

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



Twenty-fourth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva, (Switzerland), 20-24 April 2009

SUSTAINABLE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF SEA CUCUMBER FISHERIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 14th meeting (the Hague, June 2007), the Conference of the Parties directed the Secretariat in Decisions 14.98 and 14.99 to:

Decision 14.98

bring to the attention of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and prior to the FAO Workshop on Sustainable Use and Management of Sea Cucumber Fisheries, the discussion paper on Biological and trade status of sea cucumbers in the families Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae in Annex 1 to document CoP14 Doc. 62, and the following recommendations by the Animals Committee to range States of these taxa and Parties that are engaged in trade in them:

- a) develop and implement national adaptive management plans for species of high conservation concern, such as those identified as of 'high concern' and 'concern in certain countries of its range' in Annex 3 of the discussion paper on Biological and trade status of sea cucumbers in the families Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae, including minimum harvest size and total allowable catch, and apply where appropriate a precautionary approach, such as restrictive fisheries measures;*
- b) develop regional management strategies to manage the resource;*
- c) develop a standardized approach for the collection and reporting of fisheries and trade data, including species collected, locations, habitat, weight, size and number of individuals;*
- d) encourage greater communications and cooperation between fisheries and CITES authorities at the national level for the management of and trade in specimens of these species;*
- e) increase significantly basic biological and ecological research and stock assessments, particularly for species of high conservation concern, such as those identified as of 'high concern' and 'concern in certain countries of its range' in the discussion paper referred to in paragraph a) above;*
- f) conduct socio-economic evaluations of the sea cucumber fisheries, especially in developing countries, to identify clearly their importance and role in the livelihoods of coastal fishing communities;*

- g) *enhance the enforcement capacity to reduce illegal fishing, transshipment and landings, as well as the capacity to implement the current Appendix-III listing;*
- h) *explore the potential of mariculture in promoting the sustainable use of the resource, with experience from China, and identify best practices;*
- i) *consider the merits of inclusion of their species of conservation concern in Appendix III, where appropriate;*
- j) *support the development of harmonized codes for reporting international trade in sea cucumber products; and*
- k) *develop and distribute identification guides that clearly distinguish sea cucumbers subject to international trade.*

Decision 14.99

promote cooperation with FAO concerning the conservation of and trade in sea cucumbers in the families Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae, inter alia by bringing the outcomes of the FAO Workshop on Sustainable Use and Management of Sea Cucumber Fisheries to the attention of the Parties and supporting relevant capacity-building activities.

3. The Secretariat contacted FAO in advance of the Workshop on Sustainable Use and Management of Sea Cucumber Fisheries, and asked it to include in its agenda the discussion paper and the relevant recommendations by the Animals Committee specified in paragraph 2 above.
4. On 8 December 2008, FAO brought to the attention of the Secretariat that the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper No. 516 *Sea cucumbers: A global review of fisheries and trade* had been published. This publication is part of the outcomes of the FAO Technical Workshop which was held in Ecuador from 19 to 23 November 2007. The full report in PDF format is available on the FAO website (<http://www.fao.org/docrep/011/i0375e/i0375e00.htm>).
5. FAO also informed the Secretariat that they were finalizing the technical guidelines on *Sustainable management of sea cucumber fisheries*, which had also been prepared during the workshop, and were planning to publish them in the first quarter of 2009.
6. As directed in Decision 14.100, the Committee is invited to evaluate the outcomes of the FAO Workshop on Sustainable Use and Management of Sea Cucumber Fisheries and to recommend appropriate follow-up actions at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to support this initiative.