AND RAYS (ELASMOBRANCHII SPP.)

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are encouraged to:

- a) consistent with Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation and management of sharks*, provide brief information (with an executive summary not exceeding 200 words, if the report exceeds four pages) to the Secretariat, in particular on any national management measures, including new or updated national plans of action for sharks, that prohibit commercial take or trade;
- b) respond to the Notification called for in Decision 20.BB including sharing any non-detriment findings (NDFs) and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade, where available, ~~and~~ any other scientific information on sharks and rays and share their experience in implementing CITES provisions for listed shark and ray species, in particular current challenges;
- c) consider if they are likely to be key beneficiaries from the guidance document(s) reviewed under Decision 20.EE, paragraphs a) and c); if so, these Parties are strongly encouraged to participate in any Standing Committee working groups established to address Decision 20.EE; and
- d) seek external funding for a dedicated marine species officer and consider seconding staff members with expertise in fisheries and the sustainable management of aquatic resources to the Secretariat.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to:
 - i) consistent with Resolution Conf 12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation and management of sharks*, provide concise (with 200 word executive summary, if the report exceeds four pages) new information on their shark and ray conservation and management activities, in particular:
 - A. the making of NDFs;
 - B. the identification of CITES-listed shark-products in trade;

- C. the monitoring of export data of CITES-listed shark, parts and derivatives, and any suitable remedial measures applied to limit the export of specimens in order to maintain each species throughout its range at a level consistent with its role in the ecosystem;
- D. capacity-building needs; and
- ii) share with the Secretariat their non-detriment findings (NDFs) and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade, where available, and any other scientific information on sharks and rays, to post in the sharks and rays web portal;
- iii) share with the Secretariat their experience in implementing CITES provisions for listed shark and ray species, in particular:
 - A. challenges related to CITES permitting process including but not limited to the making of non-detriment findings and legal acquisition findings; and
 - B. challenges related to transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of fisheries management including the context of the provisions on introduction from the sea in Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16);
- b) provide information from the CITES Trade Database on commercial trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2010, sorted by species and, if possible, by product at the shipment level;
- c) invite non-Party, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organization observers to support Parties by providing concise information related to the above; and
- d) collate this information for the consideration of the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

20.CC Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) continue to provide capacity-building assistance for implementing Appendix-II shark and ray listings to Parties, especially developing countries and small island developing states, upon request;
- b) liaise with relevant Regional Fishery Bodies (RFB) including Regional Fisheries Management Organizations and Arrangements (RFMO/As) to identify opportunities for capacity-building with the same organizations, possibly in the form of attending meetings (where the RFB permits such attendance) or by directly liaising with the Secretariat of the organization to provide this information to its membership and/or the provision of training;
- c) collaborate closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to verify that information about Parties' shark management measures is correctly reflected in the shark measures database developed by FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en/>) and if not, support FAO in correcting the information;
- d) seek to collaborate with Parties and organizations to establish a repository to hold imagery under a Creative Commons license of wet and dried unprocessed shark, parts and derivatives (particularly, but not exclusively, those from CITES-listed species) along with related species level taxonomic information to facilitate refinement of automated species identification development through a range of novel technologies; and
- e) investigate mismatches and possible errors (e.g. differences in transactions reported by exporter/importer countries under the same permit; weights; species; etc.) in the CITES Trade Database and make corrections, where possible;
- f) communicate with Parties that do not appear to be reporting exports of sharks and rays despite available information showing otherwise (i.e., trade only reported by importing countries) to

determine the reason for underreporting and provide necessary support to encourage reporting;

- g) explore opportunities for information exchange between fisheries researchers, fisheries authorities and CITES Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities, as appropriate, to facilitate efficient transport of biological samples for scientific and diagnostic purposes taking into consideration the discussions that occurred under Decision 19.160 and the responses to the Notification called for in Decision 20.BB, paragraph a) iii); and
- h) bring the results of activities in this present Decision to the attention of the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.DD The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the information collated by the Secretariat under Decision 20.BB and the results of activities described under Decision 20.CC; and
- b) make recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to Standing Committee

20.EE The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider if there is a need to develop new guidance or identify existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II;
- b) consider the FAO's on-going guidance on Catch Document Schemes, Port State Measures and any other measures to reduce Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing;
- c) in consultation with the Animals Committee, review challenges and consider the need for the development of further appropriate mechanisms, including guidance, related to transport of biological samples for research and data collection purposes in the context of fisheries management including the context of the provisions on introduction from the sea in Resolution Conf 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) and make recommendations to CoP21; and
- d) report its findings under the present Decision to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

20.FF The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the comments and recommendations provided by the Parties, the Animals Committee and the Secretariat under Decisions 20.AA, 20.BB, 20.CC and 20.DD; and
- b) prepare a report with any necessary recommendations for improving the implementation of the Convention for sharks and rays for consideration by the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON THE *FEASIBILITY OF AN ADAPTED RST PROCESS FOR SHARKS AND RAYS*

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) draft a report that envisions an adapted Review of Significant Trade process for sharks and rays, which would:

- i) select high priority species in international trade consistent with Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*;
 - ii) determine the stocks that are affected for the selected species; then
 - iii) identify range and fishing States with significant trade for the relevant stocks of concerns; and
- b) provide the Animals Committee with the report with the implications and feasibility of implementing such a process and any amendments that may be necessary to Resolution Conf 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*.

Directed to the Animals Committee

20.BB The Animals Committee shall review the report by the Secretariat under Decision 20.AA and make recommendations to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the recommendations by the Animals Committee under Decision 20.BB and report to CoP21.

71. Seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.) (Decision 19.232)

71.1 Report of the Animals Committee..... SC78 Doc. 71.1

and

71.2 Report of the Secretariat..... SC78 Doc. 71.2

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc 71.1 and drew attention to ongoing work under several Decisions and Resolutions that may address the recommendations in the document, including work on legal acquisition findings (LAFs), stockpiles, and the study under Decision 19.228 to be discussed under agenda item 71.2.

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 71.2 and indicated that work with UNODC to prepare a report on global illegal trade in seahorses was ongoing and regretted that the report was not available in time for the meeting. It therefore proposed revisions to Decisions 19.229 and 19.230, along with two new draft decisions.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported the recommendations in both documents. Australia proposed to reference the recommendations included in c), d), e), f), g) and i) of paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 71.1 in draft decision 20.BB of document SC78 Doc. 71.2, in line with the Secretariat's suggestion to take these recommendations into consideration following the completion of the report on global illegal trade in seahorses. The International Union for Conservation of Nature supported this suggestion, noting that these recommendations would help strengthen the regulation of trade the millions of dried seahorses traded internationally each year, primarily illegally.

Regarding document SC78 Doc. 71.1, the Committee:

- a) noted the outcome of the discussions on seahorses from AC33 as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 71.1, including a new set of decisions; and
- b) agreed that Decision 19.231 has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

Regarding document SC78 Doc. 71.2, the Committee:

- a) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties revised Decisions 19.229 (Rev. CoP20) and 19.230 (Rev. CoP20), as well as new draft decisions 20.AA and 20.BB, as presented in the Annex to document SC78 Doc. 71.2 and as amended by Australia; and

- b) agreed that Decisions 19.228 and 19.232 can be proposed for deletion.

Directed to source, transit, and consumer Parties for which there is evidence of illegal and/or unsustainable international trade in dried seahorses

19.229 (Rev. CoP20) ~~To effectively implement effectively the inclusion of regulation of international trade in seahorses in Appendix II of CITES, source, transit, and consumer Parties for which there is evidence of illegal and/or unsustainable international trade in dried seahorses are encouraged to:~~

- a) ~~collaborate with key stakeholders and species experts to develop national or regional plans of action to improve CITES the implementation of CITES regulations for seahorses and should include, inter alia, the following, inter alia:~~
 - i) ~~encouraging collaboration and communication between key stakeholders at a national and regional level, including Environment, Fisheries and Enforcement agencies, with respect to CITES implementation and data gathering for the international trade in seahorses;~~
 - ii) ~~improving monitoring, detection and law enforcement activities related to seahorses in coastal areas and at transaction points (e.g. in the marketplace, online, in maritime areas, and at air- and seaports);~~
 - iii) ~~submitting comprehensive and accurate information on illegal international trade in seahorses in their annual illegal trade reports to the Secretariat, as required in compliance with Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19) on National reports; and in support of Decision 19.228, paragraph a)~~
 - iv) ~~addressing the main drivers of illegal and unsustainable trade by effectively regulating and constraining the operations of non-selective fishing gears, such as bottom trawls and gillnets, to reduce their impacts on seahorses, and combating illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing of seahorses by developing best practices for sustainable harvest; and~~
- b) ~~share progress in developing and implementing these national or regional plans of action with the Secretariat for its report to the 33rd meeting of the Standing Animals Committee.~~

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

19.230 (Rev. CoP20) *Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide financial and technical assistance to Parties to implement Decision 19.229 (Rev. CoP20) and any further recommendations made by the Standing Committee.*

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) continue to work on and finalize the report on the global illegal trade in seahorses that includes an analysis of data from the CITES illegal trade database, illegal trade *routes*, *modus operandi*, seizures, information contained in the studies prepared by the Secretariat in previous intersessional periods and information received through consultations with Parties, species experts and regional enforcement networks as applicable; and
- b) make the report available to the Standing Committee together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the report and any recommendations presented to it in accordance with Decisions 20.AA and 19.229 (Rev. CoP20), and the recommendations in paragraph 12 c), d), f), g) and i) of document SC78 Doc. 71.1, and develop recommendations as appropriate, to strengthen CITES implementation and enforcement regarding international trade in seahorses; and
- b) report on the implementation of the Decisions on *Seahorses* (*Hippocampus spp.*) to the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting.

72. Products containing specimens of Appendix-II orchids (Orchidaceae spp.)
(Decision 19.248) SC78 Doc. 72

For agenda items 20, 22, 30, 72 and 78, the Committee requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and other stakeholders for consideration by the Chair of the Standing Committee when these documents are submitted to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

73. Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*) (Decision 19.253) SC78 Doc. 73

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 73, which summarizes progress on the study to assess and monitor the implications of the amendment to annotation #10 on the conservation and international trade of Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*).

Canada flagged that document SC78 Doc. 73 and the study misrepresented its response to the study, as Canada did not have a system in place to control Brazil wood, but had emphasized the benefit of creating standardized traceability systems.

On the study itself, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, requested clarification on how some of the information was verified. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), while agreeing with many of the conclusions of the report with regard to traceability, could not agree with the conclusion that commercially planted stocks were sufficient to meet demand, nor that plantations had any impact on the supply of violin bows. Brazil reported that there were no official records of authorized exports of derived products of Brazil wood from plantations, and that no plantations had registered federally, which was one of the requirements before exports could be authorized. Brazil also reported that there was wood laundering in companies that held stocks. Brazil called on the bow-making industry to prove that its production was indeed sustainable and encouraged it to research new materials. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, considered that the study covered a breadth of traceability systems and strategies to enhance the listing of *Paubrasilia echinata*, but lacked information on the cost and enforceability of the traceability options, as well as information on plantations.

Regarding the draft decisions, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, supported the draft decisions and considered that establishing the potential of commercial plantations was a key component. Poland suggested adding to draft decision 20.BB an invitation to Brazil to consider all information regarding activities reported as developed in the country. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), requested the deletion of draft decision 20.BB in its entirety, as it was providing the relevant information at the present meeting. The deletion was supported by China. Feeling that confirmation of the information was needed, Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested that draft decision 20.BB invite Brazil to submit the information on plantations to the Secretariat. The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, supported the draft decisions with amendments to ensure a role of the Plants Committee in the tasks therein, and suggested a new draft decision directed to the Plants Committee to consider the results of the report and provide recommendations as appropriate. These amendments were supported by Poland.

The International Society of Violin and Bow Makers (also on behalf of *Chambre Syndicale de la Facture Instrumentale*, *Confédération des Industries Musicales Européennes*, *International Pernambuco Conservation Initiative*, and the *League of American Orchestras*) drew attention to information document

SC78 Inf. 26, which contained industry comments on the study, and stated that the industry would work with Brazil to register plantations in the federal systems and advance stockpile registration and traceability.

The Committee:

- a) noted the feedback provided to the draft report contained in the Annexes 1 and 2 to document SC78 Doc. 73 and requested the Secretariat to revise the draft report and to submit it to CoP20;
- b) agreed to establish a drafting group to review the draft decisions in paragraph 9 of document SC78 Doc. 73 and submit the revision as an in-session document for consideration by the Standing Committee. Membership was agreed as follows: Brazil, Poland and the United States of America; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 19.249 to 19.253 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

Later in the meeting, the Chair introduced document SC78 Com. 8, prepared by the drafting group.

The United States (Committee Member for North America) proposed that other relevant stakeholders be allowed to consider and respond to the information which would be shared by Brazil under recommendation 1 a) of document SC78 Com. 8. This was supported by Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).

The Committee agreed the recommendations in in-session document SC78 Com. 8 as amended by the United States of America as follows:

The Committee:

- a) invited Brazil to share via a Notification to the Parties any relevant information on *Paubrasilia echinata* (including but not limited to plantation growth and stockpiles) and allowing Parties and other relevant stakeholders to consider and respond to it prior to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20); and,
- b) invited Brazil to share with the Secretariat any comments received from the Notification, so that they can be considered as part of the revisions to the draft report on "*Paubrasilia echinata* bows: Fine Tuning Traceability Solutions"; and
- c) requested the Secretariat to submit the following draft decisions on Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*) for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at CoP20:

Directed to Parties, in particular source, transit and destination Parties for Paubrasilia echinata

20.AA Parties, in particular source, transit and destination Parties for *Paubrasilia echinata* are invited to:

- a) consider the findings of the report "Paubrasilia echinata bows: Fine Tuning Traceability Solutions" (CITES Secretariat, 202X);
- b) collaborate, as appropriate, with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and entities to develop voluntary marking or identification systems for *Paubrasilia echinata* musical instruments to enhance traceability mechanisms for individual bows;
- c) establish a mechanism to register *Paubrasilia echinata* bow and wood stockpiles; and
- d) provide the Secretariat with information relating to the voluntary marking or identification systems developed for bows and the mechanism used to register *Paubrasilia echinata* bow and wood stockpiles.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) consolidate information relating to:

- i) the voluntary marking or identification systems developed by source, transit and destination Parties for *Paubrasilia echinata*;
 - ii) the mechanisms used to register *Paubrasilia echinata* bow and wood stockpiles; and
 - iii) make the information available to Parties on request; and
- b) submit a report to the Standing Committee and Plants Committee relating to the information received from Parties in terms of Decision 20.AA.

Directed to the Plants Committee

20.CC The Plants Committee shall consider the report submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 20.BB and make recommendations as appropriate in preparation for the Secretariat's reporting to the Standing Committee under Decision 20.DD.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.DD The Standing Committee shall consider the report submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 20.BB, including any recommendations by the Plants Committee under Decision 20.CC, and make recommendations for consideration by:

- a) the source, transit and destination Parties for *Paubrasilia echinata*; and
- b) the Conference of the Parties at its 21st meeting, as appropriate.

74. Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species (Decision 19.264)..... SC78 Doc. 74

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 74 and reported that substantial feedback had been received on the analysis of e-commerce supply chains in products of CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plant species, precluding its finalization for the current meeting but that it could be finalised by CoP20.

Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), speaking on behalf of the Asia region, and the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, considered that further review of the draft report was necessary before it was submitted to the Conference of the Parties.

The United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, supported referring nomenclature issues listed in Annexes 2 to 4 to document PC27 Doc. 32.1 Add. to the nomenclature specialist and the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre, and, while supporting the cross-referencing of the Medicinal Plant Names Services and CITES databases, suggested ensuring continued consultation from the Plants Committee on this matter.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) stressed the importance of including the notion of access and benefit sharing, a pillar of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in the work on aromatic and medicinal plant species.

The Committee noted that the recommendations in paragraph 15 a) of document SC78 Doc. 74 could not be discussed and agreed that Decisions 19.261 to 19.264 can be replaced by the draft decisions recommended by the Plants Committee for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 74.

**DRAFT DECISIONS ON TRADE IN MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS
AGREED BY THE 27TH MEETING OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE 20TH
MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) finalize the study developed under Decision 19.261, paragraph c), and summarized in document PC27 Doc. 32.1 Add. for the consideration of the Plants Committee;
- b) work with the nomenclature specialist of the Plants Committee and the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to consider the identified discrepancies listed in Annexes 2 to 4 of document PC27 Doc. 32.1 Add, and identify whether corrections or improvements to the nomenclature in CITES databases are necessary;
- c) subject to external funding, implement cross-references between CITES databases and the Medicinal Plant Names Services for CITES-listed MAPs, taking into account the technical advice of the Plants Committee agreed at its 26th meeting (see summary record PC26 SR); and
- d) report to the Plants Committee.

Directed to the Plants Committee

20.BB The Plants Committee shall

- a) review the study and the report submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.AA;
- b) continue to consider the draft Resolution on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants contained in the Annex to document PC27 Com. 3, including taking into account the report submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 20.AA, and make any recommendation as appropriate; and
- c) report to the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Plants Committee and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

75. An assessment of the practicalities of the CoP12 decision that the Convention should apply to fungi SC78 Doc. 75

The United Kingdom of Great Britain of Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) introduced the document, recalling that, at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, it was agreed that species of fungi are covered by the Convention. However, since then, there had been limited discussion on its practical application. The document aims to reopen discussions and gather views on how CITES provisions could apply to fungi. Noting the time constraints, the United Kingdom welcomed feedback after the meeting.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) suggested that the first step should be to identify endangered fungi species to have a concrete case for the Committee to discuss and gain an understanding of the workload associated with including such species. Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia) concurred with the need for a concrete example to consider the implications for the Convention.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania), speaking on behalf of the Oceania region, noted that they had identified an internationally recognized Australian fungi expert willing to provide *ad hoc* advice to the Committees, and could explore a formal agreement with a follow up paper to CoP20. Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, was open to the appointment of an *ad hoc* expert as opposed to a permanent fungi nomenclatural specialist. New Zealand noted that it saw value in the development of a specific resolution that draws together an agreed approach.

Kuwait (Committee Member for Asia), supported by Honduras (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) and Indonesia (Committee Member for Asia), considered that fungi were outside the mandate of the Convention and that their conservation was better addressed through other specialised frameworks. The Chair reminded the Committee that CoP12 agreed that the Convention should be considered to apply to fungi.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and Japan (Committee Member for Asia) did not support the establishment of a fungi specific body equivalent to the Animals and Plants Committees, with Poland suggesting the joint sessions of both Committees, or the

Plants Committee, could be most appropriate forum to discuss such issues. Japan highlighted the importance of fungi for domestic consumption in its country.

China, while acknowledging the importance of fungi conservation, believed it was premature to involve CITES in the regulation of trade in fungi. Mexico did not consider that there was a need for fungi-specific measures under CITES.

The Animal Alliance for Canada remarked that it had consulted with a fungi expert from Chile who considered that while there were some species that could benefit from consideration under the Convention, until a proposal came forward, it was not an urgent matter.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania indicated they would provide feedback on the document in writing.

The Committee noted document SC78 Doc. 75 and invited Parties, in particular Peru, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America, to provide any feedback relating to the implications relating to the application of the Convention to fungi in particular the practical considerations to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

76. Annotations [Decision 16.162 (Rev. CoP19)]SC78 Doc. 76 and SC78 Doc. 76 Add.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the intersessional working group on annotations, introduced document SC78 Doc. 76, drawing the Committee's attention to the working group's advice on annotations #14, #11, #12, and #4 and the definitions in Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP19) on *Implementation of the Convention for tree species* that may require interpretation and guidance to the Parties. The Secretariat also submitted SC78 Doc. 76 Add. including draft decisions to be considered by the Standing Committee.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) concurred with the working group's advice that it was premature to take recommendations regarding annotations #11 and #12 forward unless range States were consulted prior to CoP20. However, given the long-standing issues regarding these annotations, the United States suggested that Standing Committee regional representatives could be requested to consult with *Aniba rosaeodora* and *Bulnesia sarmientoi* range States in their regions, which was supported by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) expressed its willingness to reach out to members of its region but requested the inclusion of "if possible" in the suggested recommendation. Argentina offered to contact the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Paraguay regarding annotations #11 and #12.

Canada supported the recommendations but proposed to delete paragraph a) i) of draft decision 20.XX.

The Committee:

- a) noted the report and the advice provided by the working group in paragraphs 7 through 18 of document SC78 Doc. 76;
- b) endorsed the amendments proposed by the working group to annotation #4 as described in paragraph 16 of document SC78 Doc. 76;

f) <i>finished products <u>packaged and ready for retail trade</u> of <i>Aloe ferox</i> and <i>Euphorbia antisiphilitica</i> packaged and ready for retail trade;</i>

- c) invited regional representatives of the Standing Committee, with support from the Secretariat, to obtain, if possible, feedback from range States of *Aniba rosaeodora* and *Bulnesia sarmientoi* on whether they can support the revisions to annotation #11 and annotation #12 described in paragraph 12 of document SC78 Doc. 76;

Proposed #11

<i>Logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, plywood, powder and extracts, except the following products containing such extracts when the extract is not the primary or highest-percentage ingredient in the product:</i>

- a) *finished products packaged and ready for the retail trade;*
- b) *finished fragrance mixtures; and*
- c) *finished flavour mixtures.*

Proposed #12

Logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, plywood and extracts, except the following products containing such extracts when the extract is not the primary or highest-percentage ingredient in the product:

- a) *finished products packaged and ready for the retail trade;*
- b) *finished fragrance mixtures; and*
- c) *finished flavour mixtures.*

- d) endorsed the proposed addition of text to Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for tree species* (Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 76) and in the Interpretation Section of the Appendices (Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 76); and

AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION CONF.10.13 (REV. COP18) ON
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION FOR TREE SPECIES

1. RECOMMENDS that:

[...]

- d) for the purpose of annotations in the Appendices for parts and derivatives of species traded as timber, definitions to be used should, to the extent possible, be based on the tariff classifications of the Harmonized System of the World Customs Organization. Note references to Harmonized System codes refer to the language of the definition adopted by CITES, and not to the Harmonized System code that applies;

NEW PARAGRAPH OF THE INTERPRETATION SECTION OF THE APPENDICES

- xx. Note references to Harmonized System codes refer to the language of the definition adopted by CITES, and not to the Harmonized System code that applies.

- e) agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the following draft decision as amended by Canada to replace Decision 16.162 (Rev. CoP19).

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.XX The Standing Committee shall, in close collaboration with the Plants Committee, recognizing that the Plants Committee is an important source of expertise and advice to Parties on such scientific and technical issues:

- a) re-establish the working group on annotations, aiming to ensure balanced representation of importing and exporting Parties. The group shall include, but not be limited to, Members from the Standing Committee, Plants Committee, observer Parties, including representatives of CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, enforcement focal points, and industry representatives. The terms of reference for the working group shall include the following and may be expanded in response to other Decisions adopted by CoP20:
 - i) ~~in close collaboration with ongoing efforts in the Plants Committee, continue reviewing the appropriateness and practical challenges resulting from the implementation of the annotations to the Appendices, including those related to tree species, particularly to assess the benefits of simplifying annotations #5, #6 and #17 or assessing the benefits of harmonizing annotations for species with the same genus, taking into account the guidance provided by Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP19) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II;*~~

- ii) further consider Annotations #11 and #12 with regard to determining when extracts become ingredients in finished products and consult with range States to ensure that the annotations would continue to regulate the specimens/commodities they export under the original rationale for the species listing in line with the guidance provided in Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP19) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*;
 - iii) further consider Annotation #14 related to the agarwood producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.) in particular with regard to the implementation of paragraph e) “exhausted agarwood powder, including compressed powder in all shapes” and the challenges related to the identification of exhausted agarwood powder by frontline enforcement officers;
 - iv) develop or refine definitions of terms used in current annotations as appropriate, and submit them for adoption by the Conference of the Parties and subsequent inclusion in the Interpretation section of the Appendices;
 - v) conduct any work related to annotations directed to it by the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee or the Plants Committee; and
 - vi) prepare reports on progress made in addressing the issues tasked to it and submit them for consideration by the Standing Committee.
- b) report its conclusions and any recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

77. Annotation #15 [Decision 18.322 (Rev. CoP19)]..... SC78 Doc. 77

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 77, pertaining to exemptions for finished instruments, parts and accessories made from wood from species in the genera *Dalbergia* and *Guibourtia*. The Secretariat reported on a study assessing the effects of the exemptions on international trade and concluded that, while there were some interpretation challenges, the annotation was effective in regulating trade and had a low impact on conservation, but that gaps in the traceability of raw materials persisted.

Poland (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, remarked that inconsistent reporting was an issue that should be addressed more generally. The United Republic of Tanzania recommended that the Secretariat continue to build capacity and provide technical and financial support on wood identification, in particular for lookalike species, to improve traceability.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, proposed additional recommendations to gather more feedback on the study.

India drew attention to the fact that *Dalbergia sissoo*, a species classed as Least Concern by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and abundant in the wild and in agroforestry on the Indian subcontinent, was not included in the study, and requested that the impact on *Dalbergia sissoo* of the genus-level listing of *Dalbergia* be brought out in the study.

The League of American Orchestras (also on behalf of Chambre Syndicale de la Facture Instrumentale, Confédération des Industries Musicales Européennes, International Pernambuco Conservation Initiative, International Society of Violin and Bow Makers and Taylor Guitars) supported the study and considered that annotation #15 had substantially supported the cross-border movement of finished musical instruments. IWMC-Wildlife Conservation Trust welcomed the study and wondered if similar annotations could be considered for other species used by the music industry.

The Committee:

- a) noted the feedback provided on the second draft of the report contained in the Annexes 1 and 2 to document SC78 Doc. 77;
- b) requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties following SC78 inviting Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft report;

- c) requested the Secretariat to revise this second draft of the report taking into consideration the comments made at SC78 and in response to the Notification and submit a final report for consideration at CoP20; and
- d) agreed that Decisions 18.321 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.322 (Rev. CoP19) have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion at CoP20.

78. Orchid specimens exempted through annotation #4 g) (Decision 19.271)SC78 Doc. 78

For agenda items 20, 22, 30, 72 and 78, the Committee requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties inviting comments from Parties and other stakeholders for consideration by the Chair of the Standing Committee when these documents are submitted to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

79. Implications of the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another [Decision 18.151 (Rev. CoP19)]..... SC78 Doc. 79 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 79 (Rev. 1) and presented draft guidance on transition periods and possible transitory measures and draft decisions that would allow further consideration of the topic at the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), Japan (Committee Member for Asia), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Committee Member for Europe) and China supported the new approach suggested by the Secretariat.

Brazil (Committee Member for Central and South America and the Caribbean) highlighted that the differing interpretations of importers and exporters on the date of entry into force of listings had disrupted important commercial transactions and considered it important that importers consider the date of entry into force in the exporting country and take into account shipment duration. Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, agreed that if the shipment left the port of export prior to the date of entry into effect of the listings, the import can be accepted based on the rules applicable at the time of export.

Regarding the general principles in the draft elements for guidance, Japan (Committee Member for Asia) considered that paragraph 16 b) added additional procedures for Parties with no practical solutions. Japan also did not agree with paragraph f) regarding inventorying stockpiles acquired for the purpose of export, highlighting the difficulties associated with obtaining data from privately owned stockpiles and distinguishing stockpiles for export from those for domestic trade.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) speaking on behalf of the North American region, considered the guidance as a positive first step, but expressed disappointment that consultation with the Plants Committee on tree species with annotation #5 or other annotated plant species had not occurred, and that the recommendations did not extend beyond advising Parties to liaise bilaterally. It lacked clear guidance on how Parties can deal with circumstances related to certificates of ownership, musical instrument certificates, or traveling exhibition certificates issued before adoption of a CoP proposal, given that these can remain valid for up to three years. They also noted the need for similar guidance for cases where a trade suspension is put into effect. The United States recommended to draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) to provide consistent long-term guidance, by expressly including: 1) that pre-Convention certificates may be issued prior to entry into force date of a species newly added to the Appendices and; 2) the narrow circumstances in which a retrospective document may be issued, to address shipments that were legally exported prior to entry into force date but arrive at the port of import after the entry into force date without necessary CITES documents. They also recommended amendments to paragraph 3 of Resolution Conf. 13.6 (Rev. CoP18) to incorporate the recommendations regarding necessary measures to prevent excessive acquisition of specimens included in Appendix II as long-term guidance (in addition to the existing text in the Resolution concerning Appendix-I specimens).

Georgia (Committee Member for Europe), Israel and Peru supported the amendments of the United States, with an additional suggestion from Israel that the new requirement of an import permit for a species that transitions from Appendix II to Appendix I should be reflected in the list of general principles in the guidance.

The International Wood Products Association, also on behalf of Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, highlighted the negative consequences of the ongoing lack of consensus on CITES permitting requirements during transition periods. They noted that shipments of lumber, veneer and plywood, often take weeks or months to reach their destination, meaning that some pre-Convention shipments may arrive after a listing takes effect. Disagreements between exporting and importing Parties on whether permits are required were reported to have led to significant financial losses and trade disruptions. They urged Parties to collaborate ahead of CoP20 to resolve these inconsistencies that impacted stakeholders committed to compliance.

The Committee:

- a) noted the comments made by Belgium, Brazil, China, Georgia, Israel, Japan, Peru, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America on behalf of the North American region; and by the International Wood Products Association;
- b) agreed to submit for consideration at CoP20 updated draft guidance and best practices related to periods of transition and possible transitory measures provided in Annex to document SC78 Doc. 79 (Rev. 1) revised by the Secretariat taking into consideration the comments made by Parties and industry at SC78;
- c) requested the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, to prepare draft decisions to be submitted at CoP20, for further consideration of this topic at SC81, taking into account any comments made at this meeting; and
- d) agreed that Decision 18.151 (Rev. CoP19) has been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

80. Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species
[Decision 18.317 (Rev. CoP19)]..... SC78 Doc. 80

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 80 and proposed that Decision 18.317 (Rev. CoP19) and Decision 19.265 be renewed.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America) did not support the renewal of the Decisions, expressing concern that the scope had expanded beyond what was in the mandate of CITES. This were echoed by Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, Japan (Committee Member for Asia), Canada and Mexico.

The Committee:

- a) noted the updated report provided by the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 19.265; and
- b) agreed to propose the deletion of Decision 18.317 (Rev. CoP19) and Decision 19.265 to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

81. Informal review mechanism for existing and proposed annotations (Decision 19.267)..... SC78 Doc. 81

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 81 and proposed an approach for reviewing existing annotations and a strategy to limit or avoid future implementation challenges related to new or amended annotations.

The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking as a Party, endorsed the Secretariat's approach to reviewing existing annotations, but emphasized that Parties facing implementation challenges linked to annotations should be encouraged to raise these issues with the Secretariat at any time. They agreed with the Secretariat's conclusion that a key challenge in ensuring appropriate annotations arises from substantive amendments made during CoP negotiations, but recognized that such negotiations provide flexibility to reach consensus on complex issues.

Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, suggested an amendment to draft decision 20.AA to request the Secretariat to report back to the first regular meeting of the Standing Committee following CoP20. The Chair noted that the existing draft decisions sufficiently accounted for reporting and review by the Secretariat and the Committee.

Canada was supportive of a pilot test but cautioned the use of a reflection period, considering that its use should be at the discretion of the relevant Committee Chair to ensure smooth functioning of the meeting.

The Committee:

- a) noted of the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decision 19.266 and of the report contained in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 81;
- b) agreed with the approach to the review of existing annotations proposed in paragraphs 23-25 of document SC78 Doc. 81 and the draft decisions included in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 81;

ADDITIONAL DECISIONS ON ANNOTATIONS

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties inviting Parties and observers to provide information on whether there have been any implementation issues or challenges concerning any of the annotations contained in Appendices I, II and III, and if so, describe the issues or challenges, including options for addressing these; and
- b) based on the responses received, prepare a report to the Standing Committee on identified implementation challenges with its recommendations for addressing these.

Directed to Parties and observer organizations

20.BB Parties and observers are encouraged to submit pertinent information to the Secretariat in response to the Notification concerning issues or challenges related to the implementation of annotations in the Appendices as well as options for addressing these.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider the report and the recommendations prepared by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 20.AA; and
- b) formulate recommendations to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties concerning the implementation of the annotations, as appropriate.

- c) agreed to test the approach with respect to annotations that are proposed to be amended during the course of the meeting of the CoP, described in paragraph 26 of document SC78 Doc. 81 and requested the Secretariat to report back to the first regular meeting of the Committee following CoP20 on the experience and any results as well as any recommendations;
- d) noted the comments made by Belgium, Canada and the United States of America; and
- e) agreed that Decisions 19.266 and 19.267 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

82. Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings [Decision 18.314 (Rev. CoP19)]..... SC78 Doc. 82

The specialist on zoological nomenclature of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 82. The Animals and Plants Committees concluded that nomenclature updates for Appendix III taxa should be the responsibility of the listing Party, preferably in consultation with the Secretariat and nomenclature specialists and proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for species in Appendix III* and Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature* to clarify the process for implementing nomenclature changes in Appendix III.

New Zealand (Committee Member for Oceania) thanked the nomenclature specialists and both scientific committees and, with support from and further additions by the United States of America (Committee Member for North America), proposed minor amendments to Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 82.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for species in Appendix III* in Annex 1 and Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature* in Annex 2 to document SC78 Doc. 82 as amended by New Zealand (Oceania) and the United States of America on behalf of the North American region to be considered at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) agreed that Decisions 18.313 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.314 (Rev. CoP19) have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion to the Conference of the Parties.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 9.25 (REV. COP18) ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONVENTION FOR SPECIES IN APPENDIX III

The Plants and Animals Committees agreed the following amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18):

Text proposed to be deleted is ~~crossed-out~~ and proposed new text is underlined.

1. RECOMMENDS that, when considering the inclusion of a species in Appendix III, a Party:

a) ensure that:

i) the species is native to its country;

ii) if the species concerned is included in one of the standard lists of scientific names or taxonomic references adopted by the Conference of the Parties, the scientific name provided by that reference be used; if the species concerned is not included in one of the adopted standard references, the Party provide references as to the source of the scientific name used as indicated in sub-paragraph e) below, and in cases where there is any doubt regarding the nomenclature to follow, consult the nomenclature specialist of the Animals Committee or the Plants Committee, as appropriate;

iii) its national laws and regulations for the conservation of the species are adequate to prevent or restrict exploitation and to control trade, and include penalties for illegal taking, trade or possession and provisions for confiscation; and

iv) its national enforcement measures are adequate to implement these regulations;

[...]

c) inform the Management Authorities of other range States, the known major importing countries, the Secretariat and the Animals Committee or the Plants Committee that it is considering the inclusion of the species in Appendix III and when a non-standard reference has been used, provide the Nomenclature Specialist of the Animals or Plants Committee with the reference as to the source of the scientific name used to describe the species being proposed, and seek their opinion on the potential effects of such inclusion;

[...]

e) after due consultation, and having satisfied itself that the biological and trade status of the species justify the action, submit to the Secretariat its considerations under paragraph 1 a) to d) above, specifying the following, in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article XVI of the Convention:

i) the scientific name of the species it is submitting for inclusion in Appendix III:

A. if the species concerned is included in one of the standard lists of scientific names or taxonomic references adopted by the Conference of the Parties, the reference citation and the scientific name provided by that reference should be submitted;

B. if the species concerned is not included in one of the adopted standard references, the Party(ies) should provide reference(s) as to the source of the scientific name used; and

C. if there are nomenclature uncertainties concerning the species, Party(ies) should consult the nomenclature specialist of the Animals Committee or the Plants Committee, as appropriate; and

- ii) any readily recognizable parts and derivatives to be included, unless it intends to include all readily recognizable parts and derivatives

.....

6. URGES Parties having included species in Appendix III to:

- a) review periodically the status of these species, seek assistance of the Animals or Plants Committee in undertaking the review mentioned in paragraph 5 of this Resolution, if necessary, and taking into account these guidelines and any recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees, to consider the necessity to maintain the species in Appendix III;
- b) inform the Secretariat and the Animals and Plants Committees about any proposed taxonomic or nomenclatural changes affecting species included in Appendix III to determine whether these changes would also result in changes in distribution that would affect the determination of which countries would be required to issue export permits or certificates of origin, and proceed to amend the Appendix-III listing, if needed; and
- c) respond in a timely manner to requests from the Secretariat on proposed nomenclature changes for Appendix-III listed species recommended by the Animals or Plants Committee through its process for updating current standard nomenclatural references in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature* to inform amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) and proceed to amend the Appendix-III listing, if needed.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 12.11 (REV. COP19) ON *STANDARD NOMENCLATURE*:

The Plants and Animals Committees agreed the following amendments to Resolution Conf.12.11 (Rev. CoP19) [Note the Secretariat made an editorial amendment in paragraph g) to replace '(see definition in paragraph 2.h)', with ', as defined in subparagraph h) below']:

Text proposed to be deleted is ~~crossed out~~ and proposed new text is underlined.

2. RECOMMENDS that:

.....

- f) whenever a change in the name of a taxon included in the Appendices is proposed, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Animals or Plants Committee, determine whether this change would alter the scope of protection for fauna or flora under the Convention. In the case where the scope of a taxon is redefined, the Animals or Plants Committee shall evaluate whether acceptance of the taxonomic change would cause additional species to be included in the Appendices or listed species to be deleted from the Appendices and, if that is the case, a range state Party or the Depositary Government should be requested to submit a proposal to amend the Appendices in accordance with the recommendation of the Animals or Plants Committee, so that the original intent of the listing is retained. Such proposals should be submitted for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties, at which the recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees will be considered;
- g) if the Animals or Plants Committee become informed of taxonomic or ~~proposes~~ nomenclatural changes in a published taxonomic authority, as defined in subparagraph h) below relating to taxa included in Appendix III, they should advise the Secretariat of such proposed changes and whether they these changes would also result in changes in species distribution that would affect the issuance of determination of which countries would be required to issue certificates of origin by range States. To ensure the Party (or Parties) that included the species in Appendix III are aware of the potential changes

and their potential impacts on implementation, the Secretariat will inform the Party (or Parties) of the nomenclature changes and any resulting changes in distribution that potentially alter the scope of protection for fauna and flora (inclusion or deletion of species or populations) included in Appendix III and in consultation with the nomenclature specialist(s) as appropriate, encourage the Party (or Parties) to revise the nomenclature of their Appendix-III listing in accordance with the procedure described in Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for species in Appendix III*.

.....

8. AGREES that the adoption of a standard checklist or reference by the Conference of the Parties does not by itself change the status vis-à-vis CITES of any entity, whether it is listed in the Appendices or not, and the status of the entity remains as intended in the proposal adopted by the Conference unless specifically changed by the adoption of a further amendment proposal; any Party that identifies a change in the status vis-à-vis CITES of any entity as a result of the adoption of a new standard reference should consult the Secretariat and nomenclature specialist as soon as possible.

83. Higher taxon listings in the Appendices (Decision 19.273)..... SC78 Doc. 83 (Rev. 1)

The specialist on zoological nomenclature of the Animals Committee introduced document SC78 Doc. 83 (Rev. 1). The Animals and Plants Committees concluded that changes should only be made through regular nomenclatural updates if they do not alter the scope of protection and remain consistent with the original listing proposal. These conclusions were reflected in proposed amendments to paragraph 2 f) of Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature*.

Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) and Peru supported the recommendations in the document. Peru expressed concerns that inclusion of higher taxa in the Appendices posed problems with respect to the implementation of the Convention.

The Committee:

- a) agreed to submit the amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature* in paragraph 11 of document SC78 Doc. 83 (Rev. 1) to be considered at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and

2 f) whenever a change in the name of a taxon included in the Appendices, or the taxonomic level in which a taxon is included in the Appendices, is proposed, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Animals or Plants Committee, determine whether this change would alter the scope of protection for fauna or flora under the Convention. In the case where the scope of a taxon is redefined, the Animals or Plants Committee shall evaluate whether acceptance of the taxonomic change would cause additional species to be included in the Appendices or listed species to be deleted from the Appendices and, if that is the case, the Depositary Government should be requested to submit a proposal to amend the Appendices in accordance with the recommendation of the Animals or Plants Committee, so that the original intent of the listing is retained. Such proposals should be submitted for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties, at which the recommendations of the Animals and Plants Committees that are determined not to alter the scope of protection for fauna and flora under the Convention will also be considered by the Conference of the Parties;

- b) agreed that Decisions 19.272 and 19.273 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

84. Taxonomy and nomenclature of African elephants (Loxodonta spp.) (Decision 19.277) SC78 Doc. 84 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced document SC78 Doc. 84 (Rev. 1), which provides an analysis of the potential impacts of recognizing the African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) as a separate species to the African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) and concludes that that recognition did not constitute a substantive change to the Appendices. The document presents three options for reflecting the nomenclature change, as well as a draft decision on *Data collection and analysis for two species of African elephant* and an amendment to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

The Chair proposed that all three options for reflecting the nomenclature change be referred to CoP20, given the fact that not all African elephant range States were present.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) and Belgium (Committee Member for Europe), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, agreed with the report's conclusions that the change would be non-substantive and did not require a listing proposal to amend the CITES Appendices.

Israel (acting Committee Member for Europe in the absence of Georgia) and Kenya (Committee Member for Africa) expressed a preference for nomenclature option B. The United States of America (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, agreed that any of the three options would represent a non-substantive change and expressed a preference for options B or C.

Regarding the draft decisions, the United States (Committee Member for North America), speaking on behalf of the North American region, requested a change in decision 20.AA subparagraph b) to replace 'in accordance' with 'consistent'.

The Committee:

- a) noted the change to the standard nomenclature reference recommended by the Animals Committee as set out in paragraph 4 of document SC78 Doc. 84 (Rev. 1);
- b) agreed to submit the three options to reflect the nomenclature change in the Appendices, as contained in paragraphs 29 to 32 of document SC78 Doc. 84 (Rev. 1) to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting;
- c) agreed to submit the draft decision on *Data collection and analysis for two species of African elephants* as amended by the United States of America and proposed amendment to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* contained in Annex 1 to document SC78 Doc. 84 (Rev. 1) to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and
- d) agreed that Decisions 19.275 to 19.277 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISION ON
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS FOR TWO SPECIES OF AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA Subject to extrabudgetary resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) consult the MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group to advise whether an analysis of the trends in the proportion of illegally killed elephants (PIKE) based on the two species of African elephants can be provided in the future, in addition to the analysis of the genus-level continental and subregional trends and,
- b) if feasible, carry out the analysis and include the results in its regular report to the Standing Committee ~~in accordance~~ consistent with paragraph 27 of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 10. 10 (REV. COP19) ON
TRADE IN ELEPHANT SPECIMENS

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~.

23. URGES Parties to collect samples from large-scale ivory seizures (i.e. a seizure of 500 kg or more) that take place in their territories, preferably within 90 days of the seizure or as soon as allowed under judicial processes, and provide these to forensic and other research institutions capable of reliably determining the origin, species and ~~or~~ age of the ivory samples in support of investigations and prosecutions;
24. RECOMMENDS that Parties share with the Secretariat and source countries information on the origin, species and ~~or~~ age of seized ivory specimens arising from forensic analysis of samples to facilitate

investigations and prosecutions, and for analysis by MIKE and ETIS in their reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties;

85. Any other business..... *No document*

There were no interventions.

There was no decision taken by the Committee.

86. Determination of the time and venue of the 79th and 80th meetings..... *No document*

The Committee noted that its 79th meeting would take place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on 23 November 2025, and that its 80th meeting would be held immediately after the close of CoP20, on 5 December 2025.

87. Closing remarks..... *No document*

Following the remarks by the Secretary-General, the Chair thanked all participants for their cooperation, the Secretariat and the interpreters, and closed the meeting at 17h.

**Conf. 16.5*
(Rev. CoP20)**

**Cooperation with the Global Strategy
for Plant Conservation of the
Convention on Biological Diversity**

Edits by the North American region, Brazil and Poland shown in bold.

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity*, and the *Memorandum of Cooperation between the Secretariat of CITES and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity*, signed on March 1996, as well as its amendment, signed in 2000 and 2001;

RECALLING that, in 2002, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2002, adopted, through Decision VI/9, the *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation* (GSPC), including outcome-oriented global targets through to ~~for~~ 2010; in Decision X/17 adopted the *Consolidated update of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation for 2011-2020*, and, in 2024 through Decision **16/20** adopted the voluntary complementary actions related to plant conservation to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework **adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CBD;**

NOTING that, since its 13th meeting (Geneva, August 2003), the Plants Committee has recognized that CITES contributes to many of the Targets of the GSPC and since its 27th meeting (Geneva, July 2024) that these contributions will continue through the voluntary complementary actions under the CBD's new Global Biodiversity Framework;

NOTING further that the Secretariat of the CBD recognizes in the ~~2020~~ *Plant Conservation Report* that Target 11 of the GSPC (*No species of wild flora endangered by international trade*) formed the core business of CITES activities related to flora;

RECALLING Decision ~~159.2249~~ adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its ~~159th~~ meeting (~~Panama City Doha, 202240~~), which directs the Plants Committee and the Secretariat to collaborate with processes established to implement develop the relevant outcomes regarding the post-2020 future of the GSPC beyond 2040, as it relates to CITES activities;

WELCOMING Decision **16/20**~~17~~ of the ~~160th~~ meeting of Conference of the Parties to the CBD (~~Japan-Cali, Colombia, 202440~~), which adopted the consolidated update of the *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020* (GSPC) to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

RECOGNIZING the significant role that CITES can play in the achievement of the ~~objectives and targets~~ voluntary complementary actions of the GSPC, and the effect upon CITES if the GSPC is successfully implemented;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. INVITES Parties to:

- a) take note of the potential contribution of CITES through ~~to~~ the objectives and targets and voluntary complementary actions of the consolidated update of the *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 202311-20320* through the activities and products listed in the Annex to the present Resolution;
- b) promote and enhance collaboration between their GSPC focal point and their CITES Authorities, through:

- i) the involvement of CITES authorities in the development and implementation of the GSPC national biodiversity strategies, particularly activities related to CITES-listed species; and
 - ii) the inclusion of CITES-GSPC-related activities in CBD National Reports;
- 2. DIRECTS the Secretariat to encourage the exchange of information related to the GSPC and other plant conservation and sustainable use initiatives, by:
 - a) promoting awareness of ongoing CITES activities that contribute to the achievement of GSPC voluntary complementary actions~~Targets~~, by communicating information among CITES bodies and Parties on the operations and outcomes of CITES processes, such as the Review of Significant Trade, Periodic Review of the Appendices, proposals to amend the CITES Appendices,~~and~~ formulation of Non-detriment Findings (NDFs), among others;
 - b) collaborating with the CBD Secretariat to streamline reporting on relevant CITES activities related to the GSPC objectives, targets and voluntary complementary actions~~Targets~~;
 - c) including the GSPC in any work plans developed under the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Secretariat of CBD; and
 - d) inviting a CBD representative to participate as an observer at Plants Committee meetings that address GSPC;
- 3. DIRECTS the Plants Committee and the Secretariat to promote CITES collaboration with CBD on the implementation of the GSPC objectives, targets and voluntary complementary actions by:
 - a) representing the CITES Plants Committee at meetings of CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and other GSPC-related meetings subject to the availability of external funding; and
 - b) providing contributions for CBD documents regarding the implementation of the GSPC objectives, targets and voluntary complementary actions.

Annex

List of potential CITES activities and products and their contribution to the objectives, and targets and complementary voluntary actions of the updated *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020*

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
1. Reducing threats to biodiversity		
Target 1 <u>Ensure that all areas are under participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.</u>	Plant conservation in spatial planning and management processes <u>1. Identify and map, where possible, all plant species in terrestrial, inland water, marine and coastal ecosystems, including at the population level, as well as areas and ecosystems important for plant diversity, using diverse knowledge systems.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <u>CITES Appendices.</u> – <u>Proposals for amendment of the Appendices.</u> – <u>Non-detriment Findings.</u> – <u>Periodic Review of the Appendices.</u> – <u>Review of Significant Trade.</u>
Target 2 <u>Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.</u>	Ecological restoration <u>2. Implement or participate in programmes for the effective restoration of degraded ecosystems and habitats, including to prevent or mitigate the existing drivers of degradation, prioritizing the use of genetically appropriate material of native species, enhancing and conserving soils, considering ecological criteria, associated fungal symbionts, pollinators and dispersers, and including species of conservation concern, as well as climate resilience, long-term commitment, innovative financing and adaptive</u>	<u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
	<u>management, ensuring that the programmes enhance biodiversity and human well-being and are informed, where possible, by traditional knowledge, with the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned.</u>	
<u>Target 3</u> <u>Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.</u>	<u>Important areas for plant diversity</u> <u>3 (a) Ensure that important areas for the conservation of plant species and their genetic diversity are identified, well connected and represented within protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, including in marine and coastal areas.</u> <u>3 (b) Develop integrated management plans for important areas for plant diversity and implement programmes to ensure that those areas are effectively documented, protected, monitored and sustainably managed, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.</u>	<u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u>
<u>Target 4</u> <u>Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and</u>	<u>Plant species conservation</u> <u>4 (a) Ensure that extinction risk and conservation status are known, understood and maintained and that assessments are regularly updated, as far as possible, for known plant species.</u> <u>4 (b) Develop and implement recovery plans for all known threatened plant species, including management</u>	<u>Species Plus.</u> <u>CITES Non-detriment Findings.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.</u></p>	<p><u>plans for pests, weeds and other known threats and drivers of loss, to significantly reduce extinction risk.</u></p> <p>4 (c) <u>Promote programmes to ensure that threatened plant species are effectively conserved, managed, monitored and restored using in situ and ex situ methodologies, aiming to achieve adequate levels of genetic diversity and viable populations and, where appropriate, involving indigenous peoples and local communities.</u></p> <p><u>Conservation of genetic diversity</u></p> <p>4 (d) <u>Undertake ex situ and in situ conservation programmes for genetic diversity in wild and domesticated plant species and populations, including crops and their wild relatives and other socioeconomically valuable plant species, considering the domestication gradient and the use of surrogates or proxies, ensuring that the genetic diversity within and among populations is effectively documented, managed and monitored, to maintain and restore genetic diversity and safeguard their adaptive potential, taking into account the relevant frameworks and plans of action developed under the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.</u></p> <p>4 (e) <u>Establish programmes to ensure that domesticated, cultivated species and crop wild relatives are effectively protected, restored and managed using on-farm and in situ methodologies and by applying sustainable management practices using agroecology and other sustainable production practices involving the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, with their free, prior and informed consent.</u></p>	<p><u>Artificial Propagation and assisted production.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 13.9 Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
	<p>4 (f) <u>Encourage ex situ operations that artificially propagate threatened plant species to seek cooperative measures that would support in situ conservation, such as technical support, the contribution of funds, the exchange of specimens for reintroduction into the wild, capacity-building and training, technology transfer, investment and infrastructure.</u></p>	
<p><u>Target 5</u> <u>Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spillover, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</u></p>	<p><u>Sustainable harvesting</u></p> <p>5 (a) <u>Develop and implement strategies to ensure the sustainable and legal harvesting and use of wild plants, including by determining sustainable harvest levels, and for artificial propagation or assisted production, respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</u></p> <p><u>Trade in plants</u></p> <p>5 (b) <u>Identify wild plants that are currently or likely to be threatened by unsustainable or illegal trade, and support the implementation or development and adoption of national or international guidelines and other measures to ensure that the harvesting of and trade in plants are sustainable, safe and legal.</u></p>	<p><u>Legal Acquisition Findings.</u></p> <p><u>Non-detriment Findings.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18) Implementation of the Convention for tree species.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18) Regulation of trade in plants.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 14.4 Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 16.10 Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p>Target 6 <u>Eliminate, minimize, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent by 2030, and eradicating or controlling invasive alien species, especially in priority sites, such as islands.</u></p>	<p><u>Monitoring invasive species</u></p> <p><u>6 (a) Develop or strengthen early warning and monitoring and tracking systems, including public awareness programmes, at the national and international levels, to prevent, manage and eradicate potentially invasive alien species that affect or may affect native plants and their ecosystems, and put in place measures¹ to manage pathways of introduction.</u></p> <p><u>¹ Any international measures should be implemented in compliance with the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization and the International Plant Protection Convention.</u></p> <p><u>Controlling invasive species</u></p> <p><u>6 (b) Address the detrimental impact of invasive alien species on plant diversity and ecosystems by undertaking control or eradication measures, with a focus on areas important for plant diversity and considering the impacts of climate change.</u></p>	<p><u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u></p> <p><u>Nevertheless, CITES Parties have recognized the link between trade and alien invasive species in Resolution Conf. 13.10 (Rev. CoP14) on Trade in alien invasive species.</u></p>
<p>Target 7 <u>Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: (a) by reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; (b) by reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals</u></p>	<p><u>Impact of pollution on plants</u></p> <p><u>7. Gather information, research, assess and provide evidence of pollution risks and their negative impacts, and take action to minimize pollution pressures on plant species and their ecosystems.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u> <u>However, CITES does take into consideration the impacts on plants from multiple threats, including pollution.</u> <u>CITES Appendices.</u> <u>Supporting statements for proposals to amend the Appendices.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and (c) by preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Non-detriment Findings.</u>
<u>Target 8</u> <u>Minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.</u>	<u>Native plant use in climate mitigation and adaptation</u> <u>8 (a) Consider current and projected impacts of climate change on species, species distribution and ecosystems when implementing plant conservation activities, including those undertaken under Targets 2, 3, 4 and 6.</u> <u>8 (b) Encourage the use of genetically, biologically and ecologically appropriate native plant species, including species of conservation concern, in areas planted for carbon sequestration and in nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for climate mitigation and adaptation, ensuring that such areas are selected appropriately to avoid negative effects and foster positive impacts on biodiversity.</u>	– <u>CITES Appendices.</u> – <u>Supporting statements for proposals to amend the Appendices.</u> – <u>Non-detriment Findings.</u> – <u>Periodic Review results.</u> – <u>Review of Significant Trade results.</u>
<u>2. Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing</u>		
<u>Target 9</u> <u>Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and</u>	<u>Plants for peoples' needs</u> <u>9. Co-develop and implement programmes with indigenous peoples, local communities and relevant stakeholders to sustainably maintain and manage wild plants that are of socioeconomic and cultural importance, as well as their ecosystems, and to enhance benefits for people.</u>	<u>Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) CITES and Livelihoods.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.</u></p>		
<p><u>Target 10</u> <u>Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches, contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems, and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services.</u></p>	<p><u>Sustainable management of production land</u></p> <p><u>10 (a) Support and put in place sustainable management programmes for existing areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry and increase the proportion of those areas that is managed sustainably to ensure the conservation and restoration of associated wild plant diversity, including crop wild relatives.</u></p> <p><u>10 (b) Include a special effort to conserve landraces, both in situ and ex situ, and promote the wider use of landraces to support the diversification of crops and cropping systems.</u></p> <p><u>10 (c) Promote and support actions relating to the conservation of wild relatives of edible species as a clear contribution towards food security.</u></p>	<p><u>Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) CITES and Livelihoods.</u></p> <p><u>Captive-produced animals and artificially propagated plants.</u></p>
<p><u>Target 11</u> <u>Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as the regulation of air, water and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.</u></p>	<p><u>Native plants and ecosystem functions and services</u></p> <p><u>11. Ensure that genetically, biologically and ecologically appropriate and adapted native plant species, including species of conservation concern, are used for the restoration of ecosystems or ecosystem services, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches.</u></p>	<p><u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>Target 12</u> <u>Significantly increase the area and quality, and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature, and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and to the provision of ecosystem functions and services.</u></p>	<p><u>Urban green infrastructure</u></p> <p><u>12 (a) Establish green infrastructure projects focused on plant diversity and connectivity, encouraging the use of native climate-resilient species in plant diversity conservation programmes in urban areas and developing and implementing new strategies for promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning and management, taking into account coastal urban areas and coastal and marine ecosystems.</u></p> <p><u>Urban plant diversity</u></p> <p><u>12 (b) Develop, designate and protect biodiversity-rich accessible green and blue spaces in urban areas by establishing or strengthening, inter alia, parks, greenways, ponds, watercourses, wetlands, botanical gardens and arboretums in such areas, and ensure connectivity among those spaces, in order to support biodiversity conservation, environmental education and awareness, and human health and well-being effectively.</u></p>	<p><u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u></p>
<p><u>Target 13</u> <u>Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilization of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030, facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in</u></p>	<p><u>Access and benefit-sharing for plant conservation</u></p> <p><u>13. Support and encourage measures to facilitate appropriate access to plant genetic resources, ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits that arise from the utilization of such resources and associated traditional knowledge, as well as from digital sequence information originated from those resources, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.</u></p>	<p><u>Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) CITES and Livelihoods.</u></p> <p><u>Artificially propagated plants.</u></p> <p><u>Medicinal Plants.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<u>accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.</u>		
<u>3. Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming</u>		
<u>Target 14</u> <u>Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, and fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework.</u>	<u>Tools for mainstreaming plant conservation</u> <u>14. Provide open and accessible data and develop tools to help to measure and integrate the importance of diverse knowledge systems and value of plant diversity into policies, regulations, environmental assessments and planning processes, including rural and urban development, poverty reduction strategies and national accounting and reporting mechanisms.</u>	<u>CITES and Forests Compendium.</u> <u>CITES Tree Species Programme.</u> <u>Non-detriment Findings.</u> <u>Legal Acquisition Findings.</u>
<u>Target 15</u> <u>Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions:</u> <u>(a) Regularly monitor, assess, and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions</u>	<u>Sustainable practices in plant use</u> <u>15 (a) Encourage and support the adoption by businesses, in particular large and transnational companies and other sectors that focus on plants of sustainable practices along supply chains for trade in wild plant species, and promote those practices in such sectors as finance, transport, e-commerce and tourism.</u> <u>15 (b) Promote and support the development of best practices for the monitoring and evaluation of plant use in sustainable production, to support plant conservation and benefits to indigenous peoples and local communities.</u>	<u>Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) CITES and Livelihoods.</u> <u>Artificially propagated plants.</u> <u>CITES Tree Species Programme.</u> <u>CITES and Forests Compendium.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>along their operations, supply and value chains, and portfolios;</u></p> <p><u>(b) Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns;</u></p> <p><u>(c) Report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable;</u></p> <p><u>in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production.</u></p>	<p><u>15 (c) Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption practices in plant use.</u></p>	
<p><u>Target 16</u> <u>Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices, including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, including through halving global food waste, significantly reducing overconsumption and substantially reducing waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.</u></p>	<p><u>Sustainable consumption</u></p> <p><u>16 (a) Provide information and guidance, including in the form of trade statistics and data, and capacity-building to inform the development of policies and legislative and regulatory frameworks that recognize the importance of wild plants as a source of food, fibres, medicines, pharmaceuticals and construction material and as a resource for other sectors.</u></p> <p><u>16 (b) Develop and support education programmes on the importance of plants and the impacts of the global footprint of consumption, global food waste and overconsumption on plant diversity.</u></p>	<p><u>Review of Significant Trade.</u></p> <p><u>Medicinal Plants.</u></p> <p><u>CITES and Forests Compendium.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 13.9 Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<u>Target 17</u> <u>Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries, biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention.</u>	<u>17. Foster and support research and development, especially in developing countries, to enhance the benefits arising from the use of safe biotechnologies related to plant conservation and increase the sustainability and resilience of agrifood systems.</u>	<u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u>
<u>Target 18</u> <u>Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least \$500 billion per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.</u>	<u>No particular plant conservation action is required under Target 18, except to support its achievement.</u>	<u>Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.</u>
<u>Target 19</u> <u>Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, mobilizing at least \$200 billion per year by 2030, including by:</u> <u>(a) Increasing total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from</u>	<u>Financial resources for plant conservation</u> <u>19. Support and mobilize resources from a wide range of appropriate sources to carry out plant conservation actions.</u>	<u>CITES consistently seeks to increase the resourcing raised and allocated to plant conservation actions that relate to CITES-listed plant species.</u>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least \$20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least \$30 billion per year by 2030;</u></p> <p>(b) <u>Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances;</u></p> <p>(c) <u>Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments;</u></p> <p>(d) <u>Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, and benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards;</u></p> <p>(e) <u>Optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises;</u></p> <p>(f) <u>Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth centric actions and non-market-based</u></p>		

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity;</u></p> <p>(g) <u>Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use.</u></p>		
<p><u>Target 20</u> <u>Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the Framework.</u></p>	<p><u>Capacity-building</u></p> <p><u>20 (a) Establish or strengthen professional training and capacity-building initiatives related to plant conservation, scientific research and monitoring, taxonomy and information management, horticulture, botany, plant conservation biology research, biotechnology and ecological restoration.</u></p> <p><u>20 (b) Establish mechanisms, partnerships and networks to support the accessibility of data, knowledge, technology and South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation for collaborative plant conservation.</u></p>	<p><u>Capacity building.</u></p> <p><u>Draft guidance on Non-detriment Findings.</u></p> <p><u>CITES Tree Species Programme.</u></p> <p><u>Conf. 13.9 Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes.</u></p>
<p><u>Target 21</u> <u>Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and</u></p>	<p><u>Public awareness programmes</u></p> <p><u>21 (a) Develop or implement programmes to raise public awareness of the value of plant diversity and the ecosystem services that they provide.</u></p> <p><u>Plant information systems</u></p>	<p><u>Species Plus, CITES Checklist.</u></p> <p><u>CITES and Forests Compendium.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation.</u></p>	<p><u>21 (b) Support the development and use of existing comprehensive, authoritative and accessible expertise and online information systems, documentation and inventories, as well as access to biological collections (e.g. through digitization) at the local, national and international levels, making available to all countries information on their floras and the status of known plant species and associated ecosystems, while ensuring the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples with regard to access to traditional knowledge and taking into consideration the ongoing work and processes carried out under relevant organizations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.</u></p> <p><u>21 (c) Explore ways to consider various knowledge systems, including traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies, to support plant conservation action.</u></p> <p><u>21 (d) Promote the continuous updating of the World Flora Online, including its identification support tools, information on plant distribution and the updating of regional floras.</u></p> <p><u>[Citizen science</u></p> <p><u>21 (e) Develop or support citizen science programmes for identifying, documenting, monitoring, conserving, restoring and sustainably using plant diversity.]</u></p>	<p><u>CITES identification materials.</u></p> <p><u>CITES Virtual College.</u></p> <p><u>CITES website.</u></p>
<p><u>Target 22</u> <u>Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources,</u></p>	<p><u>Plant conservation and traditional knowledge</u></p> <p><u>22. Ensure the full equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at all relevant levels, with their free, prior and informed consent, in accordance with national legislation, to build respect for, and safeguard traditional</u></p>	<p><u>Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18) CITES and Livelihoods.</u></p> <p><u>Capacity Building.</u></p>

<u>Targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework</u>	<u>Global Strategy for Plant Conservation Voluntary complementary actions for the period 2023–2030</u>	<u>CITES's potential contribution</u>
<p><u>and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.</u></p>	<p><u>knowledge, innovations and practices related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant diversity.</u></p>	
<p><u>Target 23</u> <u>Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.</u></p>	<p><u>Gender equality</u> <u>23. Ensure gender equality in the implementation of plant conservation and restoration actions by proactively implementing a responsive approach, encompassing the recognition of women's rights, equitable access to plant resources and inclusive participation at all levels in decision-making processes, while highlighting the important role of women, as essential knowledge holders, in plant conservation.</u></p>	<p><u>CITES gender action plan.</u></p> <p><u>Resolution Conf. 19.3 on Gender and international trade in wild fauna and flora.</u></p>

PC27 agreed to maintain the last table in the Annex that maps the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation objectives, targets and CITES potential contribution:

GSPC's Objective	GSPC's Target ¹⁶	CITES's potential contribution
(I) Plant diversity is well understood, documented and recognized	1. An online flora of all known plants.	CITES checklists available online.
	2. An assessment of the conservation status of all known plant species, as far as possible, to guide conservation action.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — CITES Appendices. — Supporting statements for proposals to amend the Appendices. — NDFs. — Periodic Review results. — Review of Significant Trade results.
	3. Information, research and associated outputs, and methods necessary to implement the Strategy developed and shared.	
(II) Plant diversity is urgently and effectively conserved	4. At least 15 % of each ecological region or vegetation type secured through effective management and/or restoration.	Not directly applicable as CITES works at species level.
	5. At least 75 % of the most important areas for plant diversity of each ecological region protected with effective management in place for conserving plants and their genetic diversity.	
	6. At least 75 % of production lands in each sector managed sustainably, consistent with the conservation of plant diversity.	
	7. At least 75 % of known threatened plant species conserved <i>in situ</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Inclusion of species/populations in CITES Appendices. — Identification of the location/habitat of Appendix-I species. — Efforts by CITES Parties to ensure sustainable use of CITES-listed species: NDFs and national quotas. — Implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.9 on <i>Encouraging cooperation between Parties with ex situ breeding operations and those with in situ conservation programmes</i>.
	8. At least 75 % of threatened plant species in <i>ex situ</i> collections, preferably in the country of origin, and at least 20 % available for recovery and restoration programmes.	

¹⁶ As taken from the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020.

GSPC's Objective	GSPC's Target ¹⁶	CITES's potential contribution
		— CITES Certificate of Scientific Exchange.
	9. 70 % of the genetic diversity of crops including their wild relatives and other socio-economically valuable plant species conserved, while respecting, preserving and maintaining associated indigenous and local knowledge.	Not directly applicable.
	10. Effective management plans in place to prevent new biological invasions and to manage important areas for plant diversity that are invaded.	Not directly applicable. Nevertheless, CITES Parties have recognized the link between trade and alien invasive species in Resolution Conf. 13.10 (Rev. CoP14) on <i>Trade in alien invasive species</i> .
(III) Plant diversity is used in a sustainable and equitable manner	11. No species of wild flora endangered by international trade.	All CITES activities contribute directly to this Target, and CITES is recognized as having a leadership role in implementing this Target.
	12. All wild-harvested plant-based products sourced sustainably.	— NDFs, national quotas, Review of Significant Trade, and Periodic Review of the Appendices. — Annotations to the Appendices enable regulation of certain target commodities.
	13. Indigenous and local knowledge innovations and practices associated with plant resources, maintained or increased, as appropriate, to support customary use, sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care.	— NDFs. — Resolution Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14) on Traditional medicines. — CITES Standing Committee Working Group on CITES and Livelihoods.
(IV) Education and awareness about plant diversity, its role in sustainable livelihoods and importance to all life on earth is promoted	14. The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, education and public awareness programmes.	CITES tools, such as: — Training courses, workshops results and technical reports. — CITES Virtual College. — CITES website. — CITES Identification Manual and Web pages.
(V) The capacities and public engagement necessary to implement the Strategy have been developed	15. The number of trained people working with appropriate facilities sufficient according to national needs, to achieve the targets of this Strategy.	— Training materials, including PowerPoint presentations and CD-ROMs. — Capacity building work of the Secretariat.
	16. Institutions, networks and partnerships for plant conservation established or	— CITES Parties and Plants Committee. — Regional Directories.

GSPC's Objective	GSPC's Target¹⁶	CITES's potential contribution
	strengthened at national, regional and international levels to achieve the targets of this Strategy.	

INTERVENTION BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON
DOCUMENT SC78 DOC. 65.7: TRADE IN MAMMOTH IVORY

We regret to note that the document prepared by the Secretariat contains misleading information regarding procedures, law enforcement practice, and the actual situation with mammoth ivory in the Russian Federation.

Since 2023, mammoth ivory as such has not been exported from Russia. The exception is made when mammoth ivory is a part of a palaeontological collection that has cultural significance. In addition, the process of collection of mammoth ivory is a licensed activity both at the stage of planning and subsequent export operations. Planning includes carrying out assessments of collection methods as well as of potential impacts on the environment. Illegal collection of mammoth tusks is prosecuted in accordance with criminal law resulting in severe penalties. The export of palaeontological collection materials is strictly regulated through licensing at both federal and regional levels.

The sources of information cited in the document are not official, reliable or up to date. They do not contain unequivocal facts and do not provide concrete evidence of mammoth ivory collection. For example, even the licensing authority for the export of mammoth ivory in the Russian Federation is indicated incorrectly. Such licensing is carried out by a different governmental body from the one specified in the document.

Among sources, we would like to particularly highlight the article by Cox and Hauser from 2019. The information contained therein and cited in paragraph 34 does not correspond to the reality. In addition, the subject of this publication does not speak to the CITES mandate.

We stress that Secretariat's reports should be based on verifiable sources. The Russian Federation stands ready to provide all necessary information. In light of this, we request deletion of incorrect information from the text. We also disagree with the recommendation 40(a) and request that this be reflected in the summary of the discussion.