



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2009/045

Geneva, 15 October 2009

CONCERNING:

Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

General information

1. Date and venue

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15) will be held in Doha, Qatar, from 13 to 25 March 2010, at the following address:

*Sheraton Doha Resort & Convention Hotel
Al Corniche Street
Doha
Qatar*

2. Registration

The Secretariat hereby transmits to the Parties the *Registration form* (Annex 1) for CoP15. Each participant should fill in a registration form and send it to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

Participants with access to the Internet are encouraged to use the online registration form that is available on the CITES website (www.cites.org), under Official Documents / Conference of the Parties / Online registration.

Formal registration of participants will start on Thursday 11 March 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

3. Credentials

Parties are reminded that, in accordance with Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, the credentials to enable delegates to represent their country have to be issued by a proper authority, i.e. the Head of State, the Head of Government or the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The original document should be sent to the Secretariat where possible at least one week before the beginning of the meeting together with a translation into English, French and Spanish if it is not in one of these languages.

Parties are also reminded that, pending a decision on their credentials, delegates may participate provisionally in the meeting but not vote. Once the Credentials Committee has reached a decision on their credentials, only delegates whose credentials have been accepted have the right to participate in the meeting. It is therefore requested that the head

of each delegation makes sure that all the members of his/her delegation are included in the credentials or that the credentials expressly authorize him/her to appoint advisers to the delegation.

4. Hotel reservations

Delegates are responsible for making their own hotel accommodation arrangements and should do so as soon as possible as March is a very busy month in Doha. The Qatari Ministry of Environment has made block bookings in several hotels in Doha. The document *CITES 2010 official hotels* (Annex 2) provides information about recommended hotels. Each participant should fill in the reservation form for the hotel of his/her choice and send it directly to that hotel.

5. Visas

Participants are responsible for obtaining their own visas and should do so as soon as possible.

The document *Visa information* (Annex 3) provides information to citizens of all countries on the entry visa requirements. However, participants should check with the Qatari embassy or consulate in their country whether this information is still valid at the time of application.

The document *Qatari embassies and consulates abroad* (Annex 4), provides a list of countries where Qatar has a diplomatic representation.

CITES 2010 official hotels can also assist with the visa application process. Interested participants should ask for assistance when contacting hotels (see Annex 2).

6. Meeting rooms reservations

There will be no function space available at the *Sheraton Doha Resort & Convention Hotel* during CoP15.

Information for delegations interested in renting meeting rooms during CoP15 will be posted on the CITES website as soon as it is available.

7. Office and exhibition space

Information about office and exhibition space for rent will be posted on the CITES website as soon as it is available.

8. Conference documentation

The working documents for the Conference will be placed on the CITES website as they become available.

One full set of documents will be given to each country delegation and each organization represented by observers at the time of registration in Qatar.

No more than two copies of each in-session document will be provided to each delegation and organization during the meeting.

9. Participation of observers

International agencies or bodies, either governmental or non-governmental, and national governmental agencies and bodies technically qualified in protection, conservation or management of wild fauna and flora, which have informed the Secretariat of their desire to be represented at CoP15 by observers, shall be admitted unless at least one-third of the Parties present object. Once admitted, these observers shall have the right to participate but not to vote. Agencies or bodies desiring to be represented at the meeting shall submit the names of these observers to the CITES Secretariat at least six weeks prior to the opening of the meeting, that is by **Saturday 30 January 2010**. The Secretariat can not accept names after that date.

International non-governmental organizations

In order to be registered by the Secretariat, any international non-governmental organization must demonstrate that it is:

- a) qualified in protection, conservation or management of wild fauna and flora; and
- b) an organization in its own right, with a legal persona and an international character, remit and programme of activities.

Organizations that were registered as international organizations at the 13th or 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, (CoP13, Bangkok, 2004) (CoP14, The Hague, 2007) need not apply for international status again.

Any international non-governmental organization that wishes to be represented at CoP15 but was not registered at CoP13 or CoP14 should send its request to the Secretariat, including the information to show that it meets the above criteria, **no later than 4 January 2010**.

National non-governmental organizations

Parties and national non-governmental organizations are reminded that national organizations that wish to participate must be approved in advance by the Management Authority of the State in which they are located, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 2, paragraph 2 b), of the Rules of Procedure. The names of the observers from these organizations, and evidence of the approval of the Management Authority, must be submitted to the Secretariat at least six weeks prior to the opening of the meeting, that is by **30 January 2010**, in accordance with Rule 3, paragraph 5, of the Rules of Procedure.

10. *Information about Qatar* is provided in Annex 5.