

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

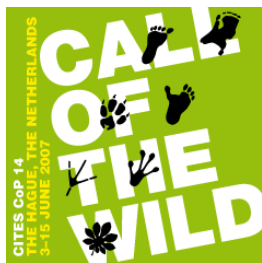


Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
The Hague (Netherlands), 3-15 June 2007

Ministerial Round Table

CHAIR'S REPORT

1. The attached document has been submitted by the Netherlands.
2. The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.



Chair's Report of the

The Ministerial

Round Table

of the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties

to the

Convention on International Trade

in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Ministers responsible for the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), present at the Ministerial Round Table (see Annex 1), gathered for the first time in its history, in The Hague, The Netherlands, on 13 June, on the occasion of the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

The Ministers discussed the way in which they could strengthen political commitment and action at all levels in order to further the implementation and enforcement of CITES.

The Ministers discussed four key themes:

- The contribution of CITES to the broader biodiversity and sustainable development agenda;
- How to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of CITES;
- CITES role regarding timber species;
- CITES role regarding marine species.

The Chair's Report reflects the expressed views of the Ministers present at the Ministerial Round Table in this regard.

I. CITES contribution to Biodiversity and Sustainable Development Agenda

1. We acknowledged the critical importance of biodiversity – the variability among living organisms from all sources and ecological complexes of which they are part, including diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems – that has made earth a uniquely habitable place for humans and that is essential to our planet and our well-being.
2. We welcomed that CITES, since its inception, is one of the most successful multilateral environmental agreements in achieving its objectives by supporting that international trade in wildlife is non-detrimental to the survival of species and by combating illegal trade in wild fauna and flora to that end.
3. We acknowledged the role of CITES in conserving biodiversity and the contribution to its sustainable use by ensuring that no species of wild fauna or flora becomes or remains subject to

unsustainable exploitation through international trade, thereby contributing to the significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss.

4. We welcomed the contribution of CITES, within a range of conventions, to the achievement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 as well as to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular those with respect to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability, and acknowledged the need to strengthening political guidance and action at all levels to further enhance the contribution of CITES to this target and these goals, and we should act in this regard.
5. We recognized that international trade in wild animal and plant species represents a considerable economic value worldwide and that, when this international trade is conducted unsustainably and illegally, it can have far-reaching consequences for nature and the survival of animals and plants. Therefore, we need, inter alia, more insight in the economic consequences of the loss of biodiversity.
6. We emphasized within the framework of CITES the need to strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation, especially to establish and maintain cooperation with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, instruments, processes and United Nations bodies, relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and stakeholders.
7. We believed that we have to strive for a balance between the use of our natural resources, including sustainable international trade, on the one hand, and the protection and conservation of wild animals and plants, on the other, which also relies on awareness raising and adaptation of civil society.

II. Strengthening Implementation and Enforcement of CITES

8. We underlined the importance to strengthen the national implementation and enforcement capacity of Parties to improve and contribute to preventing unsustainable international trade in certain species of wild and fauna in accordance with CITES.
9. We acknowledged that international cooperation, including financial support, technology transfer, capacity-building and education plays a crucial catalytic role in supporting the efforts of all countries, particularly developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to further the implementation and enforcement of CITES.
10. We recognized, however, with great concern that despite the strengths of CITES, including its provisions for import and export monitoring requirements, non-detriment findings to the survival of species, science-based listings of species and concerted efforts at all levels to secure the implementation and enforcement of CITES, crime against wildlife, including illegal internet trade, is at an unacceptable high level.
11. We, therefore, resolved to strengthening the implementation capacity of CITES through a coherent approach of incentives and disincentives aimed at reducing international illegal wildlife trade and ensuring compliance with the provisions of CITES, taking into account the root causes of illegal trade in wildlife, through, as appropriate:

- a. strengthening national legislation, including sufficient penalties to act as a deterrent against illegal wildlife trade;
 - b. promotion and strengthening of public understanding of the importance of and the benefits provided by sustainable international trade in wild fauna and flora and the negative impacts of illegal wildlife trade;
 - c. provision of appropriate financial resources and means for the operation and implementation of CITES, including capacity-building programmes, taking into account the potential impact of international trade in wildlife on livelihoods;
 - d. administrative procedures that are transparent, practical, coherent and user-friendly, and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens;
 - e. facilitating and achieving compliance with obligations under CITES;
 - f. strengthening of scientific and technical cooperation;
 - g. enhancing cooperation and cross-sectoral policy and programme cooperation amongst sectors affecting and affected by international trade in wildlife, with a view to integrating the regulation of sustainable international trade in wildlife into national decision-making processes;
 - h. monitoring mechanisms, including criteria and indicators, assessing progress towards achieving the objectives of CITES;
 - i. promotion of regional programmes;
 - j. strengthening of the cooperation among Range States to ensure the effective management of natural resources.
12. We resolved to developing and implementing policies and measures at all levels that strengthen the enforcement capacity of CITES through, amongst others:
- a. identification of wildlife trade as a priority area of enforcement;
 - b. the use of risk and intelligence assessments;
 - c. facilitation of access and exchange of information for relevant enforcement officers;
 - d. strengthening of training of enforcement officers;
 - e. adoption of national and regional action plans for coordination of enforcement taking into account of non-detriment finding to the survival of species;
 - f. enhanced collaboration of CITES Management Authorities with relevant bodies in the field of enforcement, including ICPO Interpol, the World Customs Organization and the CITES Secretariat;
 - g. facilitating adequate communication facilities, improved data-exchange between enforcement agencies;
 - h. strengthening national capacities to prevent poaching.
13. We encouraged the Conference of the Parties of CITES to take into consideration during its future meetings, where relevant and within its mandate, cross-cutting issues related to, inter alia, biodiversity, climate change, sustainable forest management and desertification.

III. CITES role regarding timber species

14. We recognized that sustainable forest management, as a dynamic and evolving concept, aims to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations.
15. We expressed concern about continued deforestation, forest degradation and loss of forest species, including through unsustainable and illegal trade of timber species, as well as the slow rate of afforestation and forest recovery and reforestation, and the resulting adverse impact on economies, the environment, including biological diversity and global warming, and the livelihoods of at least a billion people and their cultural heritage, and emphasized the need for more effective implementation of sustainable forest management at all levels to address these challenges.
16. We , therefore, promoted the enhancement of cooperation and coordination, if appropriate, between CITES and other timber species-related Conventions, organizations and processes in areas of mutual interest, in particular with the United Nations Forum on Forests, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, taking into account existing forms of collaboration, with a view to addressing illicit international trafficking in forest products through, amongst others:
 - a. promotion of forest law, enforcement, and good governance at all levels;
 - b. promotion of synergies in the field of policy development, project and programme implementation, technical cooperation, and capacity building;
 - c. exchange of information and data amongst relevant Conventions, organizations and processes;
 - d. encouraging scientific review and improved inter-agency dialogue;
 - e. admission of the CITES Secretariat to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;
17. We resolved to developing and implementing policies and measures at all levels in order to promote that international trade in timber species will not be detrimental to the survival of these species, through, amongst others:
 - a. improvement of controls of international trade;
 - b. analysis of trade structures and data sheets on origins and nomenclature, including population analysis of timber species;
 - c. sampling of international trade in co-operation with scientific laboratories;
 - d. strengthening technical cooperation;
 - e. strengthening global collaboration, including south-south collaboration.

IV CITES role regarding marine species

18. We recognized that oceans, seas, islands and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth's ecosystem, and are critical for global food security, for sustaining economic prosperity and for the well-being of many national economies, particularly in developing countries.
19. We expressed concern about the state of the world's fish stocks, 75% of which is either depleted, overexploited or exploited to its full potential, including through unsustainable international

trade in marine species, while also being aware of the projected increase in future demands on these marine stocks and the related risk of marine species becoming further endangered or even extinct.

20. We, therefore, promoted enhanced cooperation and coordination, where appropriate, between CITES, within its own mandate, and other marine species-related Conventions, organizations and processes in areas of mutual interest, in particular with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, regional fisheries management organizations, International Whaling Committee and other relevant organizations in order to contribute to the sustainable management of marine species listed by CITES, and with a view to addressing illicit international trafficking in marine species through, amongst others:
 - a. promotion of law enforcement and good governance at all levels;
 - b. promotion of synergies in the field of policy development, project and programme implementation, technical cooperation, and capacity building;
 - c. exchange of information and data among relevant Conventions, organizations and processes.

21. We resolved to developing and implementing policies and measures at all levels in order to ensure that international trade in marine species will not be detrimental to the survival of these species, through, amongst others:
 - a. enhancement of enforcement capacities;

 - b. knowledge development of stock and population dynamic;

 - c. promotion of breeding programmes of overexploited marine species at an early stage;
 - d. assisting developing countries in combatting illegal, unregulated and unregulated fishing, including poaching, through, amongst others, capacity building;
 - e. creation of marine protected areas, where appropriate.

22. We expressed the view that CITES recognises the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and Regional Fishery Management Organizations for examining listing of commercially traded fish species and the competence of the International Whaling Committee for the assessment and the review of the stock levels of cetaceans.