

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

Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September -5 October 2016

Interpretation and implementation matters

Trade control and traceability

STOCKS AND STOCKPILES OF SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES

1. This document has been submitted by the Secretariat.

Background

2. In recent years the Parties have devoted increasing attention to the subject of stocks of specimens of CITES-listed species. Aside from Resolutions concerned with amendments to the Appendices, the current provisions of Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties including provisions related to this matter are as follows:

- a) Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

In Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*, Parties and non-Parties on whose territories there exist stocks of parts and derivatives of tiger and other Asian big cat species (such as tiger bone stocks), but not including pre-Convention specimens, are urged to consolidate and ensure adequate control of such stocks, and where possible destroy them, with the exception of those used for educational and scientific purposes.

It should be noted that in addition, in 2015, the Standing Committee requested all Parties with national or privately held stockpiles of captive-bred or confiscated Asian big cat body parts and derivatives to report them to the Secretariat by 1 October 2015 – see Notification to the Parties No. 2015/0006.

- b) Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

In Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on *Trade in elephant specimens* the Conference of the Parties urges Parties to introduce recording and inspection procedures to enable monitoring of the movement of ivory within the State, particularly by means of compulsory trade controls over raw ivory and comprehensive and demonstrably effective stock inventory, reporting, and enforcement systems for worked ivory.

The Parties are urged to 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, 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.

- c) Malagasy ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.) and Malagasy palissanders and rosewoods (*Dalbergia* spp.)

In Decision 16.152 adopting an “*Action plan for Diospyros spp. and Dalbergia spp.*”, the Conference of the Parties decided that Madagascar shall put in place an embargo on export of stocks of these timbers until the Standing Committee had approved the results of a stockpile audit and a use plan to

determine what component of the stockpile had been legally accumulated and could be legally exported.

d) Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.)

In Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) on *Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses* the Conference of the Parties urges all Parties that have stocks of rhinoceros horn to identify, mark, register and secure such stocks and urges the Secretariat and other appropriate bodies, where possible, to assist those Parties with the control of stocks, by providing them with technical advice and relevant information. It recommends that the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC report to the Secretariat on *inter alia* stocks of specimens of rhinoceroses and stock management and that the Secretariat distribute this information to range and implicated States for any comments before submitting it to the Conference of the Parties together with any recommendations and draft decisions as appropriate.

e) Saiga antelope (Saiga tatarica)

In accordance with Decisions 14.91 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.96 on “*Saiga antelope (Saiga tatarica)*”, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, through their implementation of the Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope (2011-2015), should encourage countries trading in saiga products to establish internal market controls for saiga parts e.g. registration of stockpiles, labelling of parts and products and registration of manufacturers and traders, learning from experiences in China.

f) Sturgeons and paddlefishes (Acipenseriformes spp.)

In Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish* the Conference of the Parties recommends that all caviar from shared stocks (populations) subject to export quotas must be exported before the end of the quota year. It appears that the purpose of this provision is to avoid complications in trade controls caused by the existence of stockpiles.

g) Tibetan antelope (Pantholops hodgsonii)

In Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope* the Conference of the Parties recommends that all Parties and non-Parties in whose territory stocks of Tibetan antelope parts and raw materials exist, adopt a registration system and national measures to prevent such stocks from re-entering into trade.

2. At its present meeting, the Conference of the Parties will consider a significant number of new proposals relating to the issue of stocks, including the following:

a) Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose the adoption of draft decisions at CoP17 to the effect that the Secretariat, subject to external funding, should review implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) and associated Decisions and prepare a report providing its findings and recommendations for the 69th and 70th meetings of the Standing Committee, in consideration of *inter alia*, the management of national and privately-held stocks of parts and derivatives of Asian big cats. The Secretariat should report on progress with this work at the 69th and 70th meetings of the Standing Committee and formulate recommendations for consideration by the Committee. The Committee should then determine whether any further time-bound, country specific actions are necessary to ensure implementation of this decision [see document CoP17 Doc. 60.1].

b) Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose adoption of a decision at CoP17, to request the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide guidance, in accordance with the provisions of Resolutions Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) and Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), on “best practices” for the management of stockpiles ivory from legal and illegal sources [see document CoP17 Doc. 57.1].

c) Pangolins (Manis spp.)

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose the adoption at CoP17 of a draft resolution that would, *inter alia*, encourage Parties on whose territories stocks of parts and derivatives of pangolins exist, to ensure that adequate control measures are in place to secure these stocks, and to ensure strict application of these measures [see document CoP17 Doc. 64.]

d) Pythons

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose the adoption at CoP17 of a draft resolution on snakes, which would, *inter alia*, recommend that prior to the implementation of a traceability system for python skins, Parties inventory and tag those skins and provide information on the inventory to the Secretariat as a baseline. The tagging method used should distinguish between skins of the initial stockpiles and skins harvested subsequently. Parties should further ensure that the inventory of the initial stockpiles contains information on the species concerned, the stage of processing of the skins (crust, dried, etc.), the corresponding quantities and tag numbers and the year of harvest for skins newly entering the stockpiles [see document CoP17 Doc. 71].

e) Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.)

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose at CoP17 an amendment to Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) on *Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses* to, *inter alia*, urge all Parties that have stocks of rhinoceros horn to identify, mark, register and secure such stocks and declare these to the Secretariat each year before 28 February, in a format to be defined by the Secretariat. The draft amendment will also recommend that the Secretariat make an aggregated summary of the rhinoceros horn stock declarations of Parties available to the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC for analysis and inclusion in their report to the Secretariat pursuant to the Resolution [see document CoP17 Doc. 68].

f) Saiga antelope (Saiga spp.)

The Standing Committee has agreed to propose at CoP17 the adoption of draft decisions to encourage range States of *Saiga* spp. and important consumer and trading countries of saiga parts and derivatives to address challenges in controlling illicit trade in saiga horns and derivatives thereof by, *inter alia*, ensuring effective stockpile management. Additionally, subject to the availability of external resources, the Secretariat should assist *Saiga* range States and major trading and consumer States, upon request, in ensuring effective stockpile management and monitoring, including the development of inventories and improving stockpile security [see document CoP17 Doc. 70].

3. The terms stock and stockpile have been used by Parties in the past without explanation of the meaning of these terms. In general the terms seem to refer to accumulations of specimens (particularly parts and derivatives) detained or stored for a period of time at a point in the supply chain between the harvester and the consumer, with stockpiles being larger accumulations than stocks. However, it is not clear whether specimens held by individual consumers in a Party could be said to constitute part of the stock of such specimens held in that Party.
4. The Secretariat observes that a variety of different processes are evolving for the control of stocks of specimens of CITES-listed species and that in some cases these are also increasing the reporting burden on Parties and the work of the Secretariat in recording and consolidating the data generated. It would be useful to reflect on the nature of the concerns about stocks, the implications that they may have for the implementation of the Convention and the purpose and means of recording them.

Recommendation

5. Consequently the Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopts a decision directing the Standing Committee to review this matter and suggests the following text:

Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall, with the assistance of the Secretariat, review the existing provisions agreed by the Parties concerning controls on stocks of specimens of CITES-listed species. It shall consider their objectives and implementation, and the resource implications for Parties and the Secretariat, and shall report its conclusions and recommendations at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

6. The Secretariat believes that budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat and Standing Committee to implement the draft decision above can be accommodated within existing provisions.