

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



Twelfth meeting of the Plants Committee
Leiden (The Netherlands), 13-17 May 2002

Report of the Standing Committee

STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. The attached document was approved by the Standing Committee at its 46th meeting.

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

Forty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 12-15 March 2002

Strategic and administrative matters

Implementation of the Strategic and Action Plans

DRAFT REVISION OF THE STRATEGIC VISION THROUGH 2005 ACTION PLAN

1. This document was prepared by the Standing Committee Working Group on the work plans.
2. Deleted text is striked out and new text is underlined.

Action Plan

The goals and objectives laid down in the Strategic Plan determine the pathway that must be followed. To move along that pathway requires actions and these have been set out in this Action Plan.

Action points		Action by
<p>Objective 1.1</p> <p>To assist in the development of appropriate domestic legislation and policies that encourage the adoption and implementation of social and economic incentives allied to legal instruments that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – promote and regulate sustainable management of wild fauna and flora; – promote and regulate responsible trade in wild fauna and flora; and – promote the effective enforcement of the convention. 		
1.1.1	Develop templates of best practice policy and legislative provisions, including several forms recognizing differences in language/culture/legal system.	Secretariat
1.1.2	Develop a planning guide to policy and legislation provisions, including a scientific basis for decision making which is woven into the legislation (to enhance capacity building).	Secretariat
1.1.3	Exchange experience on provisions that work well or not well.	Parties, Secretariat
1.1.4	Ensure adequate review and adoption of policies and legislation (e.g. land tenure; access to natural resources; harvesting; transporting, handling and housing of live specimens ; and effective seizures, fines and penalties) which may be having a significant impact on the conservation status of species or implementation of the Convention.	Parties, Secretariat, Animals Committee
1.1.5	Enhance compliance with implementation of recommendations and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties.	Parties, Secretariat
1.1.6	Develop further regulations to prevent unnecessary loss during harvesting, catching , storage and transportation of live animals and plants .	Parties, Secretariat, Animals Committee, Plants Committee
<p>Objective 1.2</p> <p>To strengthen the administrative, management and scientific capacity of Parties by improving the coordination between Management and Scientific Authorities and other national agencies responsible for wild animals and plants.</p>		
1.2.1	Convene regional and within-Party workshops to identify functional roles and train all levels of administration and related agencies.	Parties, Secretariat
1.2.2	Develop and maintain a national directory of government officials responsible for CITES issues.	Parties
1.2.3	Improve coordination between Scientific Authorities and other agencies (e.g. universities, museums) to maximize transfer of knowledge and skills.	Scientific Authorities, Secretariat

Action points		Action by
1.2.4	Improve coordination between CITES Authorities involved in the management of wild fauna and flora at the national level.	Scientific and Management Authorities
1.2.4 1.2.5	Collate and make accessible lists of specialists (national and regional).	Scientific and Management Authorities
Objective 1.3		
To strengthen the enforcement capacity of the Parties and to improve coordination among Management Authorities and other agencies (e.g. Police, Customs and veterinary and phytosanitary services).		
1.3.1	Convene regional and within-Party workshops to identify functional roles and train all levels of administration and related agencies responsible for CITES enforcement.	Parties, Secretariat
1.3.2	Produce modular procedural manuals pertaining to enforcement that can be customized for national and regional differences.	Parties, Secretariat
1.3.3	Develop a national directory of government officials responsible for CITES enforcement issues.	Parties
1.3.4	Collate and make accessible lists of taxonomic, forensic and identification experts.	Scientific and Management Authorities
1.3.5	Identify and collaborate with focal points in agencies (e.g. Police, Customs, veterinary and phytosanitary services) responsible for assisting CITES enforcement.	Parties
1.3.6	Provide training for staffs of enforcement agencies, and improve the distribution of existing public awareness tools for enforcement purposes.	Parties
Objective 1.4		
To facilitate development and use of appropriate technologies and information management systems that enhance and expedite the collection, submission and exchange of accurate information.		
1.4.1	On the basis of information from Parties, evaluate needs, capabilities and opportunities related to information technologies and management.	Secretariat, with three permanent Committees (Standing, Animals and Plants Committees)
1.4.2	Encourage use of technology such as the Internet and CD-ROM for data and information exchange and training.	Secretariat, Parties
1.4.3	Develop and implement an information management strategy and training programmes based on 1.4.1 and 1.4.2.	Secretariat, Parties
1.4.4	Develop a simple guide to the Review of Significant Trade.	Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees

Action points		Action by
1.4.5	Develop, collate , and enhance databases that include information related to species in trade, CITES Decisions and procedures, with a focus on CITES Appendices .	Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees
Objective 1.5		
To encourage organizations capable of supporting the Convention to assist the Secretariat and Parties in building national information management capacities through training and other activities, and to facilitate improved access to and management of databases.		
1.5.1	On the basis of information from Parties, evaluate national capacity and training needs.	Secretariat, Parties
1.5.2	Identify organizations with potential for assisting in training and capacity building.	Secretariat, Parties
1.5.3	Develop a list of available databases and information sources consistent with Objective 1.4.	Secretariat
1.5.4	Make relevant databases user-friendly.	Secretariat, Parties
1.5.5	Enhance compliance with implementation of recommendations and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 1.6		
To ensure that all Parties have at least one designated Scientific Authority with experts in wild fauna and flora.		
1.6.1	Advise and assist Parties in exploring options and models for establishing Scientific Authorities.	Secretariat, Standing Committee
1.6.2	Pursue on a regular basis progress toward the designation of Scientific Authorities by all Parties.	Secretariat
Objective 1.7		
To improve the coordination between CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, and increase the effectiveness of the latter.		
1.7.1	Develop a manual specifying the obligations and procedures of the Scientific Authorities in order to encourage the development of specific training courses for them.	Secretariat with Animals and Plants Committees
1.7.2	Develop and update regional directories that list the botanists and zoologists in each region who are experts in CITES-listed species.	Plants Committee, Animals Committee
1.7.3	Communicate to the Parties the importance and advisability of including plants experts within the structure of the Scientific Authorities.	Plants Committee, Standing Committee
1.7.4	Facilitate workshops and training programmes in issuance of non-detriment findings.	Secretariat
1.7.5	Ensure that Management Authorities consult with Scientific Authorities on all permits to be issued that require Scientific Authority findings, and that those findings are independent and cannot be overridden.	Parties

Action points	Action by
<p>Objective 1.8</p> <p>To encourage Parties to develop and implement effective management programmes for the conservation and recovery of species, so that the species will no longer satisfy the criteria for inclusion in the Appendices.</p>	
1.8.1	<p>Share experience gained by different countries in conservation, management and the recovery of species with other countries.</p> <p>Parties, Secretariat</p>
1.8.2	<p>Promote establishment of effective national and, where appropriate, regional programmes for species conservation, management and recovery.</p> <p>Parties, Secretariat</p> <p>Footnote: The Working Group noted that while the responsibility for this Action Point rests with the Parties, recent experience shows the Standing, Animals, and Plants Committees can play a significant role in encouraging such action.</p>
1.8.3	<p>Establish national and regional networked rescue centres for animals and plants.</p> <p>Parties</p>
1.8.4	<p>Develop and incorporate scientific baselines in management plans for traded Appendix-II species, designed to ensure that any trade is sustainable.</p> <p>Parties</p>
1.8.5	<p>Report biennially on progress related to this objective.</p> <p>Parties, Secretariat</p>
<p>Objective 1.9</p> <p>To encourage the proper funding of CITES implementation and enforcement by Parties, and the adoption of national mechanisms that have resource users make a greater contribution to such funding.</p>	
1.9.1	<p>On the basis of information from Parties, evaluate existing mechanisms for obtaining funds from resource users for conservation benefit, and share this information to encourage other Parties to adopt such mechanisms.</p> <p>Parties, Secretariat</p>
1.9.2	<p>Ensure adequate funding for necessary research and investigation on CITES species.</p> <p>Parties</p>
<p>Objective 1.10</p> <p>To use fully the potential of regional coordination and collaboration in capacity-building efforts.</p>	
1.10.1	<p>Identify and make available information on existing regional entities that could be used to assist with information sharing, capacity building and funding.</p> <p>Secretariat, Standing Committee</p>

Action points		Action by
1.10.2	Interact with existing regional networks, organizations and focal points.	Secretariat, Standing Committee, Parties
1.10.3	Ensure that representatives on all committees are enabled by their Governments to carry out their responsibilities.	Secretariat, Parties, Standing Committee
Objective 1.11		
To review and simplify, where possible, existing measures, procedures, mechanisms, and recommendations for the implementation of the Convention.		
1.11.1	On the basis of information from Parties, identify those measures, procedures and mechanisms that would benefit from review and simplification.	Parties, Secretariat
1.11.2	Make recommendations on possible review, modification and consolidation.	Secretariat
1.11.3	Continue consolidation process of Resolutions and recommendations as appropriate.	Secretariat
1.11.4	Produce modular procedural manuals for CITES implementation that can be customized for national and regional differences.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 1.12		
To ensure equity of the three working languages.		
1.12.1	Continue to ensure that all meetings of the permanent Committees are interpreted in all three working languages, and endeavour to ensure that all documents are made available in all three working languages. Footnote: The Working Group noted that in addition to providing documents in all three working languages, every effort should be made to hire interpreters who have familiarity with CITES.	Parties, Secretariat
1.12.2	Review current translation systems and recommend cost-effective alternatives to improve efficiency and cut costs.	Secretariat
1.12.3	Ensure that the three permanent Committees and the Conference of the Parties do not discuss any document not made available in advance in all three languages.	Secretariat, Conference of the Parties
Objective 2.1		
To ensure that the Convention's Appendices correctly reflect the conservation and management needs of species.		
2.1.1	Ensure periodic review and refinement of the listing criteria to ensure their applicability to broad taxonomic groups, scientific validity and utility.	Parties, Conference of the Parties
2.1.2	Regularly review the Appendices to ensure that listed taxa satisfy the relevant criteria.	Animals and Plants Committees

Action points		Action by
2.1.3	Continue the Review of Significant Trade as initiated by the Parties in Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.).	Animals and Plants Committees
2.1.4	Evaluate trade and biological information on currently unlisted species subject to significant international trade to determine whether they would qualify for and benefit from CITES listing.	Animals and Plants Committees, Parties
Objective 2.2		
To ensure that decisions to amend the Convention's Appendices are founded on sound and relevant scientific information and meet agreed biological and trade criteria for such amendments.		
2.2.1	All proposals to amend the Appendices should <u>shall</u> conform to the relevant criteria <u>in force</u> .	Parties
2.2.2	Encourage Parties to consult with the Animals and Plants Committees as appropriate to assist in the preparation of proposals to amend the Appendices.	Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees
2.2.3	For identified commodities, develop standardized units of measure for permits, trade analysis and reporting.	Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees
2.2.4	Encourage the analysis of annual report information in the development of proposals to amend the Appendices.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 2.3		
To improve the scientific basis on which Scientific Authorities make non-detriment findings.		
2.3.1	Develop <u>and disseminate</u> practical guidance for making non-detriment findings, including a manual and checklist, and samples of non-detriment findings and case studies.	Secretariat with Animals and Plants Committees
2.3.2	Facilitate national and regional training for Scientific Authorities in the issuance of scientifically based non-detriment findings; include the use of the aforementioned guidance on non-detriment findings.	Secretariat with Animals and Plants Committees
2.3.3	Ensure that the necessary scientific information is taken into consideration when making non-detriment findings (e.g. life history, ecological adaptability, distribution, abundance, population trends and management programme).	Parties
2.3.4	Ensure that management plans involve periodic research, monitoring, testing, evaluation and opportunities for improvement (including adaptive management).	Parties
2.3.5	Provide opportunities for Scientific Authorities to exchange information and data (e.g. sharing of non-detriment findings; sharing of data, management plans and case studies; postings to a website; and communication through a listserver).	Parties, Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees

Action points	Action by
<p>Objective 2.4</p> <p>To identify and develop innovative technologies and encourage relevant research, including research into CITES implementation and enforcement, and to pursue these objectives, where appropriate, at the regional level.</p>	
2.4.1	<p>In collaboration with enforcement agencies, identify the needs for and potential benefits of innovative technologies.</p> <p>Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees, Parties</p>
2.4.2	<p>In collaboration with Parties, international agencies, and relevant research entities, identify the available technologies (e.g. digital technology, microchips, barcodes, holograms, DNA testing) relevant to assisting the better implementation of the Convention.</p> <p>Footnote: The Working Group recommends that in the next update of the Strategic Plan, language be inserted under Objective 2.4 indicating that the Standing Committee will support the Parties in the development of collaborative research projects for testing the appropriateness of new and forthcoming technologies. Also note that under Action Point 2.4.2 in the Work Plan for the Standing Committee, the Working Group proposed for consideration the following new action point for the Standing Committee: To take into account information from, and the potential contribution of, innovative technologies and relevant research, as appropriate, in considering specific implementation decisions and issues.</p> <p>Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees</p>
2.4.3	<p>Encourage the adoption and use of such technologies in CITES processes and procedures (e.g. licensing, verification, enforcement, communication).</p> <p>Secretariat, Parties</p>
2.4.4	<p>Develop with relevant institutions collaborative research projects for testing the appropriateness of new and forthcoming technologies.</p> <p>Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees Parties</p> <p>Footnote: The Working Group recognized that Parties may go to the Plants and Animals Committees for support but that the Parties are primarily responsible for this action point.</p>

Action points		Action by
2.4.5	Assess progress on a regional basis.	Standing, Animals and Plants Committees
Objective 3.1		
To promote a high degree of cooperation, coordination and collaboration among <u>between</u> national, <u>regional</u> , and international law enforcement agencies.		
3.1.1	Establish, communicate and agree on international priorities for enforcement.	Parties, Secretariat
3.1.2	Encourage each enforcement agency to identify suitable contacts for WCO, Interpol, and other relevant international enforcement entities.	Parties, <u>Secretariat</u>
3.1.3	Share information on illegal trade, seizures and ongoing investigations with other relevant Parties.	Parties, <u>Secretariat</u>
3.1.4	Liaise with Interpol and WCO working groups on environmental crime.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 3.2		
To stimulate and participate in bilateral, regional and global efforts to combat illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.		
3.2.1	Develop and expand effective regional cooperative efforts, particularly among countries with common borders.	Parties, Secretariat
3.2.2	Initiate and expand regional enforcement contact networks.	Parties
3.2.3	Convene regional enforcement training workshops.	Parties, Secretariat
3.2.4	Facilitate exchange of intelligence information.	Parties, Secretariat
3.2.5	Formally recognize and award exemplary enforcement actions.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 3.3		
To encourage mutual technical assistance, including the exchange of information, in enforcement matters.		
3.3.1	Encourage enforcement agencies to share technology (e.g. forensic).	Parties
3.3.2	Collaborate in the production of pertinent identification materials.	Parties, Secretariat
3.3.3	Promote development <u>and use</u> of new technologies for the identification of specimens in trade.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 3.4		
To develop appropriate management strategies and incentives for promoting a change from illegal to legal use of wild fauna and flora.		
3.4.1	Develop and implement appropriate economic, education, and awareness programmes that lead to greater local involvement in wildlife management, and stimulate participation in combating illegal trade within and from producer countries.	Parties

Action points		Action by
3.4.2	Develop and implement targeted awareness programmes that promote voluntary compliance with wildlife trade regulations by user groups in consumer countries.	Parties
3.4.3	On the basis of information from Parties, develop templates of best practice in regard to the strategies and incentives concerned, and encourage Parties to adopt them.	Secretariat
Objective 3.5		
To promote awareness of CITES issues and a greater understanding by the judiciary of the social and economic significance of conservation threats posed by illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.		
3.5.1	Contribute papers and articles to law journals and other publications.	Parties, Secretariat
3.5.2	Attend and contribute to legal conferences.	Parties, Secretariat
3.5.3	Provide training to raise awareness of judges and prosecutors.	Parties, Secretariat
3.5.4	Encourage the judiciary to apply more appropriate penalties when dealing with wildlife crime.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 4.1		
To strengthen communication and collaboration with national and international NGOs.		
4.1.1	Recognize the significant contributions of NGOs to CITES process and encourage greater NGO participation in CITES outreach.	Parties, Secretariat
4.1.2	Encourage Parties to enhance communication and collaboration with local and national NGOs.	Secretariat
4.1.3	Improve availability of CITES information to a broad spectrum of NGOs.	Parties, Secretariat
4.1.4	Collaborate with NGOs in public education and outreach campaigns.	Parties, Secretariat
4.1.5	Meet regularly with local and national NGOs.	Parties
4.1.6	Meet regularly with international NGOs. Footnote: The Working Group noted that it would be cost effective in conducting other business, e.g. regional workshops, for the Secretariat and Parties to meet with international NGOs as opportunities arise.	Secretariat, Parties
Objective 4.2		
To strengthen alliances with relevant local communities, consumer groups and traders.		
4.2.1	Identify audiences to be targeted and their needs.	Parties, Secretariat
4.2.2	Develop campaigns and materials for the distribution of information to targeted groups, with a specific focus on Appendix II.	Parties, Secretariat
4.2.3	Promote awareness of the impacts of consumption patterns and demands on species conservation.	Parties, Secretariat

Action points		Action by
4.2.4	Meet regularly with targeted groups and encourage their active participation.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 4.3		
To promote greater awareness among and cooperation with the scientific community.		
4.3.1	Identify audiences to be targeted within the scientific community (e.g. specialist groups, universities, scientific societies, museums, academic institutions).	Parties, Secretariat
4.3.2	Participate actively at scientific meetings and conferences, and encourage participation in CITES issues by the scientific community.	Secretariat, Scientific Authorities, Animals and Plants Committees
4.3.3	Encourage the scientific community to focus their efforts on national CITES priorities.	Parties
Objective 4.4		
To produce and disseminate informative materials to a broad public at a local, national and regional levels.		
4.4.1	Develop information that is culturally and locally relevant, as well as technically accurate.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 4.5		
To improve communication and collaboration with the media.		
4.5.1	Inform media about CITES-related activities and its national , regional and global achievements.	Parties, Secretariat
4.5.2	Identify national media outlets and contacts for dissemination of CITES information.	Parties, Secretariat
4.5.3	Develop factual media packets on relevant CITES issues (e.g. fact sheets, CD-ROMs, videos).	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 4.6		
To strengthen knowledge, promote awareness and facilitate enforcement of flora issues in CITES.		
4.6.1	Ensure that adequate attention is given to plant conservation in all activities related to the implementation of this Plan.	Parties, Secretariat, Standing and Plants Committees
Objective 5.1		
To ensure an optimal working relationship with UNEP, as well as close coordination and synergy with CBD and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements.		
5.1.1	Enhance national liaison between CITES and national MEA focal points.	Parties
5.1.2	Enhance regional and international liaison between CITES and MEA focal points.	Parties, Secretariat
5.1.3	Develop and implement joint projects with other MEAs (e.g. capacity building, trade controls, enforcement, scientific and technical coordination, project development and implementation).	Parties, Secretariat

Action points		Action by
Objective 5.2		
To ensure close cooperation and coordination with related conventions, agreements and associations.		
5.2.1	Develop mechanisms to ensure transfer and exchange of information between CITES and relevant conventions, agreements and associations for species of concern.	Parties, Secretariat
5.2.2	Consider the criteria and Decisions of other Conventions, agreements and associations when considering the proposals to amend the Appendices, draft resolutions and decisions.	Parties, Secretariat
5.2.3	Encourage other Conventions, agreements and associations, when making their decisions, to consider the criteria designed and Decisions made by CITES Parties.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 5.3		
To ensure greater coordination of scientific and technical programmes and, where appropriate, more efficient distribution of responsibilities with relevant technical partners such as IUCN, UNEP-WCMC, TRAFFIC and others.		
5.3.1	Identify responsibilities of relevant technical partners and ensure adequate coordination and mutual awareness of work programmes to avoid duplication.	Parties, Secretariat
5.3.2	Develop mechanisms to disseminate information to Parties on actions of relevant technical partners and furtherance of the Convention.	Secretariat
5.3.3	Inform Secretariat of Parties' projects with technical partners.	Parties
Objective 5.4		
To ensure continuing recognition and acceptance of CITES measures by WTO and to ensure the 'mutual supportiveness' of the decision-making processes between these bodies.		
5.4.1	Enhance national liaison between CITES and WTO focal points.	Parties
5.4.2	Enhance regional and international liaison between CITES and WTO.	Secretariat
Objective 6.1		
To secure at least 20 more Parties to the Convention by 2005 with a special focus on range countries of species subject to significant trade and important consumer countries of wild plants and animals, as well as countries located in regions with relatively low representation.		
6.1.1	Identify priority non-Party countries and pursue their accession.	Secretariat, Standing Committee
6.1.2	Engage in bilateral discussions with non-Parties to encourage their accession and adoption of appropriate implementing legislation.	Parties, Secretariat, Standing Committee

Action points		Action by
Objective 6.2		
To encourage acceptance of the 1983 Amendment to Article XXI of the Convention and the subsequent accession by eligible regional economic integration organizations.		
6.2.1	Identify which additional countries are needed to accept the 1983 Amendment to Article XXI, so that it can enter into force.	Secretariat
6.2.2	Meet with appropriate officials of those countries.	Secretariat, relevant Parties
Objective 7.1		
To resolve the problem of late and inadequate contributions to the CITES Trust Fund.		
7.1.1	Analyse the budgeting process of the Secretariat in context of budgeting and financial management of different countries and pursue appropriate remedies (e.g. computation of financial year, dealing with currency conversion).	Standing Committee, Secretariat
7.1.2	Encourage Parties to pay their contributions in a timely manner.	Secretariat
7.1.3	Recommend incentives and remedies to ensure payment of contributions.	Standing Committee, Secretariat
Objective 7.2		
To ensure that the decisions of the Conference of the Parties take full account of financial implications for the CITES Trust Fund.		
7.2.1	Ensure that the work programmes of meetings of the Conference of the Parties are designed to consider the financial implications of all decisions prior to adopting a final budget.	Parties, Secretariat, Conference of the Parties
7.2.2	Comply with relevant Resolutions requesting information on budgetary implications when presenting proposals and draft resolutions to the Conference of the Parties.	Parties, Secretariat
7.2.3	Evaluate the budgetary implications for the Trust Fund and potential for donor funding for proposals with substantive impact, prior to adoption of such proposals.	Conference of the Parties
7.2.4	In the budgeting process, identify priorities for projects and actions under the Trust Fund and for donor funding.	Conference of the Parties
Objective 7.3		
To secure additional funding for actions under the Convention.		
7.3.1	Establish a fund-raising strategy.	Parties, Secretariat
7.3.2	Create a position within the Secretariat that focuses on acquisition of funding. Action Point – completed.	Parties, Secretariat
7.3.3	Encourage development of new funding mechanisms.	Parties, Secretariat
7.3.4	Encourage additional voluntary contributions.	Parties, Secretariat
7.3.5	Enhance fund-raising efforts with foundations and corporations.	Parties, Secretariat

Action points		Action by
7.3.6	Establish funding mechanisms that access funding from resource users in importing and exporting countries.	Parties, Secretariat, Standing Committee
7.3.7	Develop a marketing strategy for the Convention.	Secretariat
Objective 7.4		
To encourage additional voluntary contributions and to seek new ways of securing financial assistance from the donor community.		
7.4.1	Initiate dialogue through UNEP to explore mechanisms for accessing Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding for CITES priorities.	Parties, Secretariat
7.4.2	Establish a fund-raising strategy linking with the strategy in 7.3.	Parties, Secretariat
Objective 7.5		
To increase the level of realistic planning and forecasting, and to improve financial and implementation reporting.		
7.5.1	Analyse the current budgeting and planning process to improve forecasting.	Parties, Secretariat
7.5.2	<p>Explore opportunities for refining the budgeting process and presentation to maximize efficiency and transparency, leading to improved reporting, decision-making and accountability.</p> <p><u>Footnote: To allow for open competition and a more transparent process, the Working Group recommends that the Secretariat notify the Parties, whenever possible, when soliciting contractors for projects. In addition, the Working Group recommends that the Secretariat consult with the Chair of the Animals and Plants Committees to review the qualifications of contractors before a final selection is made. The Working Group recognizes that it may not always be possible to notify the Parties or to consult with the Chair of the Animals and Plants Committees, especially when there are short deadlines, but would encourage the use of these practices as standard operating procedures.</u></p>	Parties, Secretariat, Standing Committee
7.5.3	Ensure that all meetings of the Standing Committee include meetings of the Finance Subcommittee.	Standing Committee