

CONVENTION SUR LE COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL DES ESPECES
DE FAUNE ET DE FLORE SAUVAGES MENACEES D'EXTINCTION



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Questions stratégiques et administratives

RELATIONS AVEC LE PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT

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United Nations Environment Programme report to the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora at its fifty-seventh meeting

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with paragraph 16 of the agreement between the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of 20 June 1997, UNEP submits an annual report on its administration of and support to the CITES secretariat, including an update on the implementation of the agreement and the administration of the secretariat, for consideration at each meeting of the Standing Committee and meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

II. UNEP substantive support to the Convention

A. Support for implementation of the Convention

2. UNEP continues to provide technical and scientific support to the CITES secretariat. The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) maintains the CITES Trade Database, a database of information on trade in CITES-listed wildlife, compiled from the annual reports submitted by the Parties. This unique resource, available online (<http://www.cites.org/eng/resources/trade.shtml>), now contains over 8.5 million trade records and is used regularly to demonstrate trends and patterns of trade and to determine how well the Convention is being implemented. Regular outputs from the database are provided to the technical committees of the Convention, to national authorities, and to several organizations supporting the implementation of the Convention.

3. A number of reports are also produced at UNEP-WCMC analysing different aspects of the trade according to geographic regions and groups of species. UNEP-WCMC recently produced a scoping study for the secretariat on the use of online content management systems (wiki-type technology) for the management and distribution of documents such as the CITES Identification Manual. UNEP participated at recent meetings of the scientific committees on fauna and flora, providing reports and input on various agenda items. UNEP is also collaborating with the secretariat in the production of the 2008 checklist of CITES species and in the definition of analytical approaches for the CITES contribution to the 2010 biodiversity target.

4. UNEP-WCMC maintains the CITES species database, which contains information on all CITES-listed species, for example, which Appendix they are listed in, reservations by CITES Parties on particular listings, and relevant quota information. In this regard, online electronic tools are maintained to enable users to obtain and download information from both databases. With support from the European Union, a database module for CITES has been developed for the near-real-time monitoring of the caviar trade.

1. Harmonization of national reporting

5. As part of a wider project on knowledge management among biodiversity-related agreements, UNEP, through its Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, and UNEP-WCMC have identified potential joint core reporting elements of biodiversity-related conventions and agreements, including CITES, and have been examining the suitability of the approach to national reporting that the human rights treaty system has been using, where Parties submit a single core report for all treaties and treaty-specific reports in addition to that. This work builds on previous work with the biodiversity-related conventions on approaches to harmonization of national reporting. Those results were discussed at a UNEP-WCMC-hosted workshop on knowledge management in support of improved agreement implementation held in Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, from 7 to 9 March 2008, which brought together representatives of the secretariats of the biodiversity-related multilateral agreements, including CITES. As part of the outcome of the workshop, UNEP-WCMC was requested:

- (a) To write a paper on preconditions for the harmonization of national reporting in order to help countries understand the rationale for and challenges to the harmonization of national reporting;
- (b) To develop a concept paper on guidance for national information management.

6. In addition, the use of the 2010 and other indicators was considered as a vehicle for a participatory harmonized approach and further opportunities for clustering of reporting questions along the lines of a modular framework. A similar framework was explored in 2007 and reports prepared by the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions and UNEP-WCMC for inland waters, related to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) and drylands, for the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa.

2. Knowledge management for biodiversity-related conventions: an information portal and online reporting facilities

7. As part of a wider project on knowledge management among biodiversity-related agreements, UNEP, through its Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, and UNEP-WCMC, in cooperation with the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Ramsar Convention, the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and the Indian Ocean South-East Asian Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding, have created an internet portal which allows access to key information on those agreements, including the articles of the agreements; resolutions and decisions of their governing bodies; strategic planning documents; lists of Parties; and national focal point information. The portal is available at: www.inforMEA.org. At the above-mentioned knowledge-management workshop held in Cambridge in March 2008, it was agreed that the portal should be further developed as a tool for interoperable information management for the biodiversity-related conventions and agreements.

8. Under the same knowledge management project, UNEP worked with the secretariats of conventions and agreements to develop an online reporting tool, including for the CITES biennial reports. The tool includes not only an option that enables Parties to produce their national report online but also a generator that allows for the easy creation of other online reporting tools or questionnaires. It was made available to the CITES secretariat and presented at the knowledge management workshop, where it was agreed that it should be further developed to allow for easy analysis and synthesis of the reported information in a follow-up project (see document: SC57 Doc. 21, on national reports).

3. Issue-based modular approach to policy-making

9. The joint UNEP and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) project on issue-based modules for coherent implementation of biodiversity-related conventions, known as “Tematea”, structures the multitude of commitments and obligations under regional and global biodiversity-related agreements in a logical, issue-based framework. There are currently six modules on priority issues for biodiversity: inland waters, biodiversity and climate change, invasive alien species, protected areas, sustainable use of biodiversity and access and benefit sharing. For each of these issues, the global biodiversity-related agreements are screened (in particular CITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification) as well as relevant regional biodiversity-related agreements. Although the module on sustainable use is most relevant to the implementation of CITES, relevant CITES decisions are to be found in each of the modules.

10. Capacity-building activities are currently underway to support the use of the modules to promote national cooperation and communication across sectors and improve national multilateral environmental agreement implementation. These exercises help national experts to evaluate their existing national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and to identify how it might be improved and supported, including through the development of improved coordination mechanisms or concrete multifocal plans and project proposals. National workshops have been held in Cuba, Georgia, Norway, Peru and Seychelles, while more are planned in Africa and Europe later in 2008.

11. The website, including the modules and the results of the national capacity-building exercises, can be found online (www.tematea.org), where a downloadable version is also available for offline use.

4. Compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements

12. UNEP, jointly with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, supported a capacity-building project for the development of harmonized legislation (i.e., holistic legislation grouping and harmonizing all legal matter relating to biological diversity) for the implementation of five global and one regional multilateral environmental agreements related to the management and protection of biological diversity in member States of the Organization. The biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements included global agreements, namely, the Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention, and one regional agreement, the Protocol to Amend the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Protocol). The final text of the legislation was endorsed and adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States in late 2006. The regionally harmonized legislation is currently being used to develop harmonized and comprehensive national legislation for the implementation of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in three of the nine States members of the Organization (and in two Leeward island States also in partnership with the Organization).

13. UNEP supported the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force in the production of a documentary entitled, “Earth report: new ivory wars”, which has been aired on the BBC World channel five times since February 2008 and which will be distributed worldwide from the end of the first quarter of 2008. As part of the same programme, an amended version of the documentary has been prepared featuring more on work and activities undertaken for the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora. It was launched and shown publicly for the first time at the Eighth International Conference on Environmental Compliance and Enforcement held in Cape Town, South Africa, in April 2008. UNEP supported and facilitated the participation at that meeting of over 20 enforcement officials from Africa to enhance awareness-raising and the sharing of experiences on environmental compliance and enforcement issues.

14. UNEP has continued to build and enhance the capacity of Parties to the Lusaka Agreement to effectively combat the illegal trade in wild fauna and flora. In that regard, with support from UNEP and other partners, the Parties developed a long-term strategic plan of action for the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, which sets out short, medium and long-term activities. The strategic plan was formally approved and adopted by the Governing Council of the Lusaka Agreement at its eighth meeting held in October 2006.

15. UNEP is engaged in consultations with the Lusaka Agreement Task Force on plans to work with it and support the ninth meeting of the Governing Council of the Lusaka Agreement to be held in October 2008 in Kampala, Uganda. The Council will review progress made in the implementation of the Agreement and in the execution of Governing Council decisions as well as the status of implementation of the strategic action plan (2005–2015).

16. UNEP provided legal services and advice to an intergovernmental negotiation meeting of ten African range States held in Paris, France, from 22 to 24 October 2007, which negotiated a new range States agreement, entitled the Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes, on the conservation and protection of gorillas under the Convention on Migratory Species. The Declaration is a regional agreement developed under article IV of the Convention as a conservation tool. Gorilla *taxa* were listed under Appendix I by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its eighth meeting in order to facilitate the development of the new regional gorilla (or *N’gagi*) agreement. The Agreement was adopted and signed by three range States on 25 October 2007 and opened for further signatures and ratification. The Agreement entered into force on 1 June 2008.

17. In continuing to assist countries to address challenges brought about by the implementation and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements at different levels and in addition to a manual on compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements launched in June 2006, UNEP produced in 2007 an interactive online manual and CD-ROM on the same subject to enable wider dissemination of the manual to stakeholders. The manual is intended for use by a wide audience, including treaty negotiators, law makers, lawyers, police and customs officers and is intended to be a useful resource for teaching and for research. It is structured as an annotated commentary on the UNEP Guidelines on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (adopted by the UNEP Governing Council by its decision SSVII/4) and uses clear, simple language. It includes explanatory text, case studies, checklists, references to additional resources and annexes with supplementary information. The manual can be downloaded from the UNEP homepage (www.unep.org/dec).

18. UNEP, in close collaboration with executing agencies and partners, is finalizing documentation for a four-year (2008–2012) project on capacity-building for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries to be supported by the European Commission. The project will be implemented in two components. The first component relates to the implementation of all multilateral environmental agreements, including CITES, to be executed through three regional hubs by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Caribbean Community secretariat and the African Union in their respective regions. The second component will be divided into four subcomponents, namely, on the climate change Clean Development Mechanism to be executed by the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Energy in Environment, Risø, Denmark; on sound chemical management to be executed through the Quick Start Programme by the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management; on combating desertification to be executed by the Global Mechanism of the Convention to Combat Desertification; and on the clean up of obsolete pesticides to be executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

19. In 2007–2008, UNEP is supporting the development of national implementation plans for implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in selected countries in the Latin American region (Colombia, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Trinidad and Tobago) for systematic enforcement of their obligations under a cluster of common-theme multilateral environmental agreements to encourage synergies and interlinkages in the compliance with and enforcement of those agreements.

20. In addition, in May 2008 the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean organized a regional training programme on environmental law and policy. The workshop was attended by ministerial legal advisors, prosecutors and judges from Spanish-speaking countries in the region.

5. Green Customs Initiative

21. The Green Customs Initiative is a partnership between CITES and other trade-related multilateral environmental agreements, UNEP, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the World Customs Organization and the secretariat of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention). The initiative aims to strengthen compliance with and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements with trade-related components. It offers an integrated approach to providing information, training and awareness-raising to customs officials and other border protection officers to enhance their capacity to monitor trade in commodities of environmental concern such as endangered species of fauna and flora, living modified organisms, ozone-depleting substances, toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes. Since its inception in 2001, the Green Customs Initiative has conducted and coordinated national and regional training workshops, developed joint information materials and set up a website (<http://www.greencustoms.org>). In addition to being a founding member of the Green Customs initiative, UNEP also serves as its secretariat. The objective of the integrated training courses delivered by this partnership is to increase the capacity of customs officials on several multilateral environmental agreements at the same time, which is more cost effective and efficient than separate training courses on each agreement.

6. Assessing wildlife trade policies

22. In 2006, UNEP launched a two-year project focusing on enhancing the capacities of developing countries to assess, design and implement effective national wildlife trade policies. The project is being undertaken in partnership with the CITES secretariat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, with funding provided by the European Union and the Geneva International Academic Network. At the core of the project is the implementation of pilot studies in four developing countries. Drawing on assessment methodologies developed by UNEP and the CITES secretariat, a toolkit of wildlife trade policy assessment methodologies is under development. National institutions in the four countries will use the methodologies to assess the economic, social and environmental impacts of wildlife trade policies and develop integrated responses to enhance the effectiveness of those policies. For detailed information, please refer to document SC57 Doc. 17 (National Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews).

7. Use of economic instruments

23. UNEP, in close consultation with the CITES secretariat, has been active in promoting and examining the use of economic instruments in the implementation of biodiversity-related conventions. UNEP has recently published a study on economic instruments in biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements developed by its international working group on economic instruments in collaboration with relevant secretariats. It investigates the current and future potential role of economic

instruments in the context of CITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention.

24. In addition, UNEP is building the capacity of policymakers on the application and use of economic instruments for sustainable development. A user-friendly training resource manual on the application and use of economic instruments for sustainable development is being finalized that will assist in related environmental decision-making and capacity-building, especially at the national and regional levels.

8. Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

25. The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building aims at a more coherent, coordinated and effective delivery of environmental capacity-building and technical support at all levels and by all actors, including UNEP, in response to well-defined country priorities and needs. It complements and enhances the more traditional activity areas of UNEP intervention such as assessment, environmental policy and law, environmental institution-building and promotion of cleaner production systems. It brings the technology support and capacity-building currently being carried out by UNEP into line with well-defined country priorities and needs.

9. Great Apes Survival Project partnership

26. The Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) partnership¹ unites all the principal institutional actors involved in great ape conservation, including United Nations agencies, biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, great ape range States and donor Governments, non-governmental organizations, scientists, local communities and the private sector. The partnership was established in 2001 to address the extinction crisis facing the four main types of great ape in equatorial Africa and South-East Asia, namely, bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas and orang-utans, and the mainly forest ecosystems on which they and their human neighbours depend for survival. UNEP activities include facilitation of high-level national and intergovernmental dialogue; planning and monitoring; promotion of best practices; provision of information and public awareness-raising; and sourcing for new and additional funding.

27. In November 2006, GRASP and CITES convened a Great Ape Enforcement Task Force meeting in Nairobi to bring together key enforcement officials from range States and trading countries to tackle the illegal trade in great apes. A high-impact report entitled “Last stand of the orang-utan - state of emergency: illegal logging, fire and palm oil in Indonesia’s national parks” was published in February 2007 and resulted in thousands of direct media reports, as well as informing the debate on biofuels in the British parliament. From 5 to 8 November 2007, the CITES secretariat undertook a technical mission to Malaysia towards the implementation of resolution Conf 13.4 on conservation of and trade in great apes.

28. In collaboration with the Ramsar Convention, UNEP is finalizing a documentary on biodiversity in the Petit Loango wetland of international importance, which highlights the attempts of Gabon to reconcile ecosystem conservation and oil exploration. With the support of the Government of the United Kingdom and the European Commission, GRASP is assisting the Governments of Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo, among others, to enhance national and cross-border law enforcement efforts through innovative partnerships with civil society and the provision of information technology equipment to ministry focal points. UNEP also works with relevant United Nations peacekeeping operations to encourage mission personnel to help respond to incidents of illegal wildlife trade and great ape habitat degradation.

¹ <http://www.unep.org/grasp/>

III. United Nations Office at Nairobi administrative and financial management support to CITES

A. CITES administrative issues

29. UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi continue to work closely with the CITES secretariat by providing support and guidance on administrative and financial issues.

B. Funding provided to CITES from 13 per cent programme support cost

30. During the 2006–2007 biennium, the posts of three administrative staff directly assigned to the CITES secretariat were funded from programme support costs. In addition, 50 per cent of the salary of the information network officer was funded from programme support costs.
