



SUMMARY OF 21ST MEETING OF THE CITES

ANIMALS COMMITTEE: 20-25 MAY 2005

The 21st meeting of the Animals Committee (AC-21) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 20-25 May 2005, in Geneva, Switzerland. On 20 and 21 May, a joint session with the 15th session of CITES Plants Committee (PC-15) was held.

The Animals Committee (AC) discussed 23 agenda items on issues including: the implementation of the Strategic Vision until 2007 and the establishment of priorities; the review of trade in animal species included in the Appendices and significant trade in Appendix II species; transport of live animals; and trade in sea cucumbers, sharks and great apes.

The joint session addressed issues of common interest to both Committees, including: the Strategic Vision and Plan until 2013; the review of Scientific Committees and regional communication; the study of production systems for specimens of CITES-listed species; and the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). For the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* summary report of the joint session, please see: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol21/enb2146e.html>.

Participants to AC-21 had the task of performing a review of significant trade (RST) for a large number of species. They completed this task with great effort, showing both the thorough approach of the new RST process and the fact that there is still room for improvement. Decisions were made on numerous issues, including: prioritizing decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) resolutions and decisions directed to the AC; implementing the Action Plan until 2007; and identifying species for RST and periodic reviews. However, most of the contentious issues, such as sharks and transport of live animals were not resolved at this stage and referred to intersessional working groups, which will present results at AC-22 in 2006, where recommendations will be adopted for COP-14.

This summary covers the deliberations of AC-21 and includes a final analysis of AC-21, PC-15 and the joint session of both Scientific Committees.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CITES

CITES was established as a response to growing concerns that over-exploitation of wildlife through international trade was contributing to the rapid decline of many species of plants and animals around the world. The Convention was signed by representatives from 80 countries in Washington, DC, United States, on 3 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975. There are currently 167 Parties to the Convention.

The aim of CITES is to ensure that international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival. CITES Parties regulate wildlife trade through controls and regulations on species listed in three Appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade. Trade in such species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II species are those that may become endangered if their trade is not regulated, thus they require controls aimed at preventing unsustainable use, maintaining ecosystems and preventing species from becoming eligible for Appendix I. Appendix III species are those subject to domestic regulation by a Party requesting the cooperation of other Parties to control international trade in that species. In order to list a species in Appendix I or II, a Party needs to submit a proposal for approval by the COP, with scientific and biological data on population and trade trends. The proposal must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of Parties present at a COP. As the trade impact on a species increases or decreases, the COP decides whether or not the species should be shifted between or removed from

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the Appendices. There are approximately 5,000 fauna species and 28,000 flora species protected under the three CITES Appendices.

Parties regulate international trade of CITES species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens listed in its Appendices are imported, exported or introduced from the sea. Each Party is required to adopt national legislation and to designate two national authorities, namely, a Management Authority responsible for issuing these permits and certificates based on the advice of a Scientific Authority. These two national authorities also assist with CITES enforcement through cooperation with customs, police or other appropriate agencies. Parties maintain trade records that are annually forwarded to CITES, the sum of which enables the compilation of statistical information on the global volume of international trade in Appendix-listed species by the United Nations Environment Programme/World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).

The operational bodies of CITES include the Standing Committee and the Scientific Committees: the Plants Committee (PC), the Animals Committee (AC) and the Nomenclature Committee. As scientific and technical support bodies, the role of both the PC and AC is to: undertake periodic reviews of species to ensure appropriate categorization in the CITES Appendices; undertake other tasks requested by the COP; advise when certain species are subject to unsustainable trade and recommend action; and draft resolutions on animal and plant matters for consideration by the Parties.

AC and PC representatives are elected at COP meetings by their respective regional groups, and the number of representatives by region is allocated based on the number of Parties within each region and the distribution of biodiversity. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected by the AC and PC members.

The current AC regional representatives are: Edson Chidziya (Zimbabwe-Africa), Richard Kiome Bagine (Kenya-Africa), Mohammad Pourkazemi (Iran-Asia), Siti Nuramaliati Prijono (Indonesia-Asia), Mario Jolon Morales (Guatemala-Central and South America and the Caribbean), Peter Vogel (Jamaica-Central and South America and the Caribbean), Thomas Althaus (Chair, Switzerland-Europe), Katalin Rodics (Hungary-Europe), Rodrigo Medellín (Vice-Chair, Mexico-North America), and Rod Hay (New Zealand-Oceania).

NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE ANIMALS

COMMITTEE: AC-19 met from 18-21 August 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland, to consider strategic planning, RST, review of criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II, periodic review of animal species included in the Appendices, transport of live animals, conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, seahorses, sea cucumbers, sharks, hard corals, and trade in alien invasive species.

TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE ANIMALS

COMMITTEE: AC-20 met from 29 March to 2 April 2004, in Johannesburg, South Africa. It addressed a range of topics, including RST in specimens of Appendix II species, review of criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II, periodic review of animal and plant taxa in the Appendices, transport of live animals, budget, trade in hard corals, trade in alien

invasive species, sea cucumbers, seahorses, and sharks. Its recommendations were forwarded to CITES COP-13.

THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES: COP-13 met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2-14 October 2004. Delegates addressed a range of topics, including 50 proposals to amend the CITES Appendices, enforcement and administrative matters, and cooperation with the CBD and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Delegates decided to list ramin, agarwood, as well as the great white shark and the humphead wrasse, on Appendix II. The irrawaddy dolphin was up-listed from Appendix II to Appendix I. Regarding the African elephant, Namibia's request for an annual ivory quota was rejected, but it was allowed to proceed with a strictly controlled sale of traditional ivory carvings. Delegates also agreed to an action plan aiming to crack down on unregulated domestic ivory markets. Namibia and South Africa were allowed an annual quota of five black rhinos each for trophy hunting, and Swaziland was also allowed to open up strictly controlled hunting of white rhinos. Other decisions focused on synergies with the FAO and the CBD, while enforcement issues received considerable attention, resulting in the announcement of a Southeast Asian Regional Action Plan on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora based on joint law enforcement.

AC-21 REPORT

On Friday, 20 May 2005, CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers welcomed delegates to the 21st meeting of the Animals Committee, emphasizing the role of the Committee as the provider of sound scientific advice that is fundamental to the credibility of the Convention. He also stressed the importance of the review of the significant trade (RST) process and the Strategic Vision and Action Plan for 2008-2013, which will be a blueprint for the Convention's future activities. AC-21 re-elected Thomas Althaus (Switzerland) as Chair, and Rodrigo Medellín (Mexico) as Vice-Chair.

The AC-21 approved the admission of observers (AC21 Doc. 4) without amendment, and the meeting's rules of procedure (AC21 Doc. 2.1 and AC21 Doc. 2.2), agenda (AC21 Doc. 3.1 (Rev. 2)), and working programme (AC21 Doc. 3.2 (Rev. 2)) with minor amendments.

The AC met in plenary and in seven working groups established to address specific agenda items. The working groups were on: strategic planning, RST, periodic review, transport of live animals, trade in sea cucumbers, conservation and management of sharks, and conservation of and trade in great apes.

The agenda items addressed by the joint session of AC and the Plants Committee (PC) were: RST in Madagascar (AC21 Doc. 10.1.2); amendments to the rules of procedure (AC21 Doc. 2.2); Strategic Vision and Action Plan until 2013 (AC21 Doc. 6.4); review of Scientific Committees (AC21 Doc. 7); regional communication (AC21 Doc. 8.1); production systems; Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (AC21 Doc. 13.1); and time and venue of AC-22 and PC-16 (AC21 Doc. 21 (Rev.1)). The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* summary report of the joint session of AC-21 and PC-15 can be found at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol21/enb2146e.html>.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING****STRATEGIC VISION AND ACTION PLAN UNTIL 2007:**

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced a document on action directed to the AC, which describes the progress achieved and outstanding objectives to be accomplished in the next biennium (AC 21 Doc 6.1). He informed that the AC and PC have already agreed for the Chair and Vice-Chair to participate in the SC working group on strategic planning at SC-53. On species not listed in CITES, Humane Society International proposed analyzing specific taxonomic groups for potential inclusion in the Appendices. Chair Althaus said that the AC is already addressing some non-listed species, like sharks and sea cucumbers, as part of the meeting's agenda. A working group on strategic planning (WG1) was established, chaired by Althaus.

On Wednesday, Chair Althaus presented the results of the closed working group on strategic planning (AC21 WG1 Doc. 1), highlighting the format developed by the PC. He summarized the tasks directed to the AC, and referred to the progress in their implementation, including some recommendations on those that had not been accomplished. He added that the group agreed to appoint Alvaro José Velasco (Central and South America and the Caribbean) as the focal point to compile Parties' comments and report to AC-22.

COP RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS DIRECTED TO THE AC AND PRIORITIES: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced a list of activities included in valid resolutions and decisions directed or related to the AC (AC21 Doc. 6.2.). He flagged that the document also invites the AC to include these activities in its 2005-2007 working programme, in order to determine progress and achieve effective implementation. Chair Althaus then introduced the draft working programme and priorities for the AC (AC21 Doc. 6.3). The AC considered each item on the list, assigning them high, medium or low priority. Issues identified as high priority were, *inter alia*: periodic review of the Appendices; RST; and the manual for regional representatives.

On Resolution 12.7 (Rev. COP-13) (Conservation and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish), Asia proposed, and the AC agreed, to attach a high priority to exploring the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system. The US offered to share with the AC his country's information on sturgeon DNA.

On Resolution 11.1 (Rev. COP-13) (Establishment of Committees), Mexico, supported by Spain and IUCN, stressed the need to promote and update the IUCN manual for scientific authorities. The AC assigned medium priority to this issue and decided to address it prior to COP-14.

On Decision 13.11 (Improving regional communication and representation), the AC agreed to maintain the compilation of regional directories as low priority, while intensifying communication within regions.

On Resolution 11.16 (Ranching and trade in ranches specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II), the AC agreed to assign medium priority to assisting Parties in the preparation of proposals, with many participants recognizing that such activity constitutes a core task of the Scientific Committees. Singapore cautioned that elevating

this action point in the list of priorities may result in more politicized discussions at future AC meetings. The PC adopted its priorities and action plan, as amended (AC21 Sum. 2).

EXPORT QUOTAS

On Monday, the Secretariat informed participants that the Standing Committee (SC) Export Quota Working Group will submit to the AC and PC a document on the procedure to improve management of export quotas, and said that Parties' comments are sought before the end of 2005. Mexico noted that it will present a document on the interpretation of zero quotas for Appendix II species at SC-53 at the end of June 2005.

REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN APPENDIX II SPECIES

REPORT ON PROGRESS: On Monday, the Secretariat updated participants on the status of species selected for review at past meetings (AC21 Doc. 10.1.1 (Rev.1)). On narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*) and saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*), he noted that no further action is required within the context of past recommendations. The Secretariat stressed that the deadline for range States to comply with these recommendations is September 2005. He explained that participants should analyze range States' response in order to evaluate the implementation of Article IV (Regulation of Trade in Specimens of Species included in Appendix II).

On queen conch (*Strombus gigas*), Central and South America and the Caribbean said information on this species will be added to the regional report.

On sturgeons, highlighting international illegal trade in caviar, Asia urged reassessing the timeframe for range States to adequately implement CITES in the Caspian Sea. The Secretariat noted that the RST only deals with legal trade and the issue of illegal trade in sturgeon is considered by the SC. Responding to Europe's request, the AC agreed to convey its concern about trade in caviar to SC members. A working group on RST (WG2), chaired by Althaus, was established.

On Tuesday, WG2 reviewed country replies regarding different species, including the Malayan box turtle (*Cuora amboinensis*) and the Saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*). WG2 considered the situation of countries that had not replied and whose trade data were insufficient, and agreed on a list of countries and species to be included in the next stage of the RST process.

On Wednesday, Chair Althaus reported on the results of the RST process (AC21 WG2 Doc.1), presenting WG2 recommendations, *inter alia*, to:

- request Malaysia and Indonesia to present information on trade control measures on *Cuora amboinensis*;
- request countries categorized as "of urgent concern" to impose a zero quota for *Falco cherrug* (Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan);
- request those of "possible concern" that have not replied, to provide trade statistics and details on captive breeding facilities; and
- exclude countries of "least concern" from the review.

The Secretariat cautioned about requesting information on breeding facilities in order to track the origin of falcons within



the RST process, since this process does not deal with illegal trade. Europe and the United Arab Emirates stressed the need for the AC to have information on breeding facilities in order to conduct a well-informed review. The AC adopted these recommendations with a minor amendment, and decided to communicate concern on wild specimens being exported as captive bred to the CITES Falcons Enforcement Task Force.

On country replies regarding species subject to review, Chair Althaus conveyed the group's concern about the lack of replies by many countries, and presented a list of species and countries that would be included in the next stages of RST. He noted that countries that had not provided the required information were not excluded from the RST. The AC adopted recommendations on the following species: African grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*), Senegal parrot (*Poicephalus senegalus*), hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*), painted terrapin (*Callagur borneoensis*), Comoro Flap-nose Chameleon (*Furcifer cephalolepis*), Clam Hippopus (*Hippopus hippopus*), several *Phelsuma* subspecies, several *Uromastix* subspecies, and several *Tridacna* subspecies.

SPECIES TO BE REVIEWED: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the selection of species for trade reviews after COP-13 (AC21 Doc. 10.2). Chair Althaus urged caution in selecting new species for review, noting that 10 taxa identified at AC-20 are already undergoing a review. The United Nations Environment Programme/World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) presented the analysis of trade trends in Appendix II species (AC21 Doc. 10.2 Annex), noting that five species were identified as possible candidates for review: Malayan box turtle (*Cuora amboinensis*); Mediterranean spur-thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*); Usambara (giant) three-horned chameleon (*Chamaeleo deremensis*); Werner's three-horned chameleon (*Chamaeleo werneri*); and Pacific boa sub-species (*Candoia bibroni*).

Noting significant trade in *Candoia bibroni* from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, Oceania raised the issue of addressing increases in trade in CITES-listed species by non-Parties. The US said that ranched specimens should be included in the review. Humane Society International and the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation commented on the UNEP-WCMC methodology, especially regarding heavily-traded species recently added to the CITES Appendices.

Chair Althaus referred the selection of new species for review to WG2, requesting participants to select new species for review after COP-13, focusing on the five species proposed by UNEP-WCMC and other species identified as requiring urgent attention.

On Wednesday, Chair Althaus presented WG2 report (AC21 WG2 Doc. 1), informing that the group decided not to add too many new species, bearing in mind the large amount of species currently under the RST. He noted that WG2 recommended the inclusion in the RST of: all species of *Mantella*; and *Testudo graeca* from Lebanon.

On narwhal (*Monodon monoceros*), WG2 could not reach agreement, with some countries calling for a new RST, and others opposing due to the recent completion of an RST for the species. Canada requested to be excluded from the RST since it did not trade in narwhals. North America proposed deferring this issue to AC-22. The Secretariat explained the procedures for the first stage of the RST, emphasizing that it only requires

countries to present pertinent information to be considered at the next AC meeting. After a short break, Chair Althaus informed the AC of the WG2 decision to include the narwhal in the RST. Canada underscored that it would comply with the AC decision and clarified that the management and conservation of narwhals are addressed in a bilateral joint commission by Canada and Greenland. Denmark, on behalf of Greenland, noted that Greenland will provide information on management plans and is considering introduction of voluntary trade limits. The AC adopted the WG2 recommendations with the addition of narwhal and other minor amendments.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF ANIMAL SPECIES

SELECTION OF SPECIES: On Monday, the Secretariat presented the selection of species for the periodic review of animal species included in the CITES Appendices (AC21 Doc. 11.1 (Rev.1)). He explained that following the guidelines adopted in Resolution 11.1 (Rev. COP-13) (Establishment of Committees), UNEP-WCMC developed a list of species for potential review. Stressing that the guidelines provided were inadequate to generate a reasonable number of species for review, he proposed that participants refine them. A working group on periodic review (WG3), chaired by Colman O'Criordan (European Commission) was established.

On Wednesday, WG3 Chair O'Criordan presented the results of discussions regarding the process for selection of future species for review (AC21 WG3 Doc. 1). The AC adopted the following recommendations, *inter alia*: not to select further individual species for periodic review at this stage; to request UNEP-WCMC to test the guidelines' applicability on CITES-listed species of *Amphibia* and other species like *Galliformes* and *Lepidoptera* and present the results at AC-22; and not to suggest specific revision to the guidelines pending UNEP-WCMC reports.

PREVIOUSLY SELECTED SPECIES: On Monday, the Secretariat presented a document on the review of species selected prior to RST procedures (AC21 Doc. 11.2). Mexico presented the results of two completed reviews to the AC. On axolotl (AC21 Doc. 11.2 Annex II), he said that the protection measures for this species need to be improved, and proposed either up-listing the species to Appendix I or setting a zero-export quota within Appendix II.

On the Central American river turtle (AC21 Doc. 11.2 Annex III), Mexico recommended its inclusion in Appendix I. Central and Latin America and the Caribbean said that more information is needed. The AC agreed to further consider these issues in WG3.

On Tuesday, WG3 reviewed Mexico's proposal on axolotl, analyzing whether it would be more convenient to up-list the species to Appendix I or maintain it in Appendix II. Mexico noted that even though there is no trade in wild caught specimens, the species meets Appendix I criteria.

On Wednesday, Chair O'Criordan presented the results of the discussion on ways to proceed with the species selected by the AC in 1999 and 2000 for which reviews were not completed (AC21 WG3 Doc. 1). The AC adopted the following recommendations, *inter alia*, to: eliminate leopard (*Panthera pardus*), boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*), Cameroon toad (*Bufo superciliaris*), Madagascar tomato frog (*Dyscophus antongilli*),



and *Goniopora* spp. from the review; ask the Secretariat to issue a notification inviting Parties that had volunteered to conduct reviews on common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*), yellow-backed duiker (*Cephalophus sylvicultor*), southern elephant seal (*Mirounga leonina*), big-eared flying fox (*Pteropus macrotis*), greater rhea (*Rhea americana*), dragon lizard (*Crocodylus lacertinus*), Tegu lizards (*Tupinambis teguixin*) and medicinal leech (*Hirudo medicinalis*) to respond, within a deadline, if they are still willing to do so.

REVIEW OF FELIDAE: On Monday, the US noted that COP Decision 13.93 (Review of the Appendices) directs the AC to include *Felidae* in the Review of the Appendices. He stressed the need to establish a working group to consider guidelines and develop a strategy on this issue. The AC agreed to further consider the review of *Felidae* in WG3.

On Wednesday, WG3 Chair O'Criordan presented the results of discussions on the procedure for the review of *Felidae* (AC21 WG3 Doc. 1). The AC adopted the following recommendations, *inter alia*, to: conduct the review through an intersessional e-mail working group coordinated by the US and include range States and other relevant bodies; and note that funding would be required to perform field studies.

TRADE IN ALIEN INVASIVE SPECIES

On Monday, the Secretariat reported on its cooperation with the CBD Secretariat on alien invasive species (AIS). Oceania informed participants about a CBD workshop held in Auckland, New Zealand, in May 2005 on the AIS international regulatory framework.

Noting that Parties have domestic legislation on AIS, the EC highlighted the need for flexibility when defining AIS. IUCN stressed the difficulty in determining under which circumstances species should be considered invasive. Chair Althaus noted that Resolution 13.10 (Trade in alien invasive species) instructs the CITES Secretariat to cooperate with the CBD on the issue. The AC agreed to invite Parties to send information on how they are dealing with AIS at the national level.

NOMENCLATURE PROGRESS REPORT

On Monday, the Nomenclature Committee on fauna (NC) convened under the chairmanship of Ute Grimm (Germany). The NC addressed, *inter alia*: official tasks and working practice of the Committee; the UNEP-WCMC checklist and updates on existing checklists; standard references on birds; and acceptable taxonomic references.

On Wednesday, the Secretariat, on behalf of the NC, said that the NC had three evening meetings to discuss, *inter alia*: official tasks (NC2005 Doc. 4); NC working practices (NC2005 Doc. 5); and *Brachypelma* (Draft Checklist) (NC2005 Doc. 7). The Secretariat will compile the results of NC meetings during PC-15 and AC-21 and make them available to participants.

TRANSPORT OF LIVE ANIMALS

On Monday, Katalin Rodics (Hungary) said that pursuant to COP Decision 13.88 (Transport of live specimens), the AC should: elaborate guidelines and a working plan for the Transport Working Group, and consider the establishment of a permanent working group on transport of live animals with sufficient regional representation (AC21 Doc. 16.1). South Africa noted that the guidelines should apply only to international transport.

Chair Althaus agreed, noting that Parties may voluntarily decide to follow CITES regulations within their countries.

Europe stressed that COP Decision 13.89 (Transport of live specimens) requires the AC to undertake a review of Resolution 10.21 (Transport of live animals) and report thereon at COP-14. The AC established a working group on transport of live animals (WG4), chaired by Peter Linhart (Austria).

On Tuesday, WG4 noted the need to avoid duplication of work and participants agreed to liaise with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), which is elaborating the first transport standards for land and sea transportation of live animals. Participants also agreed to invite the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Parties to cooperate in compiling information on national legislation regarding transport of live animals on the IATA internet site.

On Wednesday, WG4 Chair Linhart presented the WG4 report (AC1 WG4 Doc. 1), which decided to remove from Resolution 10.21 references to mortality and injury to animals during transportation. WG4 also agreed to liaise with the OIE regarding its initiative on transport of live animals, and with the PC Chair regarding the transport of plants. The results of intersessional working group on transport, in particular the final version of revised Resolution 10.21, will be presented at the next joint session of the PC and AC. The AC adopted the recommendations with minor amendments.

SEA CUCUMBERS

On Monday, Mohammad Pourkazemi (Iran) updated participants on the conservation of and trade in sea cucumbers (AC21 Doc. 17), including two workshops held under the auspices of FAO (Dalian, China, October 2003) and CITES (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, March 2004). He referred to Decision 13.48 (Sea cucumbers), which requests the AC to review the results of the workshops and prepare a discussion paper on sea cucumbers for consideration at COP-14. He also highlighted the divergent views on the possible CITES listing of sea cucumbers.

Japan said sea cucumbers are a fisheries management issue and should be addressed by States and the FAO at the national and regional levels. Oceania said it was premature to provide guidance to Parties on sea cucumbers' listing in absence of a comprehensive report on their management and trade.

Chair Althaus established a working group (WG5), chaired by Pourkazemi, with a mandate to: develop an outline of the discussion paper; define the nature of recommendations; and provide suggestions to the Secretariat on fundraising, expert selection and cooperation issues.

On Tuesday, WG5 discussed the terms of reference for a consultant to prepare a discussion paper on the biological status and trade in sea cucumbers and provide scientific guidance to the AC on actions necessary to secure the conservation of this species.

On Wednesday, Chair Pourkazemi presented the report of WG5 (AC21 WG5 Doc. 1), and the AC adopted the recommendation to hire a consultant to, *inter alia*: review the proceedings of the International Technical Workshop on the Conservation of Sea Cucumbers in the families *Holothuriidae* and *Stichopodidae* and of the Forum on Advances in Sea Cucumber Aquaculture and Management; prepare and present at AC-22 a discussion paper on the biological and trade status



of sea cucumbers, providing scientific guidance on the actions needed to secure their conservation; and submit a draft report to the Secretariat by 1 April 2006.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SHARKS

On Monday, Rod Hay (New Zealand) reported on progress in the conservation and management of sharks (AC21 Doc. 18), noting COP Decisions 13.42 and 13.43 (Sharks), which request the AC to: review implementation issues and adverse impacts of trade on CITES-listed sharks; prepare a report on trade-related measures by Parties aimed at shark conservation; and report to COP-14. Hay highlighted cooperation with the World Customs Organization, FAO and IUCN/Species Survival Commission (SSC) Shark Specialist Group. He noted limited experience, due to recent listings of shark species on CITES Appendices, in identifying cases where trade is adversely impacting sharks.

The FAO reported on the 26th meeting of its Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and the ongoing technical consultation on shark conservation and management. Chair Althaus established a working group (WG6) chaired by Hay to develop an intersessional programme of work.

On Tuesday, WG6 discussed existing reviews on the implementation of the CITES listing of shark species and trade data, drafted a notification to the Parties requesting information on trade in CITES-listed sharks, and considered approaches to identify cases where trade is having an adverse impact on sharks. WG6 also discussed CITES' input to the FAO technical consultation on shark conservation and management.

On Wednesday, WG6 Chair Hay reported on the outcomes of the working group (AC21 WG6 Doc. 1), noting its decision to establish an intersessional working group. He said WG6 agreed to:

- liaise with FAO on convening a workshop on the conservation and management of sharks;
- recommend information-sharing between the Scientific Authorities and fisheries agencies ahead of the FAO technical consultation;
- analyze case studies and other sources of information on trade-related threats to sharks;
- identify key species of sharks threatened by trade; and
- complete the work on the World Customs Organization (WCO) customs codes for sharks.

Hay also presented the draft Notification to the Parties on the management of trade in sharks (AC21 WG6 Doc. 1 Annex). Singapore expressed concern about limiting the scope of threats to trade only, and using the list of shark species identified as "of management concern" as candidates for listing on the CITES Appendices. A compromise was found with the AC agreeing to retain the original wording of the COP Decision on trade-related threats to sharks, and use a wider array of information sources to identify species of concern. The AC adopted the recommendations with this and other minor amendments.

CONSERVATION AND TRADE IN GREAT APES

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced conservation and trade in great apes (AC21 Doc. 19), stressing that Resolution 13.4 (Conservation of and trade in great apes) instructs the AC to work closely with the UN Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) and identify concrete measures to advance conservation of great

apes, in particular awareness raising on illegal trade. Africa and Asia highlighted enforcement challenges in implementing CITES listings of great ape species. A working group (WG7) chaired by Richard Bagine (Africa) was established.

On Wednesday, Chair Bagine presented the results of participants' discussion (AC21 WG7 Doc. 1), and the AC adopted the WG7 recommendations, *inter alia*, to: ask the Secretariat to issue a Notification calling on donor countries to contribute towards GRASP's work; and ask the Secretariat to explore possibilities of working with IATA and individual airlines to prevent illegal shipment of great apes by air. The AC also agreed to:

- collect further suggestions on the issue from technical missions and workshops;
- establish an intersessional working group chaired by Bagine;
- invite other range States to contact Chair Bagine and participate in the working group; and
- ask Chair Althaus to inform the SC about these recommendations at SC-53.

REGIONAL REPORTS

AFRICA: On Wednesday, Richard Bagine (Kenya) presented the regional report (AC21 Doc. 5.1), which focused on activities regarding, *inter alia*, significant trade, enforcement and capacity building. On the conservation of the African lion (*Panthera leo*), he highlighted two workshops planned to take place this year: one for Eastern and Southern Africa, in Zimbabwe; and another one for Western and Central Africa, in Cameroon. On the African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), he noted activities carried out in the region to implement the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme. On enforcement, he informed, *inter alia*, that: a technical committee was established to investigate the possibility of returning four gorillas confiscated in 2004 by Malaysia to Cameroon; and the number of fines imposed for illegal trade has more than doubled in recent years. He highlighted regional difficulties regarding communication and urged the AC to address this issue with the assistance of the Secretariat.

ASIA: On Wednesday, Siti Nuramaliati Prijono (Indonesia) presented the report on the regional activities since AC-20 (AC21 Doc. 5.2), which was based on six responses from Parties in the region that had sent information on CITES implementation in their countries. She highlighted, *inter alia*: regional meetings on sea cucumbers; subregional cooperation on wildlife trade under the auspices of UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; the ASEAN Regional Action Plan for Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora for 2005-2010; and other bilateral and multilateral activities. She also noted ongoing regional activities on RST, review of the Appendices, scientific research, and CITES enforcement.

CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: On Wednesday, Alvaro José Velasco (Venezuela) presented the regional report (AC21 Doc. 5.3 Rev. 1), highlighting responses from 15 out of 30 Parties and a wide range of activities on CITES implementation across the region. He noted that these activities included: technical and capacity building workshops in Venezuela and Peru; legislative developments in Barbados, Bahamas and Guatemala; and implementation of AC recommendations on queen conch



(*Strombus gigas*) in seven countries of the region. Chair Althaus welcomed the report, noting that the participation of the region in the AC has greatly improved.

EUROPE: On Wednesday, Thomas Althaus (Switzerland) presented the regional report (AC21 Doc. 5.4), highlighting, *inter alia*: regional priorities and activities to strengthen the scientific basis of CITES implementation, which include research projects and financial support for these projects in the CITES framework; organization of workshops in the region; collaboration between CITES and other multilateral environmental agreements; and elaboration of CITES Masters and Doctorate courses in Andalucía, Spain.

NORTH AMERICA: On Wednesday, Rodrigo Medellín (Mexico) presented the regional report (AC21 Doc. 5.5 Rev. 2), noting continued communication and cooperation in the region. He highlighted developments since AC-20, *inter alia*: new appointments in the national Scientific Authorities in Canada and Mexico; completion of a study on Morelet's crocodile in Mexico; inclusion of Beluga sturgeon in the US Endangered Species Act; US-Mexico cooperation on combating illegal trade in amazons (species of parrots); and capacity-building programmes in Canada.

OCEANIA: On Wednesday, Rod Hay (New Zealand) presented the regional report (AC21 Doc. 5.6), highlighting that two Parties have joined CITES since AC-20, namely Palau and Samoa. On collaboration between CITES and the CBD, he noted the region's participation in an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Island Biodiversity convened by the CBD regarding specific actions promoting and implementing CITES in island States. He noted that the second Oceania Capacity Building Workshop (Brisbane, Australia, August 2004) carried out useful discussions on CITES implementation in the region.

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL

The Secretariat said that Resolution 11.19 (Identification manual) transfers the responsibility for the publication of the Identification Manual to the Secretariat. He informed that there have been no developments since COP-13, and invited Parties to assist the Secretariat in compiling the identification sheets for the animals listed in the Appendices.

OTHER MATTERS

On Wednesday, Chair Althaus proposed, and the AC agreed, to include the issue of externally-funded projects in the agenda of the AC pursuant to Resolution 12.2 (Procedure for approval of externally-funded projects).

CLOSING OF AC-21

On Wednesday, the AC adopted the report of the meeting (AC21 Sum. 2). Chair Althaus highlighted the positive experience of having a joint session with the PC, congratulated participants for having addressed an extensive agenda, and closed the meeting at 6:00 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PC-15 AND AC-21

The meetings of the CITES Plants and Animals Committees, and their two-day joint meeting in Geneva, were reminiscent of Swiss clockwork, in terms of precision and efficiency, as they handled the twenty-plus agenda items that each committee had to contend with. During the two-weeks they addressed scientific and technical issues dealing with the selection of species for significant trade reviews and the evaluation of international wildlife trade data, underscoring that impartial scientific advice is central to fulfilling the CITES mandate. In this respect, the proposed review of the committees adopted at COP-13 and addressed by the joint AC and PC meeting, raised some delegates' fears that the Committees' scientific input to the Convention may be jeopardized. This brief analysis explores some of the most relevant issues addressed during the Animals Committee (AC) and Plants Committee (PC), reflecting on the value of the Committees' work as a tool to further CITES implementation and compliance and to achieve cooperation and synergies with other related multilateral processes.

TOOTH AND CLAW

The Review of Significant Trade (RST) is perhaps the best example of the important role the Committees play in CITES implementation. As one participant put it, the AC and PC are "growing their teeth" by aptly using the RST as a "yellow card" for countries to take prompt action.

The RST uses a meticulous species-based approach to monitor CITES implementation and compliance at the country level. When evaluating trade statistics for specific species, factors such as sudden increments in trade, excessive quotas, dwindling populations and evidence of illegal trade set off the Committees' alarm bells, leading to further stages of more in-depth review.

The fact that the RST combines country- and species-specific analysis allows recommendations to be targeted to specific countries on specific species and thus lets good performers "off the hook" by excluding them from the review. As valuable as this implementation tool has proven to be, however, its limitations did not go unnoticed. Since the RST relies on legal trade statistics, it is not designed to cope with illegal trade. In the case of falcons, for example, where AC participants provided convincing reasons to believe that substantive illegal trade in the species was taking place, the Committee struggled to come up with a solution, with the Secretariat proposing that this issue be addressed by interested Parties through the recently created Falcon Enforcement Task Force and not in the framework of the RST process.

In the case of narwhal, the decision to re-examine this whale species through the RST process, only a few months after the AC had completed a review of the species, raised objections by range States. Notwithstanding this, the AC stuck to its new RST procedure, which does not allow for an *a priori* exclusion of a particular State, while recognizing that those complying with CITES would surely be excluded after the initial phase. Some participants did not see this case as a shortcoming of the RST, but on the contrary, were satisfied with countries' reluctance to be included in the review as a demonstration of RST's effectiveness in promoting compliance with CITES.



FLOCKING TOGETHER

Several issues in the Committees' agendas touched upon issues addressed in other international fora and provide a good example of contrasts between different processes. While in New York delegates to the fifth session of the UN Forum on Forests were busy trying to agree on an international arrangement on forests, the PC contributed to this effort by confronting head-on the challenge of ensuring the sustainable use of timber species included in the CITES Appendices. Both in the case of *Pericopsis* from Africa and bigleaf mahogany from South and Central America, the PC supported regional consultations between exporters and importers, monitored compliance with the rules applicable to Appendix II species, and, in the case of bigleaf mahogany, issued a stern reminder to all countries involved in this trade that if satisfactory compliance is not achieved by next year, this species will be included in the RST. In a remarkable spirit of cooperation, the US and Peru (main importer and exporter of bigleaf mahogany, respectively) agreed to this firm approach, volunteering to co-chair an intersessional working group and report to the next PC on progress achieved.

CITES and its Scientific Committees have also shown that they are aware of and in tune with the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules on international trade. In a group dealing with medicinal plant annotations, efforts were made to eliminate trade restrictions that did not further the objective of species conservation. In a group on transport of live animals, participants considered using IATA (International Air Transport Association) and OIE (World Organization for Animal Health) standards, thus demonstrating pragmatism in their approach to sensitive trade issues without compromising the conservation of endangered species.

In the case of sharks, the AC has shown a good degree of cooperation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Committee on Fisheries (COFI), with some participants noting an increase in knowledge about CITES within the fisheries community. The fact that both Secretariats seem to be benefiting from their increased mutual cooperation further highlights the irony of painstaking negotiations since 2002 to agree on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FAO and CITES. This draft MOU has been going back and forth between COFI and the CITES Standing Committee, mainly because some fishing nations object to recognizing the role of CITES in the regulation of trade of fishery species included in its Appendices.

The joint session of PC and AC also had the task to address the issue of synergies between CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity. While the recognition of the need to share information and avoid duplication in the Conventions' work prevails, the PC and AC struggled to find useful application of such principles. Some participants saw this as a challenging task to adapt broad environmental and socioeconomic guidelines to a specific scientific assessment that determines whether trade in an Appendix II listed species will be harmful to the survival of that species (non-detriment findings). Most were satisfied with the pragmatic solution to test the principles through case studies on

eight selected species such as *Hoodia* spp. and crocodiles, and hoped this would help improve the quality of non-detriment findings.

A FEATHER IN THE COMMITTEES' CAP

With the challenge of addressing timber and fisheries species that have substantive international trade – bigleaf mahogany and *Pericopsis elata* in the PC, and sea cucumbers and sharks in the AC – the Scientific Committees may step into the limelight of the natural resources management community by showing that it is possible to ensure that international trade is not detrimental to the survival of these species and may be compatible with sustainable use. Another noteworthy task facing the AC and PC is the first-ever country-wide RST in Madagascar, which has a potential to showcase the impact of CITES work at an unprecedented scale.

Perhaps realizing that AC-21 and PC-15 were a unique opportunity to demonstrate their performance in light of their ongoing review process, the Scientific Committees have, over the past two weeks, focused on what they are best at: politics-free science, especially since most of the high-profile species like sturgeons and elephants have already been referred to the Standing Committee. The litmus test for the Committees' success will therefore be their ability to maintain scientific integrity while tackling RST on species with significant economic implications. Their record is presently very strong, and most participants hoped that this will get them a seal of approval by COP-14 when it addresses the review of Scientific Committees in 2007.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION IN GREAT APE CONSERVATION:

The International Tropical Timber Organization, in collaboration with the Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP), will convene this one-day workshop on 27 May 2005, at ITTO headquarters in Yokohama, Japan. The workshop will discuss ways in which ITTO and GRASP can work together to strengthen efforts to protect the world's great apes. For more information, contact Emmanuel Ze Meka, ITTO Secretariat; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: rfm@iito.or.jp; internet: <http://www.iito.or.jp>

SIXTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA:

The United Nations open-ended informal consultative process will convene at UN headquarters in New York from 6-10 June 2005. This process is intended to carry out three interrelated tasks: (a) to study developments in ocean affairs; (b) against the backdrop of overall developments of all relevant ocean issues, to identify particular issues to be considered by the General Assembly; and (c) while identifying such issues, to place emphasis on areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be enhanced. One of the issues to be discussed this year is longline fishing and sea turtles. For more information, contact: Mr. Vladimir Golitsyn, UN Division



of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea; tel: +1-212-963-3951; fax: +1-212-963-5847; e-mail: doalos@un.org; internet: http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

FIRST MEETING OF THE CBD WORKING GROUP ON PROTECTED AREAS: The first meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas will be held from 13-17 June 2005, in Montecatini, Italy. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org; internet: http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=PAWG-01

ITTC-38: The 38th session of the ITTC and Associated sessions of the Committees will convene from 18-22 June 2005, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. For more information, contact: Manoel Sobral Filho, ITTO Executive Director; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: http://www.itto.or.jp

57TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION: This meeting will take place from 20-24 June 2005, in Ulsan, Republic of Korea. For more information, contact: IWC Secretariat; tel: +44-1223-233-971; fax: +44-1223-232-876; e-mail: secretariat@iwcoffice.org; internet: http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2005.htm

UN CONFERENCE FOR THE NEGOTIATION OF A SUCCESSOR AGREEMENT TO ITTA, 1994, THIRD PART: Delegates will continue negotiations leading to a successor agreement to the ITTA, 1994 from 27 June to 1 July 2005, in Geneva. For more information, contact: UNCTAD Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-5809; fax: +41-22-917-0056; e-mail: correspondence@unctad.org; internet: http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Meeting.asp?intItemID=3323&lang=1

53RD MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE: This meeting will take place from 27 June to 1 July 2005, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139/40; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch; internet: http://www.cites.org/eng/com/SC/index.shtml

WTO COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT: The regular meetings of the World Trade Organization's Committee on Trade and Environment and special sessions on the Doha Mandate for negotiations will take place from 5-8 July and 12-14 October 2005, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: WTO; tel: +41-22-739-5111; fax: +41-22-739-5458; e-mail: enquiries@wto.org; internet: http://www.wto.org

XXII IUFRO WORLD CONGRESS: This Congress will take place from 8-13 August 2005, in Brisbane, Australia, under the theme "Forests in the Balance: Linking Tradition and Technology." For more information, contact: International Union of Forest Research Organizations; tel: + 61-07-3854-1611; fax: +61-07-3854-1507; e-mail: iufro1005@ozacomm.com.au; internet: http://www.ozacomm.com.au/iufro2005/index.htm

EIGHTH WORLD WILDERNESS CONGRESS: This meeting will take place from 30 September to 6 October 2005, in Anchorage, Alaska. The theme of the 8th WWC is Wilderness, Wild-lands and People – A Partnership for the Planet. For more information, contact: The WILD Foundation Secretariat; tel: +1-

805-640-0390; fax: +1-805-640-0230; e-mail: info@8wwc.org; internet: http://www.8wwc.org/

FIFTH MASTERS COURSE IN "MANAGEMENT, ACCESS AND CONSERVATION OF SPECIES: THE INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK": Masters and Doctorate courses supported by the CITES Conference of the Parties will take place at the "Universidad Internacional de Andalucía" from 3 October to 16 December 2005, in Baeza, Spain. For more information, contact: Dr. Margarita Clemente; tel: +34-95-374-2775; fax: +34-95-374-2975; e-mail: Machado@unia.es; internet: http://www.unia.es/AntonioMachado/Paginas/AvanceProgramacionDocente.htm

FIRST INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS: This meeting will take place from 23-27 October 2005, in Geelong, Australia. For more information, contact: Congress Organizers; tel: +61-3-5983-2400; fax: +61-3-5983-2223; e-mail: sm@asnevents.net.au; internet: http://www.impacongress.org/

NINTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS: This meeting will take place from 7-15 November 2005, in Kampala, Uganda. For more information, contact Mr. Dwight Peck, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands; tel: +41-22-999-0170; fax: +41-22-999-0169; e-mail: peck@ramsar.org; internet: http://www.ramsar.org

EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES: This meeting will take place from 16-25 November 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: UNEP/CMS Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2401; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: secretariat@cms.int; internet: http://www.cms.int

39TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER COUNCIL AND ASSOCIATED SESSION OF THE COMMITTEES: This meeting will take place from 7-12 November 2005, in Yokohama, Japan. For more information, contact: Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho; International Tropical Timber Organization; tel: +81-45-223-1110; fax: +81-45-223-1111; e-mail: itto@itto.or.jp; internet: http://www.itto.or.jp

22TH MEETING OF THE CITES ANIMALS COMMITTEE AND THE 16TH MEETING OF THE CITES PLANTS COMMITTEE: AC-22 and PC-16 will be held back-to-back between July and September 2006, at a venue to be confirmed. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch; internet: http://www.cites.org

FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CITES (COP-14): This meeting will take place in the Netherlands between March and May 2007. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch; internet: http://www.cites.org