

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



Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

Summary record of the third plenary session

5 March 2013: 9h10-10h30

Chair: Ø. Størkersen (Norway)
Secretariat: J. Scanlon
J. Barzdo
Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell
S. Glaser

The Chair of the Credentials Committee announced that 127 Parties had provided acceptable credentials and that those of a further nine were being considered. She requested that a decision be drafted directing the Secretariat to formulate guidelines for submission of credentials. The Chair requested that the text of the draft decision be submitted for circulation to participants.

Administrative matters

4. Rules of Procedure

4.2 Proposal to improve transparency of voting during meetings of the Conference of the Parties

The Chair indicated that document CoP16 Doc. 4.2 (Rev. 1) contained a proposal to amend Rule 25, so that any request for a secret ballot would be accepted only if supported by a simple majority. He proposed that a vote be taken immediately on the document. This was supported by Mexico. Raising a point of order, China disagreed with the Chair's interpretation of the majority required for voting, to which the Chair responded that he had not expressed a view on the majority required to accept the proposal. Israel asked for clarification on whether a simple majority or a two-thirds majority was required to amend the Rules of Procedure and believed that it was the former. The Secretary-General clarified that, if the result of the vote on the amendment of Rule 25 was supported by half of the Parties or fewer, it would clearly be lost; that if it was supported by two-thirds or more, then it would clearly be gained; and that if the level of support was between these two, then the Chair would need to interpret the required majority in order to announce the vote. Iceland asked that a secret ballot be taken and believed that a two-thirds majority was required to amend the Rules of Procedure. China supported the motion for a vote by secret ballot and also sought clarification on the required majority.

South Africa noted that Rule 21.1 required that, as far as possible, the Conference decide on documents by consensus. She believed that insufficient effort had been made to reach a consensus and asked the Chair to allow further discussion before proceeding to a vote, to see whether a consensus could be achieved. This was supported by China, Grenada, Guinea, Iceland, the Russian Federation and Zambia. China suggested the formation of a working group, which was supported by Iceland.

In response to a statement from the Secretariat that additional credentials had been received, the Chair of the Credentials Committee requested further clarification. Canada and Guinea remarked on the importance of knowing exactly how many votes constituted a majority.

Referring to Rule 18, Japan raised a procedural motion requesting that the vote to accept the proposed amendment to the Rules of Procedure be decided by a two-thirds majority. The Chair ruled

that a simple majority was required. Japan appealed against the ruling of the Chair, who announced that the appeal would be immediately put to the vote. On a point of order, South Africa insisted that their earlier intervention had been a point of order and that it preceded Japan's, and should therefore be dealt with first. The Chair accepted this and asked South Africa to chair an informal working group to report to a plenary session the following morning. He stated that if, at that time, there was no consensus, he would proceed to a vote on the point of order from Japan, and then to a decision on the proposed amendment to Rule 25 contained in document CoP16 Doc. 4.2 (Rev. 1). Argentina, Bahrain, Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Grenada, Egypt, El Salvador, Iceland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Liberia, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe wished to serve on the informal working group.

The meeting was adjourned at 10h30.