



SUMMARY OF THE SIXTY-FIFTH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE: 7-11 JULY 2014

The sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee (SC65) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 7-11 July 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. Approximately 400 participants from national governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations attended the meeting. The Committee tackled a long agenda, including: livelihoods, cooperation with other organizations and species trade and conservation, with discussions focusing on elephants, rhinos, Asian big cats, illegal trade in cheetahs, great apes, pangolins, ebony and rosewoods, among others.

On Asian big cats, the Committee agreed to establish an intersessional working group to report back at SC66. On cheetahs, the Committee mandated the newly established intersessional working group to coordinate with the Secretariat on the organization of a workshop before the next Animals Committee meeting. On rhinos and elephants, the Committee adopted recommendations requesting non-complying countries to meet a tight deadline to take actions, or suspension of trade may be considered.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CITES

CITES was established as a response to growing concerns that over-exploitation of wildlife through international trade was contributing to the rapid decline of many species of plants and animals around the world. The Convention was signed by representatives from 80 countries in Washington, DC, on 3 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975. There are currently 178 parties to the Convention.

The aim of CITES is to ensure that international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival. CITES parties regulate wildlife trade through controls and regulations on species listed in three appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade, permitting such trade only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix-II species are those that may become endangered if their trade is not regulated, thus they require controls aimed at preventing unsustainable use, maintaining ecosystems and preventing species from entering

Appendix I. Appendix-III species are those subject to domestic regulation by a party requesting the cooperation of other parties to control international trade in that species.

In order to list a species in Appendix I or II, a party needs to submit a proposal for approval by the Conference of the Parties (CoP), supported by scientific and biological data on population and trade trends. The proposal must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of parties present and voting. As the trade impact on a species increases or decreases, the CoP decides whether or not the species should be transferred or removed from the appendices.

There are approximately 5,600 fauna species and 30,000 flora species protected under the three CITES appendices. Parties regulate international trade of CITES species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens listed in its appendices are imported, exported or introduced from the sea. Each party is required to adopt national legislation and to designate two national authorities, namely, a Management Authority responsible for issuing permits and certificates based on the advice of a Scientific Authority. These two national authorities also assist with CITES enforcement through

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cooperation with customs, police and other appropriate agencies. Parties maintain trade records that are forwarded annually to the CITES Secretariat, thus enabling the compilation of statistical information on the global volume of international trade in Appendix-listed species.

The operational bodies of CITES include the Standing Committee (SC) and two scientific committees: the Plants Committee (PC) and the Animals Committee (AC).

CONFERENCES OF THE PARTIES: The first CoP was held in Bern, Switzerland, in November 1976, and subsequent CoPs have been held every two to three years. The CoP meets to, *inter alia*: review progress in the conservation of species included in the Appendices; discuss and adopt proposals to amend the lists of species in Appendices I and II; consider recommendations and proposals from parties, the Secretariat, the SC and the scientific committees; and recommend measures to improve the effectiveness of the Convention and the functioning of the Secretariat. The CoP also periodically reviews the list of resolutions and decisions, as well as the species listed in its Appendices.

CITES CoP13: CoP13 met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2-14 October 2004. Delegates addressed a range of topics, including 50 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. CoP13 approved the listing of ramin, agarwood-producing taxa, the great white shark and the humphead wrasse in Appendix II, as well as the uplisting of the Irrawaddy dolphin from Appendix II to I. Regarding the African elephant, Namibia saw its request for an annual ivory quota rejected, but was allowed to proceed with a strictly-controlled sale of traditional ivory carvings. Delegates also agreed on an action plan to curtail unregulated domestic ivory markets. Namibia and South Africa were each allowed an annual quota of five black rhinos for trophy hunting, and Swaziland was allowed to open up strictly controlled hunting of white rhinos. Other decisions focused on synergies with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and Convention on Biological Diversity, while enforcement issues also received considerable attention.

CITES CoP14: CoP14 met in The Hague, the Netherlands from 3-15 June 2007. Delegates addressed a range of topics including: the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013; a guide to compliance with the Convention; management of annual export quotas; and species trade and conservation issues, including Asian big cats, sharks and sturgeons. Delegates agreed that no cetacean species should be subject to periodic review while the International Whaling Commission (IWC) moratorium is in place. CoP14 approved the listing of: slender-horned and Cuvier's gazelles and slow loris on Appendix I; Brazil wood, sawfish and eel on Appendix II; and to amend the annotation on African elephants to allow a one-off sale of ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe with a nine-year resting period for further ivory trade. Media spotlight was on negotiations on the future of ivory trade and African elephant conservation, with many highlighting the consensus by African range States as a major achievement of this meeting.

CITES CoP15: CoP15 met in Doha, Qatar from 13-25 March 2010. The meeting considered 68 agenda items and 42 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. CoP15 adopted resolutions

and decisions directed to parties, the Secretariat and Convention bodies on a wide range of topics including: electronic permitting; Asian big cats; rhinoceroses; bigleaf mahogany; and Madagascar plant species. Regarding species listings, CoP15 decided to list, among others: Kaiser's spotted newt; five species of tree frogs; the unicorn beetle; rosewood; holywood; and several Madagascar plant species.

CITES CoP16: CoP16 met in Bangkok, Thailand, from 3-14 March 2013. The meeting adopted 55 new listing proposals, including on sharks, manta rays, turtles and timber. Nine proposals were rejected (caspien snowcock, tibetan snowcock, saltwater crocodile, siamese crocodile, South American freshwater stingray, Rosette river stingray, blood pheasant and two species of freshwater turtles). Three proposals were withdrawn: Southern white rhino and two African elephants. Three were not considered: Indochinese box turtle; Ryukyu black-breasted leaf turtle; and Annam leaf turtle. The CoP also adopted strong enforcement measures to address wildlife crime.

SC64: SC64 convened in Bangkok, Thailand on 14 March 2013. The meeting discussed: national ivory action plans, wherein the SC Chair noted the willingness of the eight parties concerned to cooperate to produce ivory action plans and to report on their implementation; and the establishment and renewal of working groups.

AC27 AND PC21 MEETINGS: AC27 convened in Veracruz, Mexico from 28 April to 1 May 2014. AC27 was followed by the Joint Meeting of the AC and PC, which took place in Veracruz, Mexico from 2-3 May 2014. Finally, PC21 met in Veracruz from 4-8 May 2014. The Committees focused on the levels of global commercial trade in products and derivatives of CITES-listed species, and the identification of cases of unsustainable use of species of conservation concern. Some species were highlighted for special review, including lions and cheetahs. The Committees also recommended bringing international trade in long-tailed macaque monkeys, fischer's two-horned chameleons, West African and Asian three-spot seahorses and *Euphorbia itremensis* back to sustainable levels. The Committees also expressed concern over the sustainability of international trade in specimens of polar bears, pangolins, tortoises and turtles and butterflies, and plan to examine these cases in more detail at their next meetings in 2015.

SC65 REPORT

On Monday morning, 7 July 2014, SC Chair Øystein Størkersen (Norway) opened the meeting noting the success of the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2013 and how it had paved the way for SC65. He highlighted the busy agenda including its numerous important issues and the burden on the overstretched Secretariat. He emphasized new sources of funding, such as through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the need to think holistically when addressing illegal wildlife trade, including countries of origin, transit and destination.

CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon noted the size and importance of SC65, comparing it to a mini-CoP. He welcomed this increased level of participation and attention while noting the need to plan and budget accordingly. He thanked Mexico for

hosting the sessions of the 27th meeting of the CITES Animals Committee and 21st meeting of the Plants Committee in May 2014, noting CITES awarded the first ever Certificate of Merit for Science to the Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad for its contribution to the development of science in the Convention in recent years. He drew attention to synergies with other organizations and to the many initiatives and events demonstrating wide-ranging support from the likes of presidents, royal families and individuals in the public eye.

SC65 then adopted the meeting's agenda (SC65 Doc. 3 Rev.1) with the addition of purpose codes under "other business," as suggested by Canada. The working programme (SC65 Doc. 4) was approved with minor amendments.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

On Monday, SC65 noted the document on admission of observers (SC65 Doc. 7).

RULES OF PROCEDURE: On Monday, the US suggested amendments to the Rules of Procedure (SC65 Doc. 5). Regarding Rule 21 on the submission of documents by parties and observers, he suggested clarifying that documents shall be submitted in one of the official languages and placed on the CITES website 14 days before SC meetings. He further suggested amending Rule 27 so that decisions by the SC would come into effect upon endorsement of the executive summary in which they are contained, highlighting that a similar decision was taken by the AC and PC at their last meetings. The Secretariat suggested the proposed amendment to Rule 21 would apply more to Rule 20 on documents to be considered at the meeting, and cautioned that the limit of 14 days for uploading of documents on the website could result in more time pressure on the Secretariat.

Outcome: SC65 noted the amendments.

RELATIONSHIP WITH UNEP: UNEP report: On Monday morning, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported on collaboration with the CITES Secretariat (SC65 Doc. 8.2). He highlighted, *inter alia*: the multilateral environmental agreement information and knowledge management initiative; the enhancement of the CITES Trade Database; the project between the CITES Secretariat, national focal points, the UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions and UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) on "Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies." He also recognized that illegal trade in wildlife was one of the main topics of discussion at the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document.

Briefing by the Chair/Secretary-General: SC Chair Størkersen read a briefing by CITES Secretary-General Scanlon expressing concern over the current administrative arrangements between UNEP and CITES under the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), noting that UNEP's comparative advantage is not in providing administrative services but in where it is needed most and performs best: on programme, financing and UN system-wide support, as emphasized in Post-Rio+20 Review of Environmental Governance within the UN System (SC65 Inf.11). He proposed setting up an intersessional

working group to explore hosting arrangements options, which would report back to SC66. Canada and other countries supported the terms of reference of the proposed working group.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to establish an intersessional working group to review the administrative hosting arrangements for the CITES Secretariat.

FINANCIAL MATTERS: Report of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee: On Thursday, Switzerland, as Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, presented the report (FBSC/SC65 Doc. 1), noting Botswana would be taking on the chairmanship of this subcommittee at the close of SC65. CITES Secretary-General Scanlon thanked Switzerland and welcomed the new Chair. Israel asked whether local stakeholders would be allowed to attend the upcoming AC meeting in Israel without paying the full registration fee, and the Secretariat agreed, noting that registration fees were waived in particular cases.

Outcome: SC65 adopted the report.

COP MEETINGS: This item was discussed on Monday.

Structure and length of future meetings: The Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 11.1), noting the reduction by one day of CoP16 and its resulting savings, and suggested repeating the arrangement for future CoPs. The US asked whether committee sessions would be extended by thirty minutes a day as in CoP16 and the Secretariat said they would. The European Union (EU) and Colombia voiced support for the proposal.

Outcome: SC65 accepted the document.

Guidance on the submission of credentials: The Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 11.2) and China, who chaired the intersessional working group on this matter, provided further clarifications. Delegates discussed: adding a template or table to further clarify what sort of information needed to be provided; the possibility of Geneva-based missions issuing credentials; limiting the needs for credentials to the representative only; clarifying the credential submission deadline; extending the authority to sign credentials to vice ministers of foreign affairs; and using official letterheads.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to mandate the working group to revisit the document and report back at SC66. China agreed to continue chairing the working group.

Arrangements for CoP17: South Africa reported orally that the recommendation was to hold the meeting during the first two weeks of October 2016 and that the host city had yet to be announced.

Organization of special meetings: On Monday, the SC noted document SC65 Doc. 12, with Colombia suggesting the SC no longer continue consultations on this issue.

Outcome: SC65 endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to provide a document for consideration at SC66.

STRATEGIC MATTERS

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE REPORTS: On Monday, AC Chair Carolina Caceres (Canada) orally reported on the outcomes of AC27 regarding, *inter alia*, work on the periodic review of species included in CITES Appendices I and II, significant trade, and nomenclature issues. On capacity building, she mentioned the importance of identifying experts in education and modern tools to support the Secretariat in this work. PC

Vice-Chair Hesiquio Benítez Díaz (Mexico) presented an oral report outlining, *inter alia*, the outcomes of PC21, and joint work with the AC on possible amendment to Resolution Conf.14.8 on periodic review.

Potential conflicts of interest in the Animals and Plants Committees: The Secretariat introduced this issue (SC65 Doc.13.3) and noted that the review on the functioning of the conflict of interest policy is not completed and that no member of either committee declared conflict of interest at AC27 and PC21. She drew the SC's attention to the recommendation for UN system-wide guidelines on conflict of interest contained in the UN Joint Inspection Unit's report on the Post-Rio+20 Review of Environmental Governance within the UN System (SC65 Inf.11).

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to continue consideration at SC66.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CITES VISION 2008-2020: On Tuesday morning, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 14), noting that implementation of the Strategic Vision is addressed in the report of the SC Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements (SC65 Doc. 24.2) and suggested that this item be merged with the agenda item on special reporting requirements and reporting on trade in artificially propagated plants.

Outcome: SC65 noted the oral report of the Secretariat and agreed to consider this issue with the agenda item on special reporting requirements and reporting on trade in artificially propagated plants.

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the report on the celebration of the first World Wildlife Day (SC65 Doc. 15) on 3 March, and relevant recommendations, including to establish a World Wildlife Day Working Group to identify, compile and formulate ideas on how best to celebrate future World Wildlife Days. CITES Secretary-General Scanlon added that the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization proposed highlighting the benefits of wildlife-based tourism on World Wildlife Day in 2015. He also noted that the follow up high-level conference to the London Conference on illegal wildlife trade is slated to begin on World Wildlife Day 2015.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to the establishment of a working group.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: This issue was discussed on Monday.

CMS: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the document on the cooperation with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) (SC65 Doc. 16.2), highlighting progress in the implementation of the 2012-2014 joint work programme. He also proposed to align the timing of the joint work programme with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2020, and the forthcoming CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023.

CMS emphasized that the proposed Central Asian Mammals Initiative includes species covered by CITES, such as argali and snow leopard.

Norway welcomed the joint work programme, citing good results, but, with the US, cautioned that core Convention activities should be prioritized.

Outcome: SC65 welcomed the cooperation between the Secretariats of CITES and CMS, noted the report, and endorsed the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2015-2020.

FAO: On Monday, Canada presented the relevant reports of the working group on cooperation with the FAO (SC65 Doc. 16.3 and SC65 Doc. 16.3 Annex 2). Participants highlighted cooperation between FAO and CITES on sharks and discussed whether to favor an umbrella MoU or to tailor specific memoranda of cooperation such as the one on forestry.

Outcome: SC65 asked the working group chaired by Canada to resume and work intersessionally with FAO, reporting back at SC66.

ICCWC: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the report on the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) (SC65 Doc. 16.4), highlighting the rolling out of the Consortium's Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit in some countries, and the launch of the ICCWC Strategic Mission 2014-2016. The SC supported the use of the toolkit and the development of indicators for measuring the effectiveness of enforcement efforts.

Outcome: SC65 noted the report.

IPBES: On Monday, Mexico introduced the report of the Working Group on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES) (SC65 Doc. 16.5). He highlighted the inclusion of the assessment on sustainable use of wild species in the 2014-2018 IPBES work programme, which will contribute to the effective implementation of CITES, and the recommendation that the AC and PC establish a joint AC/PC drafting group to develop recommendations on matters such as the nomination of experts for that assessment.

The EU expressed support for the recommendations.

Outcome: SC65 agreed that the Secretariat should issue a Notification inviting parties to nominate experts to the planned IPBES assessment on sustainable use of wild species.

ITTO: On Monday, the Secretariat reported orally, drawing attention to the progress report on the joint CITES-International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) tree species programme (Resolution Conf. 14.4) (PC21 Doc. 18.1) presented at PC21 that provides a brief history of the programme, donors and funding available, activities underway and those completed.

Outcome: SC65 noted the report.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS: On Monday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 16.7). The EU noted the importance of cooperation at all levels and underscored the use of synergies to facilitate access to GEF funding.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the document.

ACCESS TO FINANCE, INCLUDING GEF FUNDING AND INNOVATIVE MECHANISMS: On Monday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 17). Robert Filipp, President, Innovative Finance Foundation, presented the Endangered Species Technology and Innovation Fund, a private initiative for technology devices and services to support CITES

implementation. The US and the EU welcomed the engagement of private sector investors and requested more information on the fund. CITES Secretary-General Scanlon clarified that the fund is a private initiative, independent from CITES and SC endorsement, and that the role of the Secretariat would be to provide technical assistance, including on priorities for activities in the field to benefit from the return on investments of the fund.

CITES Secretary-General Scanlon further reported that CITES and the EU signed an agreement worth €12 million for the programme “MIKES – Minimizing the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species.” On access to GEF funding, he reported on efforts to convey CITES priorities to the GEF, and noted that a process for GEF to become a formal financing mechanism for CITES had not started yet. Mexico said funding should also be available for sustainable use activities. The EU urged parties to pay their contributions. Niger suggested that countries be consulted on the preparation of the Wildlife Donor Roundtable to be organized with the World Bank.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document.

COOPERATION BETWEEN PARTIES AND PROMOTION OF MULTILATERAL MEASURES: On Tuesday, South Africa gave an oral report on the working group on this matter, with SC Chair Storkersen underscoring that SC65 had no reporting obligation on this issue.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the report.

CITES AND LIVELIHOODS: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 19), noting the Working Group on CITES and livelihoods did not reconvene in the margins of SC65 since key members were not present.

The EU drew attention to an article in the IUCN newsletter relating to CITES implementation in developing countries. Japan asked if activities were planned outside Latin America and the Caribbean and the Secretariat noted the UK had provided funding to address demand reduction and livelihood issues in Africa. The US lamented not being included in the working group and South Africa, Canada and Guatemala asked to join. Argentina drew attention to its domestic sustainable development policy. IWMC – World Conservation Trust called for the SC to ask the working group to take into account the FAO’s five strategic objectives, which pertain to hunger, poverty eradication, and resilience.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and the progress made and re-established the working group that will be chaired by Peru.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Needs assessment for strengthening the implementation of CITES: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the relevant documents (SC65 Doc. 20.1 and SC65 Doc. 20.1 Annex 1) noting the few responses to the needs assessment questionnaire might warrant a deadline extension.

Outcome: SC65 established a working group and noted that the deadline should be for three months.

Capacity-building activities for implementation of the CITES listing of sharks and manta rays: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 20.2) and drew attention to the EU’s contribution towards this work and to the CITES shark portal. Japan noted it would share its guidelines

while China highlighted difficulties in identifying non-dorsal fins and other shark parts. Colombia, China and New Zealand noted past and future meetings, with the US and others calling for documents and resources from these meetings to be uploaded. The Secretariat stressed the importance of bringing CITES and fisheries authorities together.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the document.

CITES LOGO: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 21) recalling that the Secretariat authorizes the use of the official logo for non-commercial purposes only and on a case-by-case basis, and that each CITES Management Authority can use the CITES logo. She suggested the intersessional working group continue its activities and consider granting the use of the logo to: licensed exporters and processing and repackaging plants for specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish; scientific institutions; and operations that breed Appendix-I animal species for commercial purposes.

The US, Chair of the intersessional working group, reported the very low level of participation in the working group and recommended, supported by Guatemala, Uganda, Niger and Israel, to discontinue it and keep the current policy for the use of the CITES logo.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to discontinue the working group and to continue the current approach being taken by the Secretariat to deal with requests to use the logo.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

NATIONAL LAWS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 22), highlighting that the SC is looking for an update on national legislation. She noted that some parties mostly require assistance in drafting national legislation.

Many countries supported the Secretariat’s suggestion to direct technical or financial assistance to parties identified as requiring drafting assistance. Norway suggested drawing from the Trust Fund to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat. Botswana, a Category 2 country (countries whose legislation is believed generally not to meet all of the requirements for the implementation of CITES), expressed the hope it would move to Category 1 (countries whose legislation is believed generally to meet the requirements for implementation of CITES) soon. WWF encouraged the Secretariat to look into how countries deal with non-native CITES protected species that arrive in the respective countries illegally.

On Friday, Colombia said it would be more useful for regional and subregional representatives to coordinate faster mechanisms for information transmission rather than setting up the proposed intersessional working group on legislation.

Outcome: The SC noted the document and will coordinate with the regions and the Secretariat.

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XIII ON INTERNATIONAL MEASURES: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented orally on Article XIII on International Measures, noting that the Secretariat does not exercise the authority given in Article XIII very often. She said that in accordance with Article XIII, communications had been sent to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR) relating to, *inter alia*: non-submission of annual

reports; excess of quotas; cancelling and reissuing permits; and overall ways of handling permits for the former, and to efforts in enforcing action against illegal trade and potentially illegitimate captive breeding for the latter. She noted ongoing work with these parties would be reported back to SC66 where further action might be taken. DRC drew attention to the cancellation and reissuing of permits for Afrormosia, citing problems of order cancellations due to delays caused by transportation time lags from the harvest point to the export point. The US asked for the Secretariat to inform the SC on intersessional action under Article XIII. The EU highlighted issues with the main python facility in Lao PDR and urged others to refuse python imports from it.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the document and embraced the request to, as appropriate, keep the SC updated intersessionally.

NATIONAL REPORTS: Late submission or non-submission of national reports: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 24.1) noting that Belize, Mauritania, the Philippines, Samoa and Niger had since submitted reports, with the latter having only sent one in, and that Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said they would submit theirs during the week. The Secretariat asked regional representatives for updates from Comoros, the Gambia, Lao PDR and Malawi. Delegates debated whether to apply sanctions immediately against those who had not submitted reports for three years or to wait 60 more days after the close of the meeting to do so. The EU and the US, who initially opposed the extra 60 days, eventually agreed with Japan and South Africa who favored the extra time.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the document and agreed to extend the report submission deadline by 60 days.

Special reporting requirements and reporting on trade in artificially propagated plants: On Friday, the Chair of Standing Committee's Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 24.2) and Working Group Report (SC65 Com.6), highlighting that the working group met throughout the week and agreed that there is a need for harmonized reporting to reduce parties' reporting burden.

The US suggested accepting the offer by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to participate in their research effort by providing detailed seizures data to UNODC for analysis. China noted that the release of such data could only be requested by the CoP.

Outcome: SC65 adopted more than 50 draft recommendations on CITES reporting requirements, ranging from national legislation to individual species, including whether any of the reporting requirements not reviewed by the AC and PC should be maintained or deleted. On the release of seizure data, SC65 agreed to have a sheet where parties would check the seizure data authorized to share.

RANCHING OPERATIONS IN MADAGASCAR: On Tuesday, Madagascar presented the report (SC65 Doc. 25.1) on its responses to the recommendations of the SC Working Group on Nile Crocodile Ranching. He requested lifting the trade ban, financial assistance for finalizing the reorganization of the trade, and assistance in species identification.

The Secretariat then presented document SC65 Doc. 25.2, noting that Madagascar has implemented the recommendations and suggested the Working Group prepare recommendations during the week. The EU noted that not all actions prescribed have been completed.

On Friday, France presented the outcomes of the Working Group's deliberations (SC65 Com.1), highlighting the recommendation that the SC withdraw the trade suspension with some conditions. The EU, with the US, Niger and IWMC, commended Madagascar for the work done on this matter and supported the recommendations by the working group.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to withdraw the trade suspension at the present meeting, on the condition that this withdrawal becomes effective when, *inter alia*: the Decree and Ministerial Orders have entered into force and Madagascar has communicated the Decree and Orders to the Secretariat.

REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF APPENDIX-II SPECIES: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC65 Doc. 26.1 and, noting implementation by Madagascar of the PC recommendations, reported that seven aloe species, 24 Euphorbia species and five palm species have been removed from the Review of Significant Trade (RST). He further reported that Afrormosia from the DRC has also been removed from RST following the Secretariat's determination of compliance with PC recommendations for this species.

On existing SC recommendations to suspend trade, the Secretariat recommended withdrawing the trade suspension of Beluga sturgeon from Iran. The US and Colombia supported the recommendation, with the US stressing Iran should provide the scientific basis for the non-detriment finding (NDF) prior to resuming exports of Beluga sturgeon.

The Secretariat presented recommendations on reviews of 14 animal species beyond the deadlines for implementing AC recommendations. The US, Iran and the Animal Welfare Institute requested an NDF should be conducted before resuming exports of the Indo-Pacific bottle-nosed dolphin from the Solomon Islands, with Australia cautioning about capacity constraints in the Solomon Islands.

Indonesia reported its recent cooperation with scientific institutions as a step to fulfill the request regarding a monitoring plan for the Asiatic softshell turtle.

The EU suggested the SC request the DRC communicate, by 30 November 2014, the 2015 export quota for Afrormosia on the basis of the inventory management report, and to present the NDF process for this species at PC22. Following clarification by the Secretariat that the DRC has already been advised of the removal of Afrormosia from the RST, the EU agreed to use "encourage" rather than "request."

Outcome: SC65:

- agreed to withdraw the trade suspension of Beluga sturgeon from Iran and agreed Iran should provide details of its NDF prior to resuming exports of this species;
- encouraged the DRC to communicate by 30 November 2014 its annual export quota for 2014 for Afrormosia based on inventory and present its NDF for this species to PC22;
- agreed to remove the following species from RST: grey crowned-crane from Uganda; Horsfield's tortoise from

Tajikistan; Asiatic softshell turtle from Indonesia; Golden mantella from Madagascar; and Indo-Pacific bottle-nosed dolphin from the Solomon Islands. SC65 agreed the Solomon Islands should provide the basis for the NDF prior to resuming export of this dolphin species; and

- requested Thailand to finalize implementation of the outstanding relevant AC recommendations: suspend trade in specimens of Emperor scorpion from Ghana until the country demonstrates compliance with Article IV, paragraphs 2(a) and 3 for this species, and provide full information regarding compliance with the AC recommendations.

The SC also made several recommendations regarding clam species (*Tridacna derasa*, *T. crocea*, *T. gigas*, *T. maxima*, *T. squamosa*) from the Solomon Islands, providing, *inter alia*, that the Secretariat: inform the Solomon Islands that a zero export quota for commercial trade in all specimens of *Tridacna* spp. of wild origin is in place, including “dead clam shells”; and issue a Notification to the Parties that no ranching or captive breeding of *Tridacna* spp. currently takes place in the Solomon Islands and that, until further notice from the Secretariat, parties should not import specimens from the Solomon Islands.

Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade: Report of the Animals and Plants Committees: On Wednesday, AC Chair Caceres presented orally on this item, referring to document AC27/PC21 Doc. 12.1 for background. She underscored the ambitious scope of the review and highlighted the priorities for the work of the AC/PC recommended by the CITES Advisory Working Group for the Evaluation of the RST, as: testing a selection process in consultation with UNEP-WCMC; revising the initial consultation letter to range States, including developing a short questionnaire to standardize the information being requested; reviewing and, if necessary, revising definitions of the “least concern” and “urgent concern/action needed” categories; and developing the standard menu of recommendations. She noted that a draft revision of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on RST will be presented at the next AC and PC meetings.

The EU welcomed progress on the review and encouraged intersessional work particularly regarding Article IV. The Animal Welfare Institute and Mexico commented on the need for conditions to establish NDFs before resuming export of species removed from RST after lifting of a zero export quota. AC Chair Caceres said the comments had been noted and would be included in the intersessional work of the Advisory Working Group.

Outcome: SC65 noted the report.

ENFORCEMENT MATTERS: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented the report (SC65 Doc. 27.1), on implementation of six CoP16 decisions: Decision 16.39 directed the SC to initiate a process to assess implementation and enforcement related to trade in Appendix I species; Decision 16.40 for the Secretariat to establish Wildlife Incident Support Teams in partnership with the ICCWC and conduct assessment of seizures; two decisions on pangolins: 16.41, requesting the range states to compile information on the conservation of and illegal trade in Asian pangolins, and 16.42 to SC65 to review the information provided by Asian pangolin range States and develop

recommendations and report to CoP17; and Decisions 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.139 on humphead wrasse. He indicated that the Secretariat had just received a report by IUCN indicating significant illegal trade in CITES-listed species in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, as well as compliance issues.

Bahamas, referring to the seizure in the UK in February 2014 of smuggled rock iguanas (SC65 Inf.4), noted flaws in the Bahamas enforcement system and the need to address demand reduction, and called for a SC recommendation that the Secretariat look into this matter and report to SC66.

The EU requested the Secretariat re-issue a Notification to the Parties to provide information on pangolins and consider carrying out a study similar to that done on cheetahs. Viet Nam supported the recommendation on pangolins and highlighted some national conservation efforts. India supported uplisting all pangolin species to Appendix I.

The US suggested establishing working groups on the process to assess implementation and enforcement of trade in Appendix I species and on developing recommendations on pangolins. He encouraged Asian range States to urgently submit their reports.

Malaysia recalled that pangolins are protected under domestic law and indicated that Malaysia is a transit country.

IUCN offered collaboration on humphead wrasse and pangolins. The Chinese Association for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) said both pangolins and TCM should be protected. Annamiticus, Lewis and Clark Foundation, and International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) supported expanding the Notification to submit reports to pangolin African range States.

China stated that only historical pangolin stockpiles can be used for medicinal purposes and reported that the food industry commands most pangolins.

Canada encouraged stronger links and mutual cooperation between management and enforcement authorities. Indonesia highlighted national efforts to protect pangolins, noted ongoing illegal trade in humphead wrasse and regretted the little interest shown by importing countries in the humphead wrasse working group.

On Friday, the Secretariat proposed, and Indonesia agreed, that more information would be requested from parties on the humphead wrasse and a report would be made to SC66. The US presented the document (SC65 Com.2) with SC Chair Størkersen noting its breadth and the US inviting those who had indicated an interest to join an intersessional working group to evaluate CITES mechanisms. The EU presented the report of the working group on pangolins (SC65 Com.8)

Outcome: SC65 adopted the first document, which recommends the establishment of an intersessional working group to *inter alia* evaluate existing CITES mechanisms; consider revising them or potential new ones; and make recommendations to SC66. SC65 also established an intersessional working group on pangolins, with the mandate to, *inter alia*:

- request the Secretariat to invite parties to provide information on the conservation of and trade in Asian and African pangolin species, with information to be provided by 28 February 2015;

- prepare, with the Secretariat, a questionnaire to assist parties in compiling information;
- review the information provided by parties and others; and
- draft recommendations to address the illegal trade in pangolin species and report back on these recommendations to SC66.

DISPOSAL OF ILLEGALLY TRADED AND CONFISCATED SPECIMENS OF APPENDIX-I, -II AND -III SPECIES: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 27.2), noting queries about disposal and thus encouraging broad participation in the suggested working group.

Indonesia presented the document on the establishment of the Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on Disposal of Illegally Traded and Confiscated Specimens (SC65 Inf.26), to be chaired by Switzerland and to work intersessionally.

On Friday, discussion emerged as to whether the proposed IWG should look into the disposal of ivory stocks (SC65 Doc. 42.7) but Switzerland disagreed. After further consultation, agreement was reached to include the disposal of ivory stocks in the terms of reference of the IWG, which would now be chaired by the Philippines.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to establish the IWG with modified terms of reference.

TRADE CONTROL AND TRACEABILITY

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant report (SC65 Doc. 28). The EU stressed that the provisions on chartering requirements in Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on Introduction from the Sea are very important to the EU. The US pointed to the information on the shark and ray section of the CITES website and asked for the relevant links to be provided. Argentina reiterated that CITES decisions and resolutions should not be commanding the work of the regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), but rather the States that are party to these organizations.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document as well as the oral report of the Secretariat and requested the Secretariat issue a Notification inviting parties, where relevant, to provide the information on chartering.

ELECTRONIC PERMITTING: On Thursday, Switzerland introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 29). The Secretariat announced a new course on e-permitting would be developed under the virtual college; noted a new MoU with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on the harmonization of e-permitting systems with those that customs officials use in many countries to trace goods; and said that lessons had been learned from the CITES toolkit with regard to the track and trace system.

The EU encouraged all parties to adopt e-permits. Peru explained national efforts of e-governance. Colombia suggested organizing a meeting with France and Switzerland and countries within the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) project on CITES e-permits.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and the oral report of Switzerland. SC65 also noted the offer by Colombia to organize a meeting between France and Switzerland and member countries of ACTO on CITES e-permitting systems.

TRANSPORT OF LIVE SPECIMENS: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 30) drawing South Africa's attention to the International Air Transport Association Environmental Committee meeting to be held in South Africa in October 2014, to which the Secretariat had been invited but might not be able to attend.

Outcome: SC65 took note of the document.

PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF TIMBER SHIPMENTS: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 31), noting work on this is not complete and that it will report back at SC66. She stressed that sharing available tools and procedures is important for parties in relation to the illegal timber trade.

The US suggested the Secretariat ask parties to provide updated information on tools and procedures for the identification and measurement of CITES-listed tree species.

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) reported that research has identified poor inspection measures in Hong Kong, which facilitate smuggling of Siamese rosewood from Thailand.

China stated legislative procedures are being put in place to reflect decisions taken at CoP16.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and the Secretariat agreed to issue a Notification to the Parties to solicit more information on tools and procedures for the identification and measurements of CITES-listed tree species.

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 32), highlighting that an intersessional working group was established at AC27/PC21 to enhance the WIKI Identification manual.

Outcome: SC65 noted the report.

INCLUSION OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES IN THE HARMONIZED COMMODITY DESCRIPTION AND CODING SYSTEM: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 33), reporting the Secretariat's activities on monitoring discussions at the World Customs Organization and support to FAO on a proposal for the inclusion of products of shark species in the Harmonized System codes. He informed that the FAO proposal, presented at the 53rd session of the Harmonized System Committee in March 2014, had not been approved.

The EU and the US backed the Secretariat's support for the FAO's proposal. Japan expressed concern about the proposal, given the difficulty of identifying shark species on the basis of traded commodities. Canada questioned the merit of codes that are not species specific.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document.

EXEMPTIONS AND SPECIAL TRADE PROVISIONS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION RELATING TO CAPTIVE-BRED AND RANCHED SPECIMENS:

On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 34.1) on CoP16 decisions regarding trade in specimens claimed to be derived from captive breeding or ranching, and highlighted examples of doubtful sources of trade in specimens such as export of captive-bred parrots from Bahrain, of Appendix I primates from Guinea, and of pythons from Lao PDR. He suggested completing consideration of this issue at SC66. AC Chair Caceres presented document SC65

Doc. 34.2 on the report by the AC on the same subject, noting two separate issues: source codes being incorrectly applied and source codes being deliberately misused to enable trade in specimens not otherwise permitted, and recommended intersessional work to provide more information at SC66.

Several delegations supported the Secretariat's proposal for intersessional work. The US asked that China provide more information on measures taken to control imports of primates from Guinea.

China stated it has already clarified the situation of imports of primates, and that imports were suspended as soon as they were informed by the Secretariat that no breeding facilities existed in Guinea. Côte d'Ivoire highlighted its collaboration with the Wild Chimpanzee Foundation on an awareness raising campaign.

The EU suggested the Secretariat investigate the issues raised by TRAFFIC at AC27 and consider whether any action needs to be taken by the SC.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and that the Secretariat will prepare the report on its findings and recommendations; and also endorsed the recommendation that considerations be concluded at SC66.

REGISTRATION OF OPERATIONS THAT BREED APPENDIX-I ANIMAL SPECIES IN CAPTIVITY FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the documents (SC65 Doc. 35 and Doc. 35 addendum) on an application from the US to include *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus* (Hyacinth macaw) in the CITES Register of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species for commercial purposes and the objection by the Philippines, and explained the SC is expected to either accept or reject the US proposal.

The US and the Philippines provided their respective positions on the issue. Kuwait, supported by Indonesia and the Philippines, proposed to postpone discussions until SC66 since the addendum to the Secretariat's document had just been made available to SC65 members. The US requested a vote. In the afternoon, the US reported back on its lunchtime bilateral discussion with the Philippines, noting their views did not converge, and asked again for a SC vote. The Philippines asked the SC to look into the documents prepared by the US further and noted that postponing a decision was not unprecedented. Mexico, noting that the subject had come up in previous CoPs, favored having a suitable register of facilities that breed Appendix I species and operate within the legal framework of CITES.

Outcome: By a vote of six votes in favor, and one against, with eight abstentions, the Committee agreed to the inclusion in the Register of captive breeding operations of Hyacinth Macaw Aviary Inc., in the US, for the breeding of *Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*.

SPECIES TRADE AND CONSERVATION

ASIAN BIG CATS: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced this issue (SC65 Doc. 38 and SC65 Doc. 38 Annex 1) noting the findings of the IUCN/TRAFFIC report that seizures are increasing and new forms of demand are emerging, with "wealth" replacing "health" as a primary consumer motivation, as tiger parts and derivatives are now less consumed for medicinal purposes and more as exotic luxury products. She

recommended the SC request the Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16).

The EU noted the IUCN/TRAFFIC paper contained other recommendations for consideration by a working group. He highlighted relevant areas such as: reviews of legislative and regulatory systems; improving data collection and cooperation between range States; demand reduction measures; consideration by the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements of all individual species for which parties have been asked to report; and development of a template for consistent reporting across species.

Indonesia supported the idea of a template for reporting. India reported on tiger protection initiatives and the importance of population data for species conservation and sharing of seizure information. China highlighted national protection efforts and called for international community support for the implementation of conservation programmes on the ground. A working group met during the lunch break to formulate recommendations based on the IUCN/TRAFFIC report.

In the afternoon, Viet Nam stressed that tigers are protected at the national level with related crimes warranting two to seven years in jail; noted that seizures had been made and that support was needed on the technical and financial fronts, for instance in DNA sampling; and drew attention to an information campaign to reduce tiger product consumption. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) urged the adoption of the IUCN/TRAFFIC recommendations; drew attention to weak border points; and commended China's zero tolerance to illegal online wildlife trade. EIA said that skins from wild tigers are illegally traded in China and that there is also a licensed domestic trade in the skins of captive bred tigers.

On Friday, the US, Chair of the Working Group on Asian Big Cats, introduced the working group's report and proposed recommendations (SC65 Com.4). The EU suggested removing the brackets from "internal and international" in the recommendation on national legislation. China agreed, despite earlier objection to keep the reference to internal trade in Asian big cats. He also proposed further changes, including adding reference to demand for Asian big cats as pets. On stockpiles of captive-bred or confiscated Asian big cat body parts and derivatives, China asked that the reporting to the Secretariat be either on the security of these stockpiles, or on actions to destroy such stockpiles. The US and the EU stressed that the current text referring to reporting on both should be kept. Australia suggested language on "discouraging" online advertising rather than "ensuring" that no online advertising appears. The SC Chair proposed instead "to encourage them to ensure," which was agreed. China offered to chair the proposed intersessional working group.

Outcome: SC65 endorsed, with some amendments, the recommendations of the Working Group on Asian Big Cats, including:

- encouraging parties to review all relevant national legislation to ensure that national measures restricting internal and international trade in Asian big cat parts and derivatives are comprehensive;

- urging parties to address the growing use of Asian big cats as pets and its parts and derivatives as luxury items through targeted demand reduction strategies;
- encouraging parties to engage with e-commerce trading site companies so that no online advertisements are made for illegal specimens of protected species; and
- establishing an intersessional working group to report back at SC66.

ELEPHANTS: This issue was discussed on Monday and Tuesday.

Elephant conservation, illegal killing and ivory trade: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the documents (SC65 Doc. 42.1 and Addenda 1 and 2), based on data from Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) and Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), and from IUCN. The Secretariat noted, among other issues, that UNODC, on behalf of ICCWC, is leading the development of “Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis” and that the Secretariat recommends parties use them. IUCN highlighted the threats faced by both African and Asian elephants.

South Africa, Namibia, the EU, the US, Japan, Niger, China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) supported the recommendations put forward in document SC65 Doc. 42.1. The EU and the US supported completion of reports for countries of secondary concern, and that Angola, Lao PDR and Cambodia should prepare action plans, with the EU adding that the reports should include an assessment of the effectiveness of the plans in reducing poaching and trafficking. South Africa, with Indonesia, did not support making data from ivory stock declarations available other than for MIKE and ETIS. The EU supported the submission of data from ivory stock declarations to MIKE and ETIS, with priority being given to government-held stocks, and the proposal to provide information on wholesale prices for ivory, with clarification on the products covered. The US suggested the SC request the Secretariat to re-issue the Notification to the Parties on information on stockpiles and noted sharing of data could be sensitive.

Zimbabwe expressed concern over the apparent failure to appreciate the nature of the problem, saying that the “one size fits all” approach does not work. He lamented the use by some organizations of unofficial sources of information and the selective analysis of the status of conservation in the country. UAE highlighted its transit country nature and described its national legislation to control illegal trade.

African Elephant Fund: On Tuesday, South Africa reported on the implementation of the Fund (SC65 Doc. 42.1), as Chair of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee, noting that no proposals were received from Central Africa.

Disposal of ivory stocks: This document (SC65 Doc. 42.7) was introduced on Tuesday by Chad, also on behalf of the Philippines. Chad and the Philippines highlighted that ivory stockpiles present a major security risk and a cost to authorities and recommended that all countries with ivory stockpiles destroy them.

Botswana raised concern about the lack of annual updates on stockpiles and, with China, agreed to destroy only illegal ivory stocks, not legal ones.

South Africa and Namibia did not support the destruction of stockpiles. The EU, supported by Norway and Japan, noted that the proposal to destroy “all ivory” is not consistent with current CITES resolutions and exceeds the mandate of the SC, and that any proposal to this end could be considered at COP17. Egypt and Niger supported the proposal, while Côte d’Ivoire proposed a working group.

National Ivory Action Plans: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 42.2) and the eight concerned source, transit and destination countries (China, Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda and Viet Nam) reported back on the evaluation of the progress reports on the implementation of National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs), as included in the annex to the document. China and Hong Kong took the floor first, with the latter presenting additional information on NIAP implementation (SC65 Doc. 42.2 Addendum). Kenya noted that 600 anti-poachers had been recruited and that improved law enforcement on all levels had yielded results. He said Kenya’s efforts should ensure they are no longer considered part of the “gang of eight.” Malaysia called for intelligence sharing between enforcement agencies and for transferring technical knowledge. The Philippines drew attention to a new consortium on illegal ivory including national police, customs and other enforcement agencies. Thailand said significant progress had been made on monitoring, on the preparation of an annual report, and on law enforcement, and that information would be given to the Secretariat. Uganda said that the record 2013 ivory seizure was a result of law enforcement improvements and, like Kenya, hoped their efforts across the board would be appreciated. Tanzania called for resources to be channeled towards NIAP implementation. Viet Nam highlighted progress on intelligence sharing and cooperation.

The EU, Norway, the US and Japan supported the Secretariat’s recommendations. The EU suggested the plans should be made publicly available and should include impact indicators, such as reduction in poaching levels, seizures, investigations, successful prosecutions, or reduction in demand for ivory products, to be developed in a working group. The EU welcomed the information provided orally by Thailand and suggested further discussion in a working group, with the possibility to envisage compliance measures. The US expressed concern about the reported situations and suggested the SC recommend at minimum specific actions and timelines to ensure the reports are done.

Several delegations expressed concern about the situation presented in the documents on elephants and NIAPs. The EU, supported by Norway, emphasized that the SC should be ready to consider the adoption of compliance measures and, supported by the US, that it should intervene intersessionally when recommendations are not complied with. He suggested, with Norway and the US, that the in-session working group on elephants focus on issues related to agenda items 42.1 and 42.2 on elephant conservation, illegal killing and ivory trade, and NIAPs. The US underscored the critical importance of following up on the elephant-related COP16 decision at this meeting, intersessionally and at SC66. Japan called for more efforts from the eight parties who produced NIAPs. Kenya welcomed the

approval of the €12 million MIKE funds by the EU for elephant conservation, suggested the working group address the issue of stockpile inventory, and committed all efforts to move out of the “gang of eight” before SC66.

Chair Størkersen noted an expanded working group would be established to convene throughout the week on elephant-related recommendations on agenda items 42.1, 42.2 and 42.7. In closing the discussions, Species Survival Network (SSN) called for further action in the field at the legislative and policy levels. TRAFFIC praised the progress on the NIAPs but lamented the lack of progress in Thailand, allowing illegal ivory to be sold in the country since 2005. He called on Thailand to impose a moratorium on all sales of ivory.

On Friday, Uganda, as Chair of the working group, presented the documents (SC65 Com.7 and Com.9), commending in particular the EU and Thailand for their contribution to the working group.

The EU, backed by Botswana and the US, reiterated the importance of implementing NIAPs, noting many parties had made considerable progress since CoP16, but underscored continued concern with Thailand. He stressed the EU would be vigilant that the recommendations be adhered to, stating failure to follow up would result in putting compliance measures in place. He said parties need to comply with their obligations under the Convention as an essential element of the Convention’s credibility. Thailand commended the work of the working group, stressed they take their commitments under CITES seriously and are set to move forward. He asked for understanding with regard to their domestic situation and for support with the tasks ahead.

TRAFFIC suggested, and the Secretariat concurred, explaining to Qatar and the UAE why they were identified as transit countries and parties of “Importance to Watch” and what information they should be submitting, such as inspection regimes of containers and protocols on acting on intelligence when incoming cargos are identified. It was noted that the UAE report was provided on 3 July 2014. Japan said they would submit their report again with extra information.

With regard to parties of “Primary Concern,” Kenya suggested, and SC65 agreed, that under Decision 16.83 and on information on the origin of ivory specimens from forensic analysis, parties should share information with the Secretariat “and the affected countries of origin” for use in “further investigation and prosecution in these countries and” by the MIKE and ETIS programmes.

Outcome: SC65 endorsed the working group’s recommendations with minor modifications. The recommendations state, *inter alia*, that:

- on Decision 16.79, Cameroon, Congo, the DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Nigeria should finalize their NIAPs by 31 October 2014 and report to the Secretariat by 15 May 2015 so it can report back to SC66;
- on parties of “Importance to Watch,” arising from Decision 16.80, Japan, Qatar and the UAE should submit a report to the Secretariat on their implementation relating to the control of trade in elephant ivory and ivory markets by 15 March 2015 for SC66, and Angola, Cambodia and Lao PDR should finalize and implement their NIAPs by October 2014, and

report to the Secretariat by 15 May 2015 so it can inform SC66;

- on parties of “Secondary Concern” and “Importance to Watch,” the Secretariat should share NIAPs; inform the SC if these are not submitted by the deadlines so the SC can consider appropriate intersessional decisions, including compliance measures; and recommend including indicators to measure the impact of NIAP actions;
- arising from Decision 16.78, paragraph (b), the UNODC “Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis” should be used and the Secretariat should compile a list of reliable forensic-analysis facilities;
- arising from Decision 16.83, parties should submit ivory samples for forensic analysis; share information on the origin of ivory specimens for further investigation and prosecution and use by MIKE and ETIS; encourage national sampling and funding strategies; support ICCWC and parties when large seizures are made; and support forensic sampling from national ivory stockpiles;
- arising from Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) in the section “Regarding trade in elephant specimens,” paragraph (e), the Secretariat should share country-specific data from the ivory stock declarations; parties who have legal ivory markets and export pre-Convention raw elephant ivory should share wholesale price data and look into the possible laundering of illegal ivory through these markets; and the Secretariat should identify parties of “Primary Concern,” “Secondary Concern” and “Importance to Watch” for SC67; and
- on parties of “Primary Concern” arising from recommendations adopted by SC64, SC65 encourages the eight parties who produced NIAPs to revise them to include indicators to measure their impact; requests them to continue implementing them and for those parties of “Primary Concern” to report on further measures by 15 May 2015; SC66 will decide whether these parties continue to be of “Primary Concern,” have made sufficient progress or require compliance measures.

A footnote further recommends that Thailand submit to the Secretariat a revised NIAP by 30 September 2014, which includes a list of actions to be achieved by 31 March 2015. It also notes a progress report on these actions should be submitted by 15 January 2015. The SC, with the Secretariat, will subsequently make recommendations, as appropriate. A further progress report is to be submitted by 31 March 2015, after which progress will be assessed and conveyed to Thailand. In the event the SC is not satisfied that the requested actions have been achieved, it shall proceed appropriately by postal procedure, in accordance with provisions in Resolution Conf. 14.3, paragraph 30.

Decision-making mechanism for authorizing ivory trade:

On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 42.3).

The EU stressed the focus should be on addressing the ivory trade problem and, with South Africa, Botswana and Kenya, suggested a background document be prepared rather than a working group convened during SC65. South Africa and Botswana supported UNEP preparing the document for

consideration by the working group. Kenya underscored that discussions on the decision-making mechanism (DMM) in 2007 were in a different context to today's escalating levels of illegal killing and trade. Niger urged SC65 to prioritize the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) and, with Côte d'Ivoire, to postpone a decision on the DMM to SC66. The US asked for more details on UNEP's contribution, with UNEP noting it had no position on the trade of ivory. The US raised concern about UNEP taking the lead on the preparation of the document.

On Friday, the Secretariat reported on next steps for developing the background paper for the DMM in collaboration with UNEP, including: building on papers presented in the last three to four years and documentation prepared for CoP16; and circulating an outline of the background paper to the working group to ensure that it corresponds to the needs and expectations.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document.

Review of Resolution Conf. 10.9 on Consideration of proposals for the transfer of African elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II: On Wednesday, the Secretariat presented document SC65 Doc. 42.4, suggesting a working group be established on this issue. The EU suggested dealing with this item in the Working Group on the Decision Making Mechanism, but this was opposed by Israel, Côte d'Ivoire and the US.

Outcome: The SC agreed to establish a working group to review Resolution Conf. 10.9 and prepare proposals for consideration at CoP17.

Elephant Protection Initiative: On Wednesday, Botswana presented the document (SC65 Doc. 42.5), recalling the objectives of the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI), launched by Botswana, Tanzania, Chad, Gabon and Ethiopia, to provide funds for the implementation of the AEAP, to close domestic ivory markets in participating countries and to observe a ten-year moratorium on any international trade. South Africa, with Namibia and the International World Conservation Trust, expressed their concern about the Initiative, particularly on duplication and competition with the AEAP, which is the range States' framework for elephant protection. The EU, with China, noted some elements of the EPI go beyond the mandate of CITES. Niger encouraged the EPI to seek partnerships, and Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire stressed the need for the EPI to contribute to the AEAP. The WCS expressed support for the initiative and encouraged parties to support it.

Outcome: The SC noted the document.

Preventing the illegal ivory trade under Article VII and through the internet: This item was introduced by Chad, also on behalf of the Philippines, on Wednesday (SC65 Doc. 42.6 (Rev.1)), and it concerns the adoption of stricter regulations in the area of trade: of ivory that predates the Convention, including antiques; of personal or household effects that are made of or contain ivory; and of ivory trade over the internet. He recommended the establishment of a working group in order to prepare some recommendations for consideration at SC66.

The EU noted that the proposed regulations exceed the mandate of the SC. The US called on parties to adopt stricter domestic measures, as the US did, to address this issue. South

Africa, supported by Norway, opposed the establishment of the working group. WWF noted that all the issues raised require separate solutions and concern species beyond elephants and their ivory.

Outcome: SC65 noted the report and requested that Chad and the Philippines develop a proposal for consideration at CoP17.

Ivory stock in Burundi: On Wednesday, Burundi presented the document (SC65 Doc. 42.8). The Secretariat noted the SC does not have a mandate to deal with such issues and suggested a resolution be put before the CoP.

Outcome: SC65 supported the Secretariat's proposal that Burundi prepare a proposal for CoP17.

Reporting on trade in and registration of live Asian elephants: On Wednesday, the EU presented the document (SC65 Doc. 42.9) prepared by Greece, on behalf of the EU.

In opposing the recommendation that all elephant range States have in place legislative, regulatory, enforcement or other measures to prevent illegal trade in live elephants, China noted that Thailand and Myanmar were the concerned countries and should resolve the issue directly. IUCN offered to assist in setting up a registration system. Uganda, the Philippines and Norway supported the recommendation, with the latter suggesting the Ivory Enforcement Task Force take on the tasks outlined in the recommendation. Thailand recognized challenges in controlling its long border with Myanmar; sought increased cooperation and information sharing; and drew attention to national registration legislation. The US noted the potential benefits of a registration system and stressed that the document highlighted another instance where Thailand was not carrying out its obligations under the Convention.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and agreed to China's proposal that the Secretariat review the implementation of the progress of Asian elephant range States "and other relevant parties" in implementing Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in Elephant Specimens. The Secretariat will report back to SC66.

MIKE and ETIS: On Friday, the MIKE and ETIS Subgroup met to, *inter alia*, revise the terms of reference of the Technical Advisory Group.

RHINOS: On Wednesday, the UK presented the report of the SC Working Group on Rhinoceros (SC65 Doc. 43.1) and the Secretariat introduced its report (SC65 Doc. 43.2).

The EU noted that the current rhino poaching levels remain of high concern despite CITES recommendations and efforts by parties, such as Viet Nam and its high-level directive on the matter. Botswana informed it will keep on engaging with Mozambique. South Africa explained their integrated approach to combat poaching, noting their black and white rhino management plans. Viet Nam, building on the report on Viet Nam's Compliance with Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) on the Conservation of and Trade in African and Asian Rhinoceroses (SC65 Doc. 43.2 Annex 1), noted their progress. Zimbabwe drew attention to the report on rhino conservation in Zimbabwe: 2012-2013 (SC65 Doc. 43.2 Annex 2), which denotes an increase in rhino populations and a decline in poaching trends. Kenya highlighted their revised rhino conservation and management strategy, and asked for support in implementing it.

Qatar drew attention to the seizure of six white rhino horns in Doha International Airport in May 2014 in transit from Mozambique to Viet Nam. India noted their report would be submitted soon and said armed guards and community patrols had been equipped with GPS and digital cameras. The US called for actions to be undertaken before SC66 to be clarified in the recommendations.

The EIA said that, with the International Rhino Foundation, they are petitioning the US government to impose trade sanctions against Mozambique in response to rampant poaching, under the Pelly Amendment to the US Fishermen's Protective Act that allows for trade sanctions against any nation certified to be undermining an international conservation agreement. WWF noted that the reputation of CITES was at stake and that action was needed intersessionally. TRAFFIC noted that South Africa was the hottest rhino crime scene in the world and urged for more collaboration in that area as well as efforts to reduce demand.

The Working Group agreed to merge its recommendations and those from the Secretariat, and present a consolidated set for SC65's consideration.

On Friday, the UK, as Chair of the Working Group, presented the document (SC65 Com.3) and drew particular attention to: the importance of information sharing on seizures for countries of origin, transit and destination; the high level of activity in Viet Nam; recommendations for Mozambique that reflect the group's disappointment with the lack of progress in that country; and issues, such as non-compliance, being reported intersessionally. The EU voiced support for Mozambique to prepare a national rhino action plan.

Outcome: SC65 adopted the recommendations providing, *inter alia*, that:

- all parties make efforts to implement Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) and CoP16 decisions on Rhinoceroses, and the CITES Rhino Enforcement Task Force strategies and actions;
- the Czech Republic, South Africa and Viet Nam submit reports on measures taken on rhino trophy hunting;
- India report on its implementation of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) to the Secretariat by 31 March 2015,
- Mozambique prepare, submit and implement a national rhino action plan, and share information;
- South Africa and Mozambique submit a joint report to the Secretariat;
- Viet Nam provide a further progress report by 31 March 2015, including on the outcome of investigations and seizure penalties, securing confiscated rhino horn, and measures to reduced demand;
- the Secretariat: share Mozambique's national rhino action plan; evaluate submitted reports and report back at SC66; assist in the provision of information on demand reduction effectiveness and community awareness; request the convening of a workshop; and draw SC attention to non-compliance issues intersessionally; and
- in relation to the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force, urge parties to provide the national focal point contact details, encourage parties to provide information, issue a Notification to the Parties on seizures, and report to SC66.

ILLEGAL TRADE IN CHEETAHS: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the relevant document (SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2)), which includes a study prepared by a consultant. She noted that this is the first report on illegal trade in cheetahs and that further research is required on the topic.

AC Chair Caceres reported on the AC recommendations, in particular the recommendation to have a face-to-face workshop of range States and parties implicated in the illegal trade in cheetahs and other relevant organizations. Kuwait introduced the report prepared by Kuwait with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE on Measures to combat illegal trade in Cheetah (SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2) Addendum 2 (Rev.1)). She highlighted that Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohamed bin Zayed has contributed US\$20 million to Panthera through the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund to advance wild cat conservation in the region.

Bahrain stressed that there has been no import—legal or illegal—of cheetahs in the country since the ratification of the Convention. Saudi Arabia highlighted legislative amendments made to strengthen powers to confiscate wildlife, such as cheetahs. UAE noted a draft federal law aimed at addressing the illegal trade in cheetahs.

Botswana expressed concern in the upsurge of illegal trade in cheetahs, citing evidence of smuggling of cheetahs from Botswana. Uganda welcomed the recommendations of the AC and the study, including the opportunity to hold a workshop. SSN and WCS also welcomed the recommendations.

On Friday, Kuwait presented the working group's report (SC65 Com.5). WCS suggested some minor amendments to the report, and in particular to better reflect the agreement in the working group that the SC had adopted the AC recommendations presented in Annex 3 of document SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2). The SC endorsed the report of the working group with the WCS proposed amendments.

Outcome: SC65 established an Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on Illegal Trade in Cheetah, with the following ToR:

- consider the results of the study presented in Annexes 1 and 2 of document SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2);
- consider the relevant decisions of SC65 and further consider the recommendations of the AC presented in Annex 3 of document SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2);
- develop recommendations to address the illegal trade in cheetahs and report to SC66;
- work with the Secretariat to develop a questionnaire for all Cheetah range, transit and consumer States to document the status of implementation and enforcement of relevant CITES provisions and the challenges experienced by these states. A draft of the questionnaire will be prepared by 15 August 2014 and finalized by the IWG by 1 September 2014. The Secretariat should invite relevant parties to complete the questionnaire and return it by 15 November 2014;
- convene a workshop of illegal take of and trade in cheetahs; and
- with the Secretariat organize a workshop with the terms of reference specified in paragraph 3 of Annex 3 of document SC65 Doc. 39 (Rev.2).

BUSHMEAT: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 36). Switzerland drew attention to a national study on the imports of bushmeat that revealed that a wide array and quantity of species were imported into Switzerland and prompted the development of a manual, in four languages, that will be available online soon and sent to the Secretariat. DRC provided an overview of its bushmeat situation and drew attention to a project with FAO and GEF.

Outcome: SC65 established an intersessional working group chaired by AC Chair Caceres.

GREAT APES: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 37). The EU welcomed collaboration with INTERPOL and asked the Secretariat if it was aware of any breeding centers for great apes, with the Secretariat responding that it was not. The US commended CITES efforts including through the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) and other organizations; noted range States should make further use of domestic laws and regulations; and improvements should be made in species identification. He explained the US might reclassify captive chimpanzees as endangered, which would lead to increased regulation in their use, resulting in opportunities to engage with range States.

Japan supported the recommendations and hoped the scope of the illegal trade reporting mechanism could also address other pressures associated with great apes. WCS urged GRASP not to duplicate existing efforts and highlighted the update of the IUCN Red List, which this year includes great apes. UNEP noted illegal live trade was on the increase and drew attention to a great ape illegal trade database currently under development in collaboration with MIKE and INTERPOL, and to other initiatives that provide updates on the species. IUCN said population abundance data would be made available on the A.P.E.S. Portal. Niger proposed an intersessional working group on great apes issues. Côte d'Ivoire and the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance noted DNA testing and repatriation should be used and asked to join the working group. Pro Wildlife urged the SC to request Guinea and China provide information about arrests, and seizures of great apes, and Sierra Leone, Chad and Equatorial Guinea to verify the validity of their trade. SSN noted their members' experience in great ape trade and willingness to join the working group.

SC Chair Størkersen cautioned against setting up another working group and suggested using the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements. On Friday, the Chair of the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements introduced the report (SC65 Com. 6) and agreed to look at the issue within its current scope.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and agreed to extend the mandate of the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements to consider the possible establishment of an illegal trade reporting mechanism for reporting illegal trade in great apes.

SAIGA ANTELOPE: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 40), lamenting that the saiga antelope range States have not submitted information on the implementation of the Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope (2011-2015).

The US and the EU expressed disappointment for the poor reporting record on these issues from range and consumer States and asked the Secretariat to set deadlines for reporting in time for SC66.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and asked the Secretariat to solicit more information from range and consumer States.

TIBETAN ANTELOPE: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the report (SC65 Doc. 41 (Rev.1)), noting Switzerland's comment that the nature of this trade had changed in a significant way, with shatoosh fibers mixed with cheaper fibers making it possible to reach a larger buyer base.

Switzerland expressed concern for the continued trade. The EU welcomed the report. China emphasized that while poaching in Tibetan antelope in China is under control, illegal trade in shatoosh remains a concern.

Outcome: SC65 endorsed the recommendations in the report, including to:

- remind parties of the need to continue to implement Decision 16.93 on seizure of illegal Tibetan antelope wool and its products; and
- request the Secretariat to evaluate the reports submitted by parties and to report its findings and recommendations to SC66.

SNAKE TRADE AND CONSERVATION

MANAGEMENT: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document (SC65 Doc. 44). The Chair of the Working Group on Snake Trade and Conservation Management provided a summary of its work. Japan asked to join the working group. China noted that some of the relevant CITES decisions and requirements under those decisions are duplicative and impose a great implementation burden. The EU, supported by the US, suggested that SC65 should focus on the development of a traceability system and its socio-economic implications only.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to the decisions directed to it which include: considering the AC and Secretariat reports and recommendations, the International Trade Centre study on python skin trade in Asia and other relevant information; and examining the UNCTAD Biotrade Initiative working group study on reptile skin sourcing to determine whether any recommendations should be made to parties, the AC and the Secretariat; and agree on a timeframe for reporting and for consideration at SC66.

TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES: On Thursday, the Secretariat presented the document (SC65 Doc. 45) noting its annexes and associated documents (SC65 Inf.18 and SC65 Inf.6) submitted by the Management Authorities of the US and China, respectively.

The US recognized CoP16 decisions on the matter set the bar high, particularly for parties in Asia, but noted that most problems for these species stemmed from that region. He said regional representatives should contact the Secretariat to explain why parties had not provided the information requested, and called for the SC to put out a call for funding specifically for the implementation of decisions pertaining to this species. The EU noted potential overlap in the different decisions on these species and urged a revised set of decisions be put to CoP17.

Outcome: SC65 endorsed the document.

SHARKS AND RAYS: On Thursday, AC Chair Caceres introduced the report (SC65 Doc. 46), noting that it focused on the implementation challenges associated with new shark listings. New Zealand noted that given the questions of compliance, sustainability and traceability associated with sharks, the SC is well suited to address them.

Several countries supported the findings and recommendations in the report, including India, the EU, Colombia and the US. China encouraged taking into consideration the role and work of RFMOs. Hong Kong, highlighting its role as a trading hub for shark fin, emphasized the importance of measures to ensure the legality and traceability of different shark species. CMS highlighted that it continues to work closely with CITES on the conservation of migratory sharks and noted that CMS COP11 will consider the listing of several CITES-listed shark species. WWF highlighted the implications of the listings for RFMOs. TRAFFIC recognized the need for more work to secure the effectiveness of the listings, especially on legality of acquisition, traceability and chain of custody.

Outcome: SC65 established an intersessional working group, chaired by Colombia, with the mandate to review: new legislative issues that might arise in exporting, transit and consumer countries; issues pertaining to chain of custody, legality of acquisition and introduction from the sea; the role of RFMOs; and requirements for the trade in processed product types of Appendix II species such as crocodile skins, and caviar, and consider their applicability to shark products containing Appendix II species.

STURGEONS AND PADDLEFISH: On Thursday, AC Chair Caceres introduced the AC report (SC65 Doc. 47). The US supported the recommendation to improve reporting given the lack of response from the range States, but opposed the licensing of facilities as suggested in the evaluation prepared by Germany annexed to the AC report. The EU, supported by China, proposed setting up an intersessional working group. China agreed in principle with the evaluation prepared by Germany but differed on some of the methods.

Outcome: SC65 established an intersessional working group, chaired by Germany, tasked especially with reviewing the evaluation prepared by Germany.

MALAGASY EBONIES (*DIOSPYROS SPP.*) AND MALAGASY ROSEWOODS (*DALBERGIA SPP.*): On Wednesday, the Secretariat provided an oral briefing on the status of implementation of CITES recommendations on these species in Madagascar, including the Action Plan, and introduced the relevant report (SC65 Doc. 48.1)

Madagascar then introduced its Action Plan (SC65 Doc. 48.2) and a proposal for an interim plan to sell off stockpiles of seized timber. The World Bank highlighted stockpile security as an issue and noted that an international sale could be an important source of financing for conservation. He also described the three studies under way: a viability study for the purpose of drawing up an inventory, labeling specimens, and implementing a custody system; a legal assessment of the sale of these specimens; and an evaluation of options available to sell off the illegal stockpile of rosewood.

The EU encouraged Madagascar to continue working on the implementation of its Action Plan. He also recognized that significant work needs to be done before the stockpile audit is completed and thus the SC is not in a position to approve the audit. He called for the zero export quota to remain in place. He also asked to include a recommendation requesting Madagascar to submit a use plan by 31 December 2014 for consideration by the SC by postal procedure. Switzerland expressed concern over documented cases of illegal trade in rosewood and illegal logging, noting that a clear domestic regulatory framework is still missing. She proposed a 10-year moratorium on exports of these species. The US endorsed the comments of the EU and Switzerland, except for the proposal to set an arbitrary 10-year moratorium on the sale of ebony and rosewood. Mexico proposed to review progress at SC66. WCS, also on behalf of WWF, warned that strong controls should be in place to ensure that a future sale of ebony and rosewood is conducted in accordance with CITES.

Outcome: SC65 agreed to:

- ask Madagascar to continue working and present a stockpile audit and use plan to SC66;
- request Madagascar to significantly increase the enforcement actions at the national level and to strengthen their enforcement cooperation at the international level;
- request Madagascar to extend the zero export quota until SC66;
- request Madagascar to submit a use plan by 31 December 2014 for SC consideration by postal procedure; and
- in the case that Madagascar does not communicate to the Secretariat the extension of the zero export quota by 10 August 2014, recommend that all parties suspend trade in *Dalbergia* and *Diospyros* spp. from Madagascar, to be reviewed at SC66.

SC65 also agreed that if Madagascar does not make significant progress on the points by SC66, it may consider compliance measures at that meeting.

CITES APPENDICES

ANNOTATIONS: Report of the interim working group: On Friday, the US, Chair of the interim SC Working Group on Annotations, presented the document (SC65 Doc. 49.1) recommending that the SC consider the preferred options among those presented in the papers as regard to where definitions of terms in annotations should be included permanently. He recommended the Working Group on Annotations be reconvened to report to SC66.

The EU felt it was premature for SC65 to make a decision on the preferred option and that this matter should be further explored by the Working Group. He noted possible abuse of annotations for tree species and highlighted the need for the working group to consider the results of the timber trade study called for under Decision 15.35 and, in particular, assess whether current tree annotations cover products primarily exported from producer countries and the impacts of changes to those annotations, and develop amendments for consideration at CoP17.

AC Chair Caceres informed that the AC and PC have already nominated members for the Working Group on Annotations.

Outcome: SC65 re-established the Working Group on Annotations with the US and the UK serving as Co-Chairs.

Annotations for tree species included in Appendices II and III: On Friday, the Secretariat provided an oral report on a timber trade study, noting that funding had been secured for it and the study is being conducted by the Secretariat in collaboration with ITTO. ITTO explained that the study would collect information from national and international statistics, on value added timber products, and changes in trade following species listing.

The EU suggested the study focus on priority species such as Siamese rosewood, mahogany, and afrormosia.

Outcome: SC65 noted the document and requested the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to solicit information for the timber trade study.

REGIONAL MATTERS

SC65 noted the regional reports (SC65 Doc. 50.1-6).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

PURPOSES CODES: Canada recalled that CoP16 rejected the recommendations of the Working Group on Purposes Codes and requested it submit revised recommendations to CoP17. She suggested SC members who had objected to the recommendations engage actively to ensure consensus is reached before CoP17.

Outcome: SC65 re-established the Working Group on Purposes Codes.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, the Secretariat announced that SC66 would be held in Geneva, Switzerland, for 5 days beginning 31 August 2015. Mexico suggested holding SC66 later. SC65 agreed to instruct the Secretariat to look into options to postpone SC66 to a later date.

UNEP delivered an oral statement on behalf of UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, noting the SC's agreement to establish an intersessional working group to review the administrative hosting arrangements for the CITES Secretariat and asked that UNEP be invited to be a full member of it.

The EU congratulated SC65 on the important steps taken and voiced continued support to ensuring the effectiveness of the Convention. Indonesia lauded the many positive outcomes of the meeting. Several other delegations expressed gratitude to the Secretariat for a productive meeting. CITES Secretary-General Scanlon thanked the retiring staff of the Secretariat for their service. Chair Størkersen drew the meeting to a close at 5:18 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

“Ultimately this fight will be won or lost on the front lines, whether in the field, the courtroom, or the market place—not in a conference room. We have had a lot of important high-level events over the past three years and we must now better focus our collective efforts on local, national and regional actions.”

CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon's message delivered during the first United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP was the mantra that guided delegates at the sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee through their deliberations over

documents and reports pointing out one overwhelming fact: poaching and illegal trade in endangered species fueled by an insatiable demand is dooming their very existence.

With this backdrop, this brief analysis will review the role of SC65 and its discussions on some of the most significant topics and ask whether CITES can lead the way in addressing illegal wildlife trade by supporting countries in translating conference room documents into actions on the front lines.

THE KILLING FIELDS

As the CITES Report on Elephant Conservation, Illegal Killing and Ivory Trade notes, while poaching numbers of elephants in 2013 were lower than in 2011 and 2012, more than 20,000 elephants were nonetheless killed on the African continent last year alone. The report laments that these figures are unsustainable, with mortality exceeding the natural birth rate, resulting in an ongoing decline in African elephant numbers. Poaching of rhino similarly continues unabated.

Eight elephant ivory supply and consumer countries classed as “of primary concern” and dubbed by the press as the “Gang of eight,” were mandated under SC64 recommendations to develop and implement National Ivory Action Plans. These States were largely commended by SC65 for having drawn up and activated these plans, even if significant steps still remain to be taken, as some parties highlighted, to ensure implemented measures lead to tangible results and lower levels of elephant poaching and illegal ivory trade. The elephant in the room, Thailand, came under intense scrutiny for its rampant unregulated domestic ivory markets, an issue raised as early as SC54 in 2006.

Finding their voice at SC65, several countries, including the EU and the US, considered appropriate sanctions, ranging from “warning measures” to a trade ban. After much soul searching, SC65 chose the “warning measures” and put Thailand on a stringent timetable for a number of deliverables to be presented intersessionally to the SC. The SC will evaluate Thailand at each step of the way and enact compliance measures should Thailand fall short of its promises, a move described by some as the Convention finally baring its teeth.

The SC took a milder but still similar approach towards some of the rhino countries. Mozambique was asked in absentia to develop, implement and report on a rhino action plan before the next SC meeting. Should the country fail to do so, it will be considered in non-compliance with its obligations under the Convention and the SC will be notified via postal procedure, in accordance with the provisions in Resolution Conf. 14.3, paragraph 30 on suspension of trade. Some delegates worried that the absence of Mozambique at the meeting could be a negative sign denoting the country's lack of political will to comply with the SC recommendations. Others hoped SC pressure might yield positive results.

VANISHING STRIPES

While the plight of elephants and rhinos is a very visible and dramatic one, that of tigers and Asian big cats is more complex to uncover and tackle and therefore less in the spotlight. And yet today wealth is not only fueling demand for expensive ivory artifacts and rhino horn concoctions, but is also driving consumer appetite for Asian big cats as pets, home décor and beverages

such as expensive tiger bone wine, which is also distilled using bones from other cat species. At SC65, the in-session Working Group on Asian Big Cats considered convening intersessionally to discuss the many issues concerning the illegal trade of these species. The recommendations in the report prepared by a member of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group provided then a basis for identifying what the SC should ask the parties to do.

Extensive discussions ensued in the working group on whether parties should review all relevant national legislation to ensure that domestic measures restricting both internal and international trade in Asian big cat parts and derivatives are comprehensive. Some initially objected saying it would be beyond the scope of CITES to interfere with domestic trade issues. But as illustrated by ivory, domestic trade can be used as a means of selling illegally sourced wildlife products. In China for instance, products from “farmed” tigers, namely skins but not bones, can go to scientific and educational institutions and can theoretically be sold at designated sites. But those sites have not been designated yet under the law. This has resulted in legislative loopholes being wrongly exploited.

In line with the times, delegates addressed the role e-commerce plays in the illegal sale of Asian big cats’ products. The SC agreed that parties need to engage with such sites to curb online sales, citing China’s “Zero Tolerance” approach to online advertising for protected species products as a positive national example.

While on the surface the adoption of the SC recommendations and the establishment of the intersessional working group seem small steps, establishing the intersessional working group is itself viewed by many participants as significant, and a mechanism to identify outstanding issues of concern and assess implementation of these recommendations. China’s decision to chair this working group is also viewed as a sign of a willingness to engage with the process and help address the threats affecting the endangered populations of big cats across Asia.

A CRY IN THE FOREST

Amidst an agenda packed with fauna-related issues, trees figured prominently at this SC as delegates considered whether to allow an international sale of the stockpiles of seized ebony and rosewood in Madagascar and ultimately decided this was premature given the incomplete audit of the stockpiles done by the country. Participants also discussed exports of Afrormosia from the Democratic Republic of Congo, as the species is now removed from the Review of Significant Trade following the Secretariat’s determination of compliance with PC recommendations. However, delegates’ interest and support for related issues, such as information sharing on national tools and procedures for inspection of timber shipments and for a new timber trade study with the ITTO demonstrate that the SC is effectively following up on these high profile timber issues.

OUT OF THE TRENCHES AND INTO THE FIELD

While at the beginning of the deliberations, many wondered if CITES parties would bite, by Friday there was no doubt that some SC members were ready to fight tooth and nail when others are not doing what they should under the Convention. Dubbed a crucial meeting, held on the heels of high-level events such as

the Botswana Elephant Summit and the London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade, many hoped SC65 would usher in a new era for CITES, where its non-compliance weapons would be deployed in the open, in the form of immediate trade suspension measures. The expectations for this meeting were quite high.

Some deemed those expectations reasonable: with a three-year gap between CoPs and time running out for poached and illegally traded species, the SC is increasingly viewed by some as a mini-CoP for the level of participation and number of decisions and recommendations it faces, rather than as just a body that provides policy guidance. The SC has stepped up to the mark by choosing to act intersessionally on elephants, rhino and timber, and setting milestones and deadlines within the coming months, rather than waiting an extra year for SC66 or two years for the next CoP. Parties are now expected to swiftly enact tangible measures or face the full wrath of the trade suspension measures under the Convention, which will directly impact the economies of the affected countries and decisively push them to translate the conference room documents into concrete actions to stop the killing fields, the cries in the forest and the stripes from vanishing.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

87th meeting of the IATTC: The 87th meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) will review the status of the fishery in 2013 and status of the tuna and billfish stocks. **dates:** 14-18 July 2014 **location:** Lima, Peru **contact:** IATTC Secretariat **phone:** +1-858-546-7100 **fax:** +1-858-546-7133 **email:** info@iattc.org **www:** <https://www.iattc.org/>

Workshop to test CITES NDF Guidance for Shark Species: This workshop will analyze and discuss the results of the Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) procedures tested on selected stocks of porbeagle and other listed shark species. **dates:** 20-21 August 2014 **location:** Berlin, Germany **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

26th Meeting of NAFO: The North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) will convene for its twenty-sixth meeting. **dates:** 22-26 September 2014 **location:** Spain **contact:** NAFO Secretariat **phone:** +1-902-468-5590 **fax:** +1-902-468-5538 **email:** info@nafo.int **www:** <http://www.nafo.int/meetings/frames/meetings.html>

CBD COP 12: The twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will engage in a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and will consider a range of cross-cutting, thematic, administrative and financial issues. The Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP MOP 7) will take place immediately before COP 12. The first Conference of the Parties serving as a Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing is tentatively scheduled to be held concurrently with CBD COP 12, dependent upon the ratification status of the Protocol. **dates:** 6-17 October 2014 **location:** Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288- 6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=COP-12>

Fiftieth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC): The annual meeting of the ITTC will consider progress in the implementation of International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) projects and activities in support of the sustainable management of tropical forests and the promotion of trade in sustainably produced tropical timber. **dates:** 3-8 November 2014 **location:** Yokohama, Japan **phone:** +81-45-223-1110 **fax:** +81-45-223-1111 **email:** itto@itto.int **www:** <http://www.itto.int/>

CMS COP 11: Ecuador will host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in November 2014, marking the first time that a CMS COP is held in Latin America. **dates:** 4-9 November 2014 **location:** Quito, Ecuador **contact:** Veronika Lenarz, CMS Secretariat **email:** vlenarz@cms.int **www:** <http://www.cms.int/>

Ninth Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to Study Issues Relating to the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine BBNJ: This meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ) is the third of three meetings (April 2014, June 2014 and January 2015) that the UN General Assembly (UNGA) requested be convened. The meetings aim to make recommendations to the UNGA on the scope, parameters and feasibility of an international instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). These three meetings are expected to result in a summary of discussions that will be submitted to the President of the UNGA, and are anticipated to contribute to a decision to be taken at the 69th Session of the UNGA on the development of a new international instrument under UNCLOS. **dates:** 20-23 January 2015 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs **email:** doalos@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/biodiversityworkinggroup.htm>

High-Level Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade: This meeting is a follow-up high-level segment to review the progress since the 2014 London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade. **dates:** 3 March 2015 **location:** Botswana **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

Third Session of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Plenary: The third session of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) plenary will review progress made on the adopted IPBES work programme for 2014-2018, including the related budget and institutional arrangements for its implementation. In addition, the third session of the IPBES plenary will select the members of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), based on the nominations received from governments. **dates:** 12-17 January 2015 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** IPBES Secretariat **email:** secretariat@ipbes.net **www:** <http://www.ipbes.net>

CITES Plants and Animals Committees: The CITES Plants Committee and the Animals Committee will next meet in 2015.

dates: to be announced **location:** to be confirmed **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

CITES SC66: The CITES Standing Committee will convene for its sixty-sixth meeting. **dates:** 31 August - 4 September 2015 (tentative) **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

CITES COP17: The Conference of the Parties on the Convention in Trade in Endangered Flora and Fauna will convene for its seventeenth session. **dates:** October 2016 **location:** South Africa **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** <http://www.cites.org/>

For additional meetings, see <http://biodiversity-l.iisd.org/>

GLOSSARY

AC	Animals Committee
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
CoP	Conference of the Parties
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EIA	Environmental Investigation Agency
ETIS	Elephant Trade Information System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
IWMC	World Conservation Trust
MIKE	Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDF	Non-detriment finding
NIAP	National Ivory Action Plan
PC	Plants Committee
RFMOs	Regional fisheries management organizations
RST	Review of Significant Trade
SC	Standing Committee
SSN	Species Survival Network
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society