

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

Forty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee
Paris (France), 19-22 June 2001

Reports

Reports of Regional Representatives

EUROPE
(Partial report)

This report was submitted by France and Italy, and additional information may be provided during the meeting.

1. European seminar organized by Italy on the implementation of EU Regulations on trade in wild fauna and flora

In June 2000 (14-16) Italy organized a Seminar focused on the implementation of Reg. 338/97. Following the active role played by Italy during the preliminary works which brought to the approval of the present Regulation, the meeting in Sabaudia intended to verify the implementation of Reg. 338/97, examining its interpretation and considering proposals of amendments and revision.

Thanks to the collaborative attitude of all the participants (14 Member States out of 15), the Seminar accomplished its goal: several suggestions which originated during the three days of the meeting are now part of the revision proposal of Reg. 338/97 which is being examined by the Commission.

2. Meeting in Izmir, Turkey (October 2000)

The meeting of the regional representatives of the CITES European region in Izmir, Turkey on 19 and 20 October 2000 was the most significant event since the preceding Standing Committee in Lisbon.

On 19 and 20 October 2000, in Izmir, the Turkish authorities organized the first meeting of the new regional representatives of the CITES European region on the Standing Committee.

The following attended the meeting:

- 32 Turkish dignitaries;
- The representative of Switzerland, the Depositary Government of the CITES Convention, Dr Peter Dollinger;
- The representative of Norway, Peter Johan Schei, international negotiator;

- Three representatives of Italy: Patrizia de Angelis, assisted by a member of the CITES Bureau and a representative of the Italian Scientific Authority;
- Two representatives of France: Sylvie Guillaume and Stéphanie Jacquet, from the Office on International Trade in Endangered Species, DNP [Nature and Countryside Division], MATE [Ministry of the Environment].

The main purpose of the meeting was to assign to each Standing Committee member a list of Parties for which they would be responsible during their period of office.

Division of the European region

While the division of Europe into two parts (East and West) had not caused any difficulty, dividing up the region among the three Standing Committee representatives proved to be more problematic.

Turkey, strongly supported by Switzerland and Norway, called for a functional rather than geographical division. That would mean that each representative would be responsible for a specific function with respect to all 40 Parties. Turkey also stressed that geographical division was impossible and that allocating a sphere of responsibility to each representative, for the whole of Europe, would make consultation and coordination more efficient.

The proposal of Turkey was adopted. Responsibilities were allocated by consensus, based on the representatives' own voluntary proposals, with the alternate members also being involved.

Uniform application of CITES (issue raised by Turkey)

Turkey wished to create a homogeneous structure for the application of the Convention in Europe, even if that meant modifying certain existing legislation.

The three countries representing the European region considered that that would go beyond their mandate, but that there was nevertheless a need to foster cooperation and exchange of information in this area.

Criteria for listing marine species under CITES (issue raised by Norway)

This issue was not within the remit of the Standing Committee, but within that of the Plants and Animals Committees. The most that the Standing Committee could do was to request the two Committees to include the subject in the agenda of their future meetings.

Implementation of Decision 11.78: Financing of the conservation of species of wild fauna and flora (issue raised by France)

Having been responsible for its content, France proposed that it should take responsibility for the implementation of the Decision in the European region (see 2).

DNA analyses for determining the parentage of bred animals (issue raised by Italy)

Being aware that a number of animals taken illegally from the wild are subsequently declared as having been born and bred in captivity, so that they can then be sold, Italy has developed a wide-ranging investigative programme into DNA in blood samples. Since the implementation of these analyses, commercial transactions in the species listed in Annex A of the European Wildlife Regulation covering the implementation of CITES has dropped by

30 per cent in Italy, since the fraudulent traders prefer not to take the risk of being found out.

Norway considered the initiative to be an excellent idea, which could help other Parties and could also be extended to the species listed in CITES Appendix II that were subject to export quotas.

Italy was designated as responsible for communicating information about the matter to the European region.

3. Implementation of Decision 11.78: Financing of the conservation of species of wild fauna and flora

Decision 11.78, which arose out of a proposal made by France at the preceding meeting of the Conference of the Parties and had been adopted unanimously, stipulates that the Standing Committee shall create a working group to inventory, analyse and evaluate existing funding mechanisms for the conservation of wild fauna and flora throughout the world, so as to be able to suggest the best system to Parties that were seeking funds for species for which they were range States.

In order for the Decision to have a chance of coming to fruition at the following meeting of the Conference of the Parties, France proposed in Izmir (see 2) that the membership of this working group in Europe should be defined as quickly as possible, and was entrusted with that task by the other participants.

In consequence, France contacted the Chairman of the Standing Committee on several occasions, to show him its proposed draft information and instructions documents for use by the future members of the group. Finally Mr Stansell decided that the working group would be set up during the Standing Committee meeting in June 2001, by calling on people who were interested in the subject from among those attending - both members of the Standing Committee and observers - and that the group would hold evening meetings during that session.

At the same time, and with the agreement of the Chairman of the Standing Committee, France drew up, for the Parties, an introductory note presenting Decision 11.78 and an Information sheet intended to obtain information on the existing financing mechanisms, both of which were distributed by the Secretariat on 16 March 2001 under Notification No. 2001/016.

4. Participation in the working group on the sturgeon: Moscow workshop (February 2001)

The first IUCN wider meeting of scientific specialists on the sturgeon was held on 10 and 11 February 2001 in Moscow (Russian Federation), following a closed session on 9 February which had been reserved exclusively for the members of IUCN's Sturgeon Specialist Group.

In addition to the organizers from IUCN, the meeting was attended by scientists from the range States of the sturgeon: Azerbaijan, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and the United States of America, as well as by representatives of the CITES Management Authorities of Germany and France, a representative of UNEP,

representatives of non-governmental organizations (TRAFFIC, IWMC, *Gesellschaft zum Schutz der Meeressäuger* e.V.¹) and commercial companies.

The purpose of that first meeting was to carry out a review of the present state of the sturgeon populations, the threats facing those populations and the initiatives currently under way within the context of priority actions for conservation of the sturgeon.

Despite some degree of disparity among the methods of counting, it was unanimously agreed that sturgeon populations were in grave decline on the Eurasian continent, particularly in the Caspian Sea, the Aral Sea and the Black Sea, as well as in the Danube basin and the Amur and Yangtze rivers. The decline was primarily due to poaching and the black market for caviar, but also to the construction of dams which prevented migration to the spawning grounds, pollution and a lack of regional cooperation in conservation plans and law enforcement. Repopulation with young fish from aquaculture currently seemed to be of little effect.

The experts made the following recommendations:

- reinforcement of the control of poaching and of the black market through better regional cooperation and also by improving the living conditions of the human populations of the range States;
- improvement in the effectiveness of aquaculture, of repopulation and of the counts of the populations, by adoption of harmonized methods and by drawing up a code of conduct species by species;
- establishment of genuine regional and international cooperation, by adopting regional agreements on the conservation and management of the sturgeon, by exchanging and distributing information, and by obtaining funds from concerned international and non-governmental bodies.

It was agreed that a subsequent meeting should be organized during the year 2001.

¹ *Society for the Conservation of Marine Mammals*