

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



Twenty-third meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva, (Switzerland), 19-24 April 2008

Sturgeons and paddlefish

SECRETARIAT'S REPORT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Since the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14), on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish*, directs the Secretariat to provide at each meeting of the Animals Committee a written report, including references to relevant documents, on its activities related to the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish. The present document, being the first such report, covers the period since 13 September 2007. An oral update will be given of activities undertaken since 2 January 2008, when this document was prepared.
3. On 2 October 2007, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2007/030 (available on the CITES website) in accordance with Decisions 14.121 to 14.123. This Notification:
  - a) reminded Parties to send copies of caviar export permits and re-export certificates [to UNEP-WCMC directly or to the Secretariat] in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14);
  - b) encouraged Parties to do this in a timely manner, i.e. no longer than one month after a permit or a certificate has been issued in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14);
  - c) provided a description of the caviar-trade database maintained by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre;
  - d) underlined the role that such a database could play in assisting in the effective monitoring of export quotas and in helping to reduce certain types of fraud, such as the excess of re-exports from an export permit;
  - e) reminded Parties, when preparing their annual report, to separate trade in caviar and meat from trade in live specimens by using the agreed codes and the preferred units as instructed in Decision 14.122; and
  - f) reminded Parties of the recommendation that total export quotas for 2008 (from 1 March 2008 to 28 February 2009) shall not be higher than those agreed to in 2007 for each species.

Export quotas

4. On 10 September 2007, the Secretariat received a request from the Islamic Republic of Iran to publish the following export quotas for that country for 2007 on the CITES website:

a) *Acipenser gueldenstaedtii/A. nudiventris/A. persicus/A. stellatus/Huso huso* (mixed)

500 kg glue (wild)

1,000 kg pressed caviar (wild)

b) *Acipenser persicus*

100,000 kg meat (wild)

10,000 pieces skin (wild)

c) *Acipenser stellatus*

20,000 kg meat (wild)

d) *Huso huso*

16385 kg meat (wild)

16385 kg meat (farmed)

5. Having satisfied itself, in the case of products of wild origin, that these quotas were derived from the catch and export quotas agreed amongst all States that provide habitat for the same stock of these species, the Secretariat published these quotas on the CITES website on 24 October 2007.
6. Concerning export quotas for caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States for the quota year 1 March 2008 to 28 February 2009, the Secretariat reminded Parties concerned of the procedures to be followed, described in the Notification to the Parties No. 2007/030. At the time of writing, no quotas have been published on the CITES website for meat, but the following have been published for caviar:

#### Amur River

Species	China	Russian Federation
<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i>	in preparation	in preparation
<i>Huso dauricus</i>	in preparation	in preparation

#### Azov Sea

Species	Russian Federation	Ukraine
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	0 kg*	0 kg
<i>Acipenser nudiventris</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser stellatus</i>	0 kg*	0 kg
<i>Huso huso</i>	0 kg*	0 kg

#### North-West Black Sea and lower Danube

Species	Bulgaria	Romania	Serbia	Ukraine
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg
<i>Acipenser nudiventris</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser stellatus</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg
<i>Huso huso</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg	0 kg

## Caspian Sea

Species	Azerbaijan	Islamic Republic of Iran	Kazakhstan	Russian Federation	Turkmenistan
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	3 360 kg	1 000 kg	3 070 kg	20 000 kg	0 kg
<i>Acipenser nudiventris</i>	0 kg*	0 kg	0 kg	0 kg	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser persicus</i>	0 kg*	37 000 kg	0 kg	0 kg*	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg*	0 kg	0 kg*
<i>Acipenser stellatus</i>	3 000 kg	3 200 kg	8 500 kg	3 500 kg	0 kg
<i>Huso huso</i>	300 kg	1 000 kg	1 700 kg	700 kg	0 kg

\* No export quota communicated to the Secretariat [see paragraph a) v) in the second RECOMMENDS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish*]

7. The Secretariat will publish the above export quotas on the CITES website for those States which, in accordance with the Resolution, also submitted the scientific data used to establish their catch and export quotas. The Resolution recommends that Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of *Acipenseriformes* species from stocks shared between different range States unless export quotas have been set in accordance with these procedures.

### Trade controls and identification of sturgeon specimens in trade

8. The caviar trade database became operational on 30 November 2007. The database was initially accessible via the public sections of the CITES website but it was subsequently decided to restrict access to CITES authorities only. There are, however, some Parties (including major caviar exporting countries) that are not submitting copies of permits and certificates and this hampers the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the database.
9. The Secretariat, in enforcement-related meetings, continues to encourage Parties to target illicit trade in caviar. In particular, it promotes close attention to aquaculture operations, some of which it believes may be laundering caviar of illegal-origin. The Secretariat has also drawn the attention of border control agencies to the weight reduction in the personal effect exemption for caviar to 125 g, which was adopted at CoP14. It is worth noting that 125 g of good-quality caviar was, in December 2007, retailing at almost USD 1,000, which is why criminal activity continues to be attracted to this trade.
10. In accordance with Decision 14.124, the Secretariat will communicate to Parties the outcome of the workshop on *Identification of Acipenseriformes Species in Trade* organized by the Sturgeon Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission with the assistance of the German Government, by posting it on the CITES website prior to the 23rd meeting of the Committee.

### Conclusion

11. The Committee is invited to note the contents of this report.