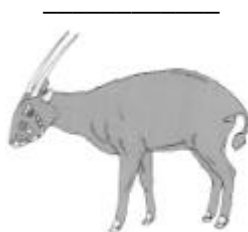


CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventeenth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Hanoi (Viet Nam), 30 July-3 August 2001

Regional Reports

NORTH AMERICA

This document has been prepared by Dr Susan S. Lieberman, in her capacity as Regional Representative for North America.

Changes in the Mexican Scientific Authority

1. In December 2000, the Mexican Scientific Authority was transferred from the Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE, National Institute of Ecology) to the Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO, National Commission for Knowledge and Utilization of Biodiversity). The new Mexican Scientific Authority is comprised of:
  - a) Biol. Hesiquio-Benítez, CONABIO (Responsible for the Scientific Authority)
  - b) Yolanda Feria-Cuevas, CONABIO (Scientific Authority Coordinator)
  - c) Dr Patricia Dávila, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (North America Regional Alternate on the Plants Committee)
  - d) Dr Rodrigo A. Medellín, UNAM (North America Regional Alternate on the Animals Committee)

Changes in the Canadian Scientific Authority

2. On March 1 2001, Bertrand von Arx took over from Dr Charles Dauphine who retired from his position in the CITES Scientific Authority and as International Coordinator at Environment Canada (EC), Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), Species at Risk Branch. He will therefore now also have to look into non-chlorophyll taxa issues.

Animals and Plants Committee meetings in the United States of America

3. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) hosted meetings of the CITES Animals and Plants Committees, 7-15 December 2000, at its National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, United States of America. A joint meeting of the

Animals and Plants Committees was held, 7-9 December 2000, to discuss the review of the CITES listing criteria (Resolution Conf. 9.24). The 16th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC16) and 10th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC10) followed, 11-15 December 2000. The USFWS was very proud to host these highly successful meetings at NCTC – the first meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees in the history of CITES to be held in the United States of America.

#### Review of the listing criteria

4. The United States of America is actively engaged in implementation of Decision 11.2, regarding the review of the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II (Resolution Conf. 9.24). Dr. Susan Lieberman, Chief of the Scientific Authority of the United States of America and North American Regional Representative on the Animals Committee, was selected by the Chairman of the Animals Committee to serve on the Criteria Working Group (CWG). She attended the first meeting of the CWG in Canberra, Australia, in August 2000, as well as the second meeting of the CWG in Spain in May 2001. Dr Lieberman coordinates regularly with the Scientific Authorities of Mexico and Canada on the listing criteria revision (both animal and plant issues), and her comments on this issue reflect input from all of the North American Parties. The United States of America submitted extensive comments in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2000/51, on the listing criteria. The USFWS hosted the second joint meeting of the CITES Animals and Plants Committees in the United States of America, 7-9 December, 2000, at its National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The joint meeting was held to discuss the review of the CITES listing criteria; all three countries of North America participated actively in discussions at that meeting.

#### Review of the Appendices

5. At the 15th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC15), held in Madagascar, 5-9 July 1999, the United States of America offered to review the listing of four taxa in the CITES Appendices, as part of an ongoing process. Those taxa are: saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and black coral (*Antipatharia* spp.) Questionnaires were sent to all range states for these taxa, and the Scientific Authority prepared detailed analyses of the status of the species, in the context of Resolution Conf. 9.24. Those documents were submitted to the Secretariat and subsequently discussed at AC16. Following discussions at AC16, the *Falco peregrinus* review was subsequently revised in depth, and will be submitted for consideration at AC17. The United States of America agreed to review the orange-throated whiptail lizard (*Cnemidophorus hyperythrus*) as part of the next review phase, and will submit a document for consideration at AC17.
6. Mexico offered at AC16 to conduct similar reviews for the axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*) and the totoaba (*Cynoscion macdonaldi*). Mexico agreed to provide the reviews for consideration at AC17, and offered to conduct reviews on the red macaw (*Ara macao*) and the Central American river turtle (*Dermatemys mawii*).

#### Significant trade

7. The United States of America, particularly through its Scientific Authority, is very active in Animals Committee issues pertaining to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 8.9. The Scientific Authority has been working with the AC Chairman and staff of the CITES Secretariat to develop and implement projects on saiga (*Saiga tatarica*) and musk deer (*Moschus* spp.).

8. In response to requests from the CITES Secretariat, the Scientific and Management Authorities submitted detailed information to the Secretariat on 26 January 2001, and 22 March 2001, describing and clarifying the process and biological factors that are evaluated prior to making a finding of non-detriment pursuant to CITES, *Acipenseriformes* native to the United States of America. During Phase IV of the Significant Trade Review, and in conjunction with Decision 11.58 (regarding trade in sturgeons and paddlefish), the Secretariat posed several questions to the United States of America and Canada about intergovernmental quotas, non-detriment findings, and sustainable trade in North American sturgeon species. In response, the countries jointly explained their national and international management programmes for shared *Acipenseriform* stocks and how these effect their Article IV implementation for those taxa.
9. Following informal discussions on Madagascar tortoise exports with AC members, the Secretariat, other Parties, and NGOs at AC16, the USFWS took the initiative to review United States of America imports and global trade levels for certain live reptiles exported from Madagascar in recent years. These species had been included in an earlier phase of the Significant Trade Review process, and were the subject of Notification to the Parties No. 833 issued in 1995. Following AC16 the Management and Scientific Authorities of the United States of America researched and prepared an information document highlighting Madagascar exports over recent years which have exceeded export quotas reported to the Secretariat. That document has been submitted for consideration at AC17. The USFWS will continue to evaluate the role of the United States of America as an importer of Madagascar wildlife.
10. The of Management and Scientific Authorities the United States of America also worked with the Secretariat and the AC Chairman to examine United States of America import levels of Madagascar flat-shelled tortoises (*Pyxis planicauda*) and to include the species in Phase V of the Significant Trade Review process.

#### Trade in freshwater turtles and tortoises in Southeast Asia

11. In response to discussions at AC15, the United States of America and Germany co-sponsored a document that was submitted to CoP11 on this issue and led to fruitful discussion and adoption of two decisions and a resolution at CoP11. The Scientific Authority of the United States of America provided funding towards a workshop on the Asian turtle trade held in Cambodia in December 1999, the results of which were well received at CoP11. The Scientific and Management Authorities of the United States of America are in close contact with herpetologists active on this issue. The United States of America is an active member of the working group established at AC16, and is active both in Animals Committee discussions on this issue (based on Decision 11.93), and in preparations for a technical workshop on this issue (based on Decision 11.150). The United States of America also provided significant funding (\$22,000) to enable the technical workshop to take place, through excess funds from the U.S. State Department voluntary contribution to the CITES Trust Fund.

#### Trade in *Tursiops truncatus ponticus*

12. In response to Decision 11.91 adopted at CoP11, requesting that the AC evaluate this issue, the United States of America submitted a document addressing the biological status of and trade in the species, for consideration at AC16. The United States of America is an active participant in the informal contact group on this issue established by AC16.

### Conservation of seahorses and other members of the family Syngnathidae

13. In response to discussions and Decisions adopted at CoP11, the Scientific Authority of the United States of America and North American Regional Representative on the Animals Committee coordinated with Project Seahorse and other NGOs involved with the conservation of syngnathids. Working in cooperation with the Secretariat and Project Seahorse, the Regional Representative submitted a document for consideration at AC16, dealing with implementation of Decision 11.97. The United States of America continues to work with interested Parties and NGOs in the implementation of Decision 11.97. The United States of America also provided significant funding (USD 22,000) for the technical workshop called for in Decision 11.97, through excess funds from the U.S. State Department voluntary contribution to the CITES Trust Fund.

### Hawksbill sea turtle range states dialogue

14. At the initiative of several range countries in the Wider Caribbean, the CITES Secretariat organized the first CITES wider Caribbean Hawksbill turtle dialogue meeting, hosted by the government of Mexico. For the region, the United States of America and Mexico attended the meeting in Mexico City, 15-17 May 2001. The United States of America delegation included USFWS, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, the State of Florida, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States of America Virgin Islands. Mexico hosted the meeting, and the United States of America also provided significant funding (USD 45,000) to enable the meeting to take place, through excess funds from the U.S. Department of State voluntary contribution to the CITES Trust Fund, and funding contributed by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service to the CITES Secretariat. Ongoing close cooperation on a number of sea turtle conservation projects continues between the United States of America and Mexico.

### Trade in hard corals

15. The United States of America is an active member of the AC working group established to analyze the trade in hard coral. The group's efforts to streamline and improve coral trade reporting led to adoption of Resolution Conf. 11.10 at CoP11, continued dialogue within the group, and productive meetings at AC16. The working group has adopted a draft United States of America identification manual for Indo-Pacific corals in trade, and the Secretariat will circulate the final version to all Parties in 2001. The United States of America is also drafting a report on coral mariculture for the group. This should facilitate discussions over possible new source codes for farmed or cultured corals in trade. As the group's efforts continue, Scientific Authority of the United States of America will continue to coordinate with other United States of America Government agencies (particularly the National Marine Fisheries Service), as well as Mexico and Canada on this issue.

### Trade in time-sensitive research samples

16. The Scientific Authority of the United States of America coordinated on this issue within the North American Region, particularly with Mexico, and with several United States of America research institutions. The United States of America is compiling and analyzing data for species that are commonly traded as human health research samples. The information may assist the United States of America and other parties in solving implementation problems related to trade in these types of samples.

### Funding for projects

17. The United States of America provided significant funding (USD 45,000) for AC-related projects, through excess funds from the U.S. State Department voluntary contribution to

the CITES Trust Fund. Some of these funds are likely to support field projects on significant trade species (e.g. saiga, musk deer, Asian pangolins - *Manis* spp.). In addition, the Scientific Authority has provided grants to:

- a) a Russian scientist/conservationist to implement various conservation activities related to saiga in Kalmykia (Russian Federation), and
- b) three international experts to conduct workshops on eastern hemisphere tarantula (*Poecilotheria* spp.) field survey techniques in India and Sri Lanka.

#### United States of America conducts CITES training workshop in Belize

18. USFWS, with assistance from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, conducted a workshop in San Ignacio, Cayo, Belize, 19-23 February 2001, to provide participants from the governments of Belize, the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica with training that included: implementation of CITES by Management and Scientific Authorities, identification of specimens of CITES-listed plant and wildlife species by inspection officials, and plant and wildlife inspection techniques. Representatives of each country also presented information on how CITES is structured and implemented within their countries. This training workshop will help insure that the participating CITES Party countries have the necessary skills and abilities to properly implement the CITES treaty. Participants in the workshop agreed that they had come away with a better understanding of CITES and a better ability to implement the Convention. Participation in the workshop has opened up good channels of communication within Belize between the Management Authority and members of the Scientific Authority, the Agricultural Health Authority, and Customs, and should enhance CITES implementation in Belize. It has also opened up good channels of communication among all of the participating countries. The Management Authority of Belize intends to follow-up with a national workshop to disseminate the information learned at the CITES training workshop to a larger audience of Belizean nationals, to further improve the implementation of CITES in Belize.

#### Kazakhstan CITES training

19. The Scientific and Management Authorities of the United States of America, in conjunction with the Government of Kazakhstan, are planning a CITES implementation workshop in Almaty for September 2001. The workshop will provide information to and offer suggestions to Kazakh officials for properly implementing Article IV, evaluating non-detriment, and implementing other critical elements of the CITES treaty. Several native taxa, including sturgeon and argali sheep, will be used as case studies.

#### Coral training

20. With funding assistance from the U.S. Department of State, the United States of America National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) convened a major international coral trade workshop in Indonesia in April 2001. The goals of the workshop were to:

- a) discuss the status of the stony coral trade, environmental concerns, and existing mechanisms to regulate trade, and
- b) provide guidance on best practices in coral collection, management, and monitoring. The Scientific Authority of the United States of America assisted NMFS in planning the workshop, and as a trainer. Participants included representatives from the Marine Aquarium Council, TRAFFIC-Europe, TRAFFIC-Oceania, WWF-United States of America, International Marinelife Alliance, the U.K. Scientific Authority, and UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Local Indonesian NGO's were also represented, as

were institutions from Fiji, Vietnam, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and the Philippines. Clear recommendations emerged for coral reef management, harvest controls, and collection practices. In addition, Indonesian law enforcement personnel received extensive training in stony coral identification.

#### Invasive alien species

21. Representatives of the North American Region participated in the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The main focus of this SBSTTA meeting was invasive species issues. General discussions were held on four thematic areas, including: an integrated approach; prevention, early detection, and incursion response; eradication; and mitigation of effects. The meeting produced recommendations regarding options for future work and reconsidered the Guiding Principles. Several parties raised their continuing interest in working with CITES on this issue. In addition, the United States of America and Canada are members of the CITES Invasive Alien Species Working Group. Activities of the Working Group are summarized in the Chairman's report.

#### Regional CITES meeting

22. On 24-27 April 2001, the Scientific and Management Authorities of Canada, the United States of America, and Mexico participated in the CITES Working Table of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/United States of America Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management held in Ottawa, Canada. The CITES Working Table provided an opportunity to exchange information and coordinate within the region on a wide range of CITES issues. Among others, the North American Region agreed to:

- a) Send a letter to the AC Chairman (with copy to the Secretariat), through the North American Regional Representative and Alternate on the Animals Committee (Susan Lieberman - United States of America, and Rodrigo Medellín - Mexico, respectively), requesting that all CITES regions be equally represented in any new working group on the registration of Appendix-I captive-breeding facilities to be established at AC17.
- b) Recommend that, in the event of controversy regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations, the Animals Committee (as well as Plants Committee) follow the procedures adopted at the most recent meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- c) Send a letter to the Co-chairmen of the Listing Criteria Working Group, through the North American regional representatives on the Animals and Plants Committees (Susan Lieberman and Bertrand von Arx, respectively), requesting that the report to the SC be bracketed when there is not consensus among working group members and Parties on changes being proposed.
- d) Recommend that an inter-sessional working group on the transborder movement of time-sensitive research samples be established to work on this issue between SC45 (June 2001) and SC46 (February 2002).
- e) Conduct a workshop (to be hosted by Mexico in Spring 2001) to exchange information on the process for issuance of non-detriment findings by all three North American Scientific Authorities.