

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 18-21 August 2003

Report on the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee

WORKING GROUP ON TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Santiago, 2002), a proposal was discussed for restructuring the permanent committees, with the possibility of establishing a committee responsible for dealing with technical implementation issues. The Conference of the Parties decided not to establish such a committee but adopted the following Decisions:

12.23 *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *identify, in conjunction with the Animals and Plants Committees, the typical categories of technical implementation issues (i.e. operational / administrative / management issues, not matters of a Party's compliance with the Convention) that have proved to be difficult to address under existing committee structures;*
- b) *establish and implement a process for the Standing Committee to act as a clearing house to direct technical implementation issues to the appropriate body (permanent committees, Secretariat, Party or, when appropriate, outside experts) so that issues can be handled in a flexible, timely and accountable manner; and*
- c) *report at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the categories of technical implementation issues identified by the permanent committees, development of a process for the Standing Committee to act as clearing house, and recommendations.*

12.24 *The Animals and Plants Committees shall:*

- a) *continue to work on technical implementation issues of a primarily scientific nature;*
- b) *develop recommendations on how the Committees could assist the Standing Committee in providing advice on technical implementation issues; and*
- c) *report to the Standing Committee by its 50th meeting.*

3. At its 49th meeting (Geneva, April 2003), the Standing Committee (SC) agreed to establish a working group on this issue, comprising representatives of the six CITES regions, the number of representatives being the same as in the SC. The United States of America was elected as Chairman of the working group. The members of the working group need not be members of the Committee. The mandate of the

working group would be to make recommendations to the SC on the process for consideration of technical implementation issues in future. The Committee agreed to the terms of reference of the working group which is presented in the Annex to this document.

Issues for consideration

4. The Animals Committee is invited to consider how it wishes to implement Decision 12.24, taking into consideration that SC50 will take place on 15-19 March 2004.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

1. This document has been prepared by the temporary SC49 working group formed to establish the terms of reference and schedule for the intersessional Working Group on Technical Implementation Issues, as outlined in Decision 12.23.
2. As agreed by the Standing Committee, this Working Group shall conduct its work through electronic mail.
3. The work of the Working Group shall be conducted in English since the translation of emails is not practicable.
4. The United States of America has agreed to be an interim Chairman until a Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected by the Working Group.

Members and alternates

5. The regional representatives in the Standing Committee shall consult the Parties within their region and select the members of the Working Group using the same regional representation as in the Committee. The number of members of the Working Group shall be the same as the number of regional members and alternate members of the Standing Committee, i.e. 28 members in total.
6. Selected members and alternates shall be individuals with practical technical experience in implementing CITES, such as individuals from Management Authorities or Customs.
7. As soon as possible, and no later than 31 May 2003, the regional representatives in the Standing Committee shall provide the interim Chairman with the selected members' names, the countries they represent, their email addresses, and a brief synopsis of each member's expertise or experience in the implementation of CITES. These synopses will assist the Working Group in electing a Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
8. The work of the Working Group shall begin on 31 May 2003.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman

9. The interim Chairman shall provide the Working Group with a list of all the regional members, their email addresses, and the synopses of their qualifications. A Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall then be elected by the Working Group. Upon election, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall assume the responsibility of the Working Group.
10. As soon as possible after the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee, the interim Chairman shall consult with the Chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees regarding the procedure for obtaining their input, and shall provide a summary of those consultations to the Working Group.
11. As soon as possible after the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Working Group shall finalize the procedure for consultation with the technical committees and decide, where appropriate, how to consult with other experts, including non-governmental organizations with expertise in implementation.
12. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Working Group shall provide deadlines that are not less than 10 working days for responses of items under discussions.

Tasks

13. The Working Group shall:

- a) By 15 May 2003 (or as soon as the members are chosen), receive, from the Interim Chairman, a list of technical implementation issues already identified by the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, the Animals Committee, the Plants Committee or Parties but not yet resolved;
- b) by 15 June 2003, finalize this list of technical implementation issues;
- c) by 30 June 2003, determine the typical categories (i.e. operational, administrative, management, etc.) of technical implementation issues;
- d) by 15 September 2003, develop a clearing-house mechanism for handling technical implementation issues that are referred to the Standing Committee;
- e) by 31 December 2003, test the clearing-house mechanism for at least one example from one category of implementation issues identified in paragraph b) above;
- f) sixty days before the 50th meeting of the Standing Committee, submit a report to the Secretariat on the work of the Working Group with recommendations for discussion and review by the Standing Committee; and
- g) assist the Chairman of the Standing Committee, if so requested, with the preparation of a report for the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as required in Decision 12.23.

Offers of technical assistance

- 14. The United States of America shall investigate and report on the possibility of setting up a listserver to facilitate the email communications of this Working Group.
- 15. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland shall investigate and report on the costs of setting up a 'Chat Room' to convene one or more virtual meetings of the Working Group. This report shall include the minimum computer requirements for each member of the Working Group to participate in these virtual meetings. The Working Group shall determine whether this is a practical and financially feasible method of working, in addition to regular email communications.