

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade control and marking issues

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT WORKSHOP ON NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS

1. This document has been submitted by Mexico with the support of Canada.

Background

2. According to Articles II, III, and IV of the Convention, Parties shall only allow trade in specimens of species included in Appendices I and II in accordance with its provisions. It is required that an export permit shall only be granted when a Scientific Authority of the State of export has advised that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species being traded (i.e. non-detriment finding or NDF), which shall be considered an essential requirement for CITES implementation.
3. Furthermore, in Resolution Conf. 10.3 (Designation and role of the Scientific Authorities), the Conference of the Parties recommends that:
 - c) *Management Authorities not issue any export or import permit, or certificate of introduction from the sea, for species listed in the Appendices without first obtaining the appropriate Scientific Authority findings or advice [NDF];*and
 - h) *the findings and advice of the Scientific Authority of the country of export be based on the scientific review of available information on the population status, distribution, population trend, harvest and other biological and ecological factors, as appropriate, and trade information relating to the species concerned;*
4. On the basis stated above, Scientific Authorities of exporting countries, and sometimes also of importing countries, are continually challenged to define whether a particular export will be detrimental to the survival of a species and therefore it is important to have documented guidelines and methodologies to make more complete and scientifically sound findings to improve the implementation of the Convention.
5. Based on this need, the IUCN-The World Conservation Union, through its Species Survival Commission (SSC), assisted by the CITES Secretariat, Parties and other organizations, convened two workshops in order to develop some practical assistance for Scientific Authorities, which resulted in very useful and comprehensive materials. The results, incorporated into a publication (Rosser, A. R. and Haywood, M. J. Comp. 2002. *Guidance For CITES Scientific Authorities: Checklist to assist in making non-detriment findings for Appendix II exports*), are a useful tool that includes a detailed checklist that can be used by Scientific Authorities when making NDFs.

6. Following this effort, that aims to give orientation to Parties on the technical and biological aspects of how to make NDFs, and as recommended in the guidelines themselves, some regional and species-specific workshops and exercises have been developed. For example, a regional workshop of Scientific Authorities was held in Nicaragua in 2002; results and lessons learned from this workshop could be useful in future discussions. Other recent efforts related to similar exercises for specific taxa could be used as a reference as well (e.g. medicinal plants, *Swietenia macrophylla*, *Cheilinus undulatus* and *Aquilaria*). These exercises have been successful in compiling relevant information and methodologies needed to formulate NDFs for some plant and animal species, thus providing single-species guidance. Now, Parties need to build on these efforts in the light of these experiences.
7. The idea of organizing an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings originated from the need to continue developing Parties' capacities for the proper implementation of the Convention, particularly in relation to the methodologies, tools, information, expertise and other resources needed by Scientific Authorities including expertise developed through case studies that build on the guidelines developed by IUCN. The first proposal of having such a workshop was first raised and discussed during the XIth Annual Meeting of Canada/Mexico/United States of America Trilateral Committee for Wildlife & Ecosystem Conservation and Management (2006), a forum where Management and Scientific Authorities of the three countries periodically discuss CITES implementation issues for the region. This idea was also expressed during the joint meeting of the Plants and Animals Committees (PC16/AC22) held in Lima (July 2006), and later also at the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee (October 2006) in Geneva.

Workshop goal

8. To enhance CITES Scientific Authorities' capacities, particularly those related to the methodologies, tools, information, expertise, and other resources needed to make NDFs, by building on existing work (IUCN checklist) and sharing information so that the central provision required for the export of Appendix-I and -II species can be properly implemented and the sustainable use of and trade in these species achieved.

Objectives

9. The following specific objectives are expected to be achieved during the workshop:
 - a) Compile case studies: Share and compile information, knowledge, and experiences about the methodologies and procedures which Scientific Authorities apply to formulate non-detriment findings for specific taxa. Based on this, explore the feasibility of developing specific categories and criteria (checklists) tailored to particular species groups.
 - b) Enhance the **guiding principles** for making NDFs: Taking into account the Parties' experiences, using the IUCN Checklist and other experiences, analyse and summarize the different approaches and paths followed by Scientific Authorities along the NDF decision-making process (considering aspects such as those related to different production systems/source codes) in order to provide Parties with complementary guidance and/or all the relevant elements that Scientific Authorities should take into account in order to formulate NDFs.

Scope

10. The workshop intends to examine all the different aspects (mainly biological and technical) of the processes followed by Scientific Authorities to make NDFs. It is proposed to cover the main Appendix-II (and possibly some Appendix-I) group species from around the world that are currently found in international trade (especially those that are more commonly traded and traded in significant volumes, trying also to include those species for which there is limited information). This scope will allow us to analyse and reflect the different conditions under which Scientific Authorities make NDFs in the results of the workshop.
11. It seeks to provide Scientific Authorities with complementary information, tools and other resources that can help them make NDFs, including general principles, guidelines and a compilation of case studies (lessons learned) for selected taxa of flora and fauna.

12. Finally, it is expected to strengthen the links between Scientific Authorities and specialists from all over the world, in order to work towards a consolidated network that can continue to grow and allow for a regular communication and exchange of information in relation to NDF making.

Participant profiles

13. It is expected that participants in the workshop will comprise representatives from CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of the different regions, including both exporting and importing countries as needed, as well as scientists (experts) related to the study (monitoring), management, conservation and utilization of selected taxa.

Logistics

14. A five-day workshop of up to 100 scientific experts representing a range of disciplines and working on relevant research and operational projects, as well as representatives from CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of countries from the different regions of the world will be convened at the end of 2007 or beginning of 2008. Mexico and Canada CITES Authorities, in coordination with CITES Authorities from other Parties and national and international organizations, will coordinate the preparatory works and host the workshop in Mexico.

Proposal

15. Considering all of the above and taking into account Resolution Conf. 10.3, in which the Conference of the Parties "encourages the Parties, the Secretariat and interested non-governmental organizations to develop and support workshops/seminars designed specifically to improve the implementation of CITES by Scientific Authorities", Mexico and Canada ask Parties to endorse and support the development of an international expert workshop on CITES non-detriment findings and thus propose the draft decisions included in the Annex to this document for the consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat welcomes this initiative from Mexico and supports the adoption of the draft decisions contained in the Annex to this document.
- B. For a five-day workshop in Mexico City with simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Spanish and 100 sponsored participants, the Secretariat estimates a cost of USD 300,000.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Non-detriment findings

Directed to the Parties

14.XX Parties:

- a) are encouraged to provide financial support for an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDFs), the main goal of which is to enhance CITES Scientific Authorities' capacities, particularly those related to the methodologies, tools, information, expertise and other resources needed to formulate NDFs; and
- b) are also encouraged to provide any help and information regarding methodologies, tools, information, expertise and any other resources used to formulate NDFs on specific taxa in order to contribute to the development of such a workshop, the results of which should be submitted to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its 15th meeting.

Directed to the Secretariat

14.XX The Secretariat shall:

- a) as a matter of high priority, assist in obtaining funds from interested Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other funding sources to support an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings under the terms set out in Decision 14.XX;
- b) assist the Steering Committee, chaired by Mexico, in preparing for the workshop;
- c) ensure that the proceedings resulting from the expert workshop on non-detriment findings are made available to the general public via the CITES website; and
- d) report on these activities at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Plants and Animals Committees

14.XX The Animals and Plants Committees shall:

- a) review the proceedings resulting from the expert workshop on non-detriment findings under the terms set out in Decision 14.XX; and
- b) prepare, for consideration at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a discussion paper and, if considered appropriate, a draft resolution on the making of non-detriment findings.