

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



Sixty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 August 2011

Regional matters

Reports of regional representatives

EUROPE

This document has been submitted by Bulgaria*. As it was received by the Secretariat after the deadline for submission of documents, it is provided herewith in English only, the language in which it was submitted.

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REPORT OF THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR EUROPE

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1. Introduction

This Report covers activities of the Parties within the European Region in the period between the 60th meeting (Doha, March 2010) and the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, August 2011). This Report was compiled using contributions received from Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Additional information for the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States¹ was received from the European Commission.

2. Overview of major developments

Currently there are **48 Parties** to the Convention in the European Region, from which **33 Parties** adopted the Gaborone Amendment to article XXI of the Convention:

The Ministry of Nature Protection of **Armenia** reported that an Act on CITES registry maintenance procedures have been approved on 24 January 2011.

Bulgaria is about to complete a document named 'Rules for cooperation between National Customs Agency, Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and the Ministry of Environment and Water on increasing effectivity of control over the export, trade, transit and export of endangered species of wild fauna and flora', elaborated in 2010 - 2011.

In October, 2010, the Secretary-General of CITES has awarded a Certificate of Commendation to the General Directorate of Customs of the **Czech Republic** and the Czech Environmental Inspectorate in recognition of their exemplary efforts to combat illegal trade in parrots. Since 2006, the two agencies have collaborated on a long-term investigation relating to the smuggling of rare parrots, which has required liaison and coordination with other law enforcement bodies around the world and with the INTERPOL General Secretariat. The investigation has uncovered widespread forgery of CITES documents, false declarations of captive breeding, and use of fake marking rings. Methods used for the first time in wildlife crime investigations also allowed the detection of new smuggling routes and techniques. Seizures of Appendix-I parrots, such as specimens of the Lear's macaw (*Anodorhynchus leari*), are particularly commendable.

Norway is now in the final stages of replacing the old CITES regulation (from 2002). A more modern regulation is suggested and contain also domestic regulation of trade and possession of CITES specimens in certain categories. It is expected that the new regulation will enter into force some time in 2012.

UK reported on:

- Full participation on the review of the EU wildlife trade regulations; Council Regulation 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora and Commission Regulation 865/2006 which implements 338/97.
- Introduction of UK stricter measures on export/re-export of rhino horn which was in response to an increase in price and demand for rhino horn. Subsequent work with EU partners to extend the UK approach to an EU and global basis, the UK has taken the lead in preparing an EU proposal on rhino horn for presentation at SC61

Ukraine reported that a Short Identification Guide of the CITES specimens was published and disseminated among law enforcement agencies.

National Action Plan of Ukraine on the Conservation, Rehabilitation and Sustainable Management of Sturgeon Fish Stock was developed.

Annually, more than 1 million of artificially bred young sturgeon fish are released into water bodies of Ukraine to support natural populations of relevant sturgeon species.

3. Activities of the regional representatives

European Commission: CITES is implemented in the European Community through Council Regulation 338/97/EC of 9 December 1996² on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.

On 22 July 2010, Commission Regulation (EC) No 709/2010 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein was adopted. The Regulation implements a number of decisions taken at CoP 15, in particular those relating to the inclusion or removal of species into the Appendices of the Convention. The Commission is now preparing a new Regulation reflecting recent changes to CITES Appendix III as well as additional amendments relating to the Annexes of Regulation (EC) 338/97 for certain non-CITES listed species.

On 5 November 2010, Commission Regulation (EC) No 997/2010 suspending the introduction into the Community of specimens of certain species of wild fauna and flora was adopted. The European Commission is updating this Regulation on a regular basis.

Implementation

Council Regulation (EC) 338/97 establishes the Committee on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, the Scientific Review Group and the Enforcement Group. The Committee on Trade in Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which agrees on implementation measures for CITES, met four times in 2009 and 2010 and will have met twice in 2011 by the time of SC 61. The Scientific Review Group, which consists of the Member States' Scientific Authorities and examines any scientific question relating to the application of the Regulations, met four times in 2009 and 2010 and so far twice in 2011. The Enforcement Group, which consists of representatives of each Member State's authorities with responsibility for monitoring compliance and enforcement of the Regulations, met twice in 2009 and 2010 and so far once in 2011. This group plays a key role for exchanging enforcement related information among enforcement, customs and police authorities.

UK activities in the reporting period:

- Co-ordination of regional input to consultations on the UNEP-CITES Memorandum of Understanding
- UK chairs the CITES e-commerce working group and coordinates EU views for that group
- Undertook a pilot on e-permitting with Switzerland and assisted with drafting guidance for Parties on e-permitting
- Member of the CITES Animals Committee representing European views. UK assisted Switzerland with preparation of the European regional report for the 25th meeting of the Animals Committee (<http://www.cites.org/eng/com/ac/25/E25-06-04.pdf>)

4. Regional cooperation

Belgium: Belgian Customs and Federal Police do regularly make use of the EU-TWIX list-server to share information on seizures and others related enforcement subjects with colleagues of CITES authorities in other EU Member States.

In June 2010, the Belgian Customs did lead a controlling action on postal parcels imported from third countries at the Brussels International Airport. For 0,2 % of the parcels controled, a CITES infraction was noticed.

In December 2010, the Belgian Customs at Antwerpen haven did lead a two-weeks controlling action in order to verify if the declared name of timber imported matched identification by microscopical examination. No CITES infractions have been detected although some non CITES timber shipments controled proved to be mislabeled. This controlling action followed a training of Customs agents by CITES Belgian Management Authority and timber experts of the Museum of Central Africa on wood identification.

Belgian Customs did participate to the WCO GAPIN project (Great Apes and Integrity) which aimed to fight against illicit trafficking in wildlife, especially great apes, and to enhance Customs integrity in the area of CITES enforcement. This project was launched in Mombasa in December 2010 and ended in March 2011 in

² OJ L 61 of 3.3.1997, p. 1

South Africa where the debriefing of the project took place. Belgian Customs participated in these two events and led a specific controlling action in the framework of this project at Brussels International Airport early 2011. This action was successful as Belgian Customs did seize, at this occasion, large amounts of ivory, dried seahorses and bush meat in 11 seizures.

Belgian Police are currently involved in the EUROPOL investigation "Rathkeale Rovers" which aims to uncover the illegal trade in rhino horns which is very active for the moment in the whole of the European Region.

Estonia: Exchange of intelligence. Customs collaborate with police and customs of different countries (e.g. joint operations with neighbouring countries. Also cooperation with international bodies (WCO, Europol etc.) is going on.

European Commission

MIKE: The European Commission contributes EUR 9.814.000 to establishing a long-term system for monitoring the illegal killing of elephants (MIKE). This project runs over a period of 5 years (until 2011) and is considered as contributing to the EC Development Policy objectives to reduce poverty as it entails a support for sustainable economic, social and environmental development, based, inter alia, on the wise use of natural resources. The continuation of the funding of the project is currently under discussions.

CITES-ITTO project: The European Commission contributes EUR 2,5 million, with co-funding from other partners, to the CITES-ITTO project ensuring international trade in CITES-listed timber species is consistent with their sustainable management and conservation. This project will assist the relevant countries in meeting the scientific, administrative and legal requirements for management and trade in these timber species. It will provide capacity building for scientific authorities to make "non-detriment findings" for the harvest of these species and the development of regional management plans by supporting co-operation between countries.

CoP15 decisions: In order to assist in the implementation of certain decisions adopted at CoP15, the European Commission in 2010 awarded a grant to the CITES Secretariat for an amount of 500.000 EUR with a view to improve the implementation and enforcement of the Convention and achieve greater synergies with other Conventions and organisations. This grant covered the activities of better implementation of and compliance with the Convention, effective enforcement of the Convention and improving species management and the scientific basis for implementation of the Convention.

CITES Capacity building: The European Commission is supporting a "CITES capacity building project" by the CITES Secretariat to strengthen the CITES implementation capacity of developing countries to ensure sustainable wildlife management and non-detrimental trade. It focuses on regional training workshops and certain in-country follow up capacity building activities following a needs assessment process. A first contract was awarded for an amount of 1 million EUR. This project has been complemented through a second phase (Country focused project) to strengthen the CITES implementation capacity of developing countries to ensure sustainable wildlife management and non-detrimental trade. The amount for this second phase is 1,5 million EUR.

In 2010, **Portugal** participated in TRAM (22-26 February) and RAMP (20-25 September) operations dynamized by INTERPOL.

From 26 to 27 October 2010, by invitation of SEPRONA, SEPNA/GNR (an environment police force) and ICNB, the management authority of Portugal attended in Madrid, Spain, an Iberian CITES Seminar about the implementation of the Convention and the ways to strengthen the cooperation between the two countries. A second seminar is expected to take place in Portugal, later 2011.

UK activities in the reporting period:

- Participation in Operations RAMP and TRAM, global operations on trade in reptiles and tortoises;
- Participation in the World Custom Organisation (WCO) Operation Gapin on illegal trade in wildlife and in particular on great apes;
- UK Border Agency (UKBA) undertook a key role in the EU CITES training programme, including producing a CD Rom;
- UK organised workshops on reptile ID and timber as part of the EU-TWIX initiative;
- Provision of UKBA experts for a number of European wide training events;
- UK sits on the working group on the Review of Significant trade;

- UK is a member of the EU eels working group;
- Provided assistance to the Georgian SA on NDF's for geophytes.

Ukraine reported that 22nd Session of the Ukrainian-Russian Commission on Fishery in the Sea of Azov was held 26–29 October, 2010, Berdyansk, Ukraine, where issues of sturgeon catch and export quota had been discussed.

5. Meetings and workshops

Armenia reported for involved in training workshop on the theme “Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade and Law Enforcement” hold in Tbilisi Georgia, on 13-17 December, 2010, and jointly hosted by International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia.

Austria. With a view towards more effective national implementation of CITES, the Austrian Ministry of the Environment, and the European Commission, held an international symposium in Vienna (17 - 20 May 2011) entitled "The relevance of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) to the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed species in exporting countries".

Supported by the Secretariats of CITES and CMS, UNEP-WCMC, the CBD, IUCN-SSC, TRAFFIC, WWF, IIED, CIC and FAO, the symposium focused on the role of economic incentives in implementing CITES obligations to improve conservation in developing countries. It also sought to address the issue of how poverty can negatively impact efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity. Case study presentations included Namibia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and the Andean countries of South America. 80 participants from 24 nations, including CBNRM experts from developing nations, EU CITES representatives and nature conservation and animal protection NGOs, discussed a broad range of issues in four working groups. Key points of discussion included the characteristics of successful CBNRM programmes; income generation, conservation implications of CITES species listings; impacts of trade restrictions and other EU policy measures. Reports of the working groups will provide the basis for an extensive policy discussion within the EU. Furthermore, working group conclusions will trigger more strategic interactions between CITES and other relevant MEAs as well as achieving wider policy coherence between MEAs on the issue of rural communities as conservation partners (<http://www.umwelt.net.at/article/archive/8023>).

Belgium participated to all CITES meetings whether at international or EU level since CoP15: 25th meeting of the Animals Committee (Geneva, 18-22 July 2011), 19th meeting of the Plants Committee (Geneva, 18-21 April 2011) and the meetings organized by the European Commission.

During the period March 2010 – July 2011, the Belgian CITES Management Authority coordinated 4 meetings of the Belgian CITES Enforcement Group (19.04.2010, 03.11.2010, 15.12.2010 and 05.04.2011). During the same timeframe, the Belgian CITES Scientific Authority met on 5 occasions (14.05.2010, 09.09.2010, 29.11.2010, 04.03.2011 and 15.06.2011).

In November 2010, two members of the Belgian CITES Management Authority have attended in Brussels the workshop “Overview of UNEP-WCMC database” that was organized to get users of EU CITES Authorities get acquainted to analysis of CITES data.

In November 2010, the head of the Belgian CITES Management Authority gave a presentation on CITES legislation at a training organized by the Catholic University of Louvain destined to magistrates on the theme of the judicial protection of species outside of protected areas.

Bulgaria: During the reporting period the Ministry of Environment and Water organized several meetings to discuss the problems of CITES implementation and elaboration of ‘Rules for cooperation between National Customs Agency, Bulgarian Food Safety Agency and the Ministry of Environment and Water on increasing effectivity of control over the export, trade, transit and export of endangered species of wild fauna and flora”.

The Bulgaria Customs Authority has organized a two days training seminar on implementation of EU CITES legislation for customs officers.

Three days seminar on implementation of EU CITES, veterinarian and phytosanitarian legislations was organized by the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency in May 2011. As participance of that seminar were invited officers form veterian and phytosanitarian border control, Border Police and Customs Agency.

As lecturer in respect to the CITES provision for both seminars was invited an expert from the Ministry of Environment and Water (CITES MA).

Representatives from the Bulgarian, Slovakian and German CITES MA, have participated in training workshop on interpretation of the CITES data base organized by UNEP-WCMC, February 2011, Cambridge, UK.

Estonia: Seminars and trainings (CITES implementation) for customs officers and environmental inspectors

The European Commission representing the European Union attended as observer the 15th Conference of the Parties in 2010, the 58th, 59th and 60th CITES Standing Committee in 2009 and 2010 as well as the CITES Animals and Plants Committees in 2011, where it participated in a number of working groups.

Furthermore, the European Commission attended the meeting of the Working group on Introduction from the sea which took place in Bergen in May 2011.

The European Commission co-funded the Symposium on Community Based Natural Resource Management, held in Vienna on May 2011.

Several regular meetings were organised by the European Commission in order to discuss the implementation of the EU CITES legislation.

22nd Enforcement Group Meeting (Brussels, 11 April 2011);

21st Enforcement Group Meeting (Brussels, 04-05 November 2010);

20th Enforcement Group Meeting (Brussels, 29-30 April 2010);

55th CITES Management Committee Meeting (Brussels, 26 July 2011);

54th CITES Management Committee Meeting (Brussels, 22 March 2011);

53rd CITES Management Committee Meeting (Brussels, 6 December 2010);

52nd CITES Management Committee Meeting (Brussels, 15 September 2010);

51st CITES Management Committee Meeting (Brussels, 11 June 2010);

56th Scientific Review Group Meeting (20 June 2011);

55th Scientific Review Group Meeting (11 March 2011);

54th Scientific Review Group Meeting (3 December 2010);

53rd Scientific Review Group Meeting (14 September 2010);

52nd Scientific Review Group Meeting (18 May 2010).

During the reporting period **Germany** contributed actively to the work of the European Union's Enforcement working group to develop common training materials for customs authorities or law enforcement officials at the various levels. Germany had been asked to take the lead of a subgroup which had been charged to prepare such common training materials for the Member States of the European Union. The training material was finalized in late 2010 and tested successfully in this year during several training workshops within the Community such as in Belgium (25th - 26th February), Hungary (10th - 12th May), Portugal (17th - 18th May & 20th - 21st May), Slovakia (27th - 28th September), Czech Republic (6th - 7th October), Estonia (23rd - 25th November) and Malta (29th November - 1st December). Altogether 240 government officials were trained in CITES issues during these eight courses.

Portugal organized in Lisbon, from 13 to 17 September 2010, a CITES Workshop to Portuguese Speaking Countries. The meeting was attended by representatives of Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Marcos Silva from the CITES Secretariat.

Romania has organized the Fourth Regional Meeting on Sustainable Management of Sturgeons of N-W Black Sea and Lower Danube River, held in Sărulești, Romania, 9 - 11 February 2011. At this meeting have participated representatives of CITES Management Authorities, CITES Scientific Authorities and Fisheries Management Authorities of Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine, with the participation of World Sturgeon Conservation Society (WSCS), Neu Wulmstorf, Germany, been discussed the status and progress of implementing the regional strategy on sturgeon conservation and recovery during the inter-sessional period, and the future needs of sturgeon conservation efforts in countries of the N-W Black Sea and Lower Danube River.

Representatives of **Norway** participated in both PC and AC meetings organized during the reporting period.

Norway recently concluded a full one day CITES training seminar for customs, police and veterinarian authorities. 9 different cities were visited and an updated training package was used. The CITES MA has bought and distributed nationwide to customs offices licenses for use of a database for identification of medicines and other related products. A full day national training seminar for the use of the database and generally on medicines has been conducted.

UK activities in the reporting period:

- Scientific Authority (JNCC/Kew) participation in all SRG meetings;
- Attendance at all Plants and Animals Committee meetings;
- UKMA, UK Scientific Authority and UK Border Agency (UKBA) attendance at CoP15;
- UK has attended all meetings of the Standing Committee and in our capacity as a member of Standing Committee for the European region, coordination of EU Member States positions for Standing Committee;
- UK enforcement officers have attended all EU enforcement working group meetings;
- UK currently chairs the Coalition against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT) which raises awareness globally of illegal trade in wildlife. UK has organised a number of meetings for CAWT members, and also a side event at CoP15;
- Attended the 'Fairwild' meeting in Vilm, Germany, May 2011;
- Attendance at the EU workshop on the review of the wildlife trade regulation in November 2010.

Ukraine reported about a workshop: "Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade Training for the Caucasian States (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia), Moldova and Ukraine", Tbilisi, Georgia, 20-24 December, 2010 and International Conference "Sturgeon Fishes and their Future, 7–10 June, 2011, Berdyansk, Ukraine.

6. Problems faced by the regional representatives

The Gaborone amendment to CITES would allow the European Union to become a Party to CITES and to play a full role in the work of the Convention. The European Commission continues to use any bilateral and multilateral contacts with Parties that have not yet ratified the Gaborone amendment to encourage its ratification. Via Notifications 2009/019 and 2010/039 to CITES Parties, the CITES Secretariat urged Parties which have not done so yet to accept the Gaborone amendment to CITES.