

Trading Wildlife



Evaluation of CITES
COP

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Enforcement at
Brussels airport

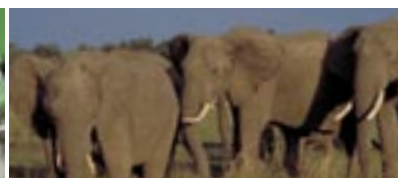
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Welcome to the new pan-European newsletter edition dedicated to wildlife trade. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) held its 14th Conference of the Parties in June 2007, in The Hague to decide how to improve the wildlife trade regime and to contribute to the 2010 biodiversity target. Susan Mainka, Head of the IUCN delegation, explains the results and implications for the future.

In this issue, we are also grateful to Dr Aldo Cosentino, Director General to the Italian Ministry of Environment, for sharing with us Italy's concern for better timber controls. Timber trees, like fishery species, have only recently started to be covered by CITES. Trade in tropical forests contributes to increasing pressure from logging and land conversion.

Though one of the most important tools for the control of wildlife trade, the implementation of CITES isn't always easy. One of our members, the Central and Eastern European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity (CEEWEB) - a coalition of conservation NGOs - conducted an Assessment of CITES implementation in Central and Eastern European Countries aiming to identify the deficiencies and urgent needs of CITES implementation in the region.

Two weeks before the CITES meeting, IUCN presented a landmark study regarding the state of biodiversity in Europe. Commissioned by the European Commission and carried out by IUCN, the launch of the first European Mammal Assessment allows us to build up a unified understanding of species status in Europe. To reverse the decline of Europe's biodiversity, the study recommends better implementation of the EU's nature conservation policies.

The EU will have to showcase its contribution to nature conservation at the World Conservation Congress. This event offers a unique occasion for the conservation community to provide a vision and action plan for a paradigm shift towards and beyond 2010. The next Congress will be held in Barcelona from 5-14 October 2008. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) invites governments, organizations, sailors and boat owners passionate about the marine environment to take part in a parade of sailing boats and research vessels in front of the Congress venue. The parade will also mark the prelude to the IUCN World Conservation Congress and contributes to the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the World Conservation Union.

Tamás



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Evaluation of CITES COP results and implication for the future

By Susan Mainka, Senior Coordinator, Global Programme, of the World Conservation Union (IUCN)

CITES COP14: Progress in linking with livelihoods

In June of this year, after two weeks of discussion and negotiation, the 14th meeting of the Conference of the parties to CITES closed with several key decisions to manage international trade in endangered species. In particular, two major decisions on conservation of Asian big cats and tigers and the African consensus on the trade in ivory and other elephant products were notable outcomes of the meeting. In addition, Parties agreed to regulate trade in several commercially important species, including sawfish, European eel, and Pau Brazil, the wood that is the primary source of bows for musical instruments.

The conference once again highlighted the unique role of CITES in conserving species subject to international trade by regulating that trade, and IUCN welcomed the increasing recognition by Parties of the connections between trade in species and other issues, such as effective governance, poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods. From IUCN's perspective, major progress was achieved in endorsing a vision for the Convention, the need for cooperation with other relevant organisations and in recognition of the role of species trade in sustainable livelihoods.

Strategic vision 2008 - 2013

A major result of COP 14 was the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2013 – essentially the blueprint for CITES action in the coming 6 years. IUCN welcomed the Strategic Vision 2008-2013 which Parties adopted by consensus as a major step forward for the Convention, as it spells out its objectives and provides for ways to clearly measure progress towards their achievement. The Vision is built around three goals, namely

- Goal 1:** Ensure compliance with implementation and enforcement of the Convention.
- Goal 2:** Secure the necessary financial resources and means for the operation and implementation of the Convention.
- Goal 3:** Contribute to significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by ensuring that CITES and other multilateral instruments and processes are coherent and mutually supportive.

IUCN supported its adoption, especially Goal 3 in which Parties acknowledge the Convention's broader goal of biodiversity conservation while also recognising the need for cooperation with other relevant organisations to achieve it. However, IUCN noted that the CITES budget does not yet extend to resource the full scope of ambition defined with the Strategic Vision. This was reinforced by budget discussions at COP 14 in which the Parties voted only a 6% increase over three years (2009-2011) meaning an effectively stable or decreasing Secretariat



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financial situation. Fulfilling CITES' true potential will require additional fund-raising and resourcing efforts and expanding partnerships.

Synergies with other environmental conventions

With Goal 3 of the Strategic Vision in mind, progress in working with other conventions to avoid overlap and increase synergies, as well as the growing number of collaborative arrangements and partnerships with other institutions to improve delivery of the Convention was also made at COP 14. For example, the results of discussions on relevant issues with FAO and ITTO formed an important part of the background documentation. However, an ongoing challenge for CITES remains the relationship with the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment which has yet to officially endorse CITES role as an observer to that body.

Species trade and Livelihoods

IUCN welcomes the increased attention of the Convention to the impacts on livelihoods of trade regulations and management measures. In particular, the convention will develop a way to assess the livelihood implications of future species listings and case studies on how such listings have positively or negatively affected the opportunities of local communities. IUCN believes the Convention can and should play a greater role in contributing to the Millennium Development Goals, and the development of this methodology is an important first step. Specific issues that were discussed at COP 14 in which livelihoods discussions were highlighted included debate on African elephant ivory, Tiger and Pau Brasil.

Compromise for the conservation of the African elephant

African elephants are listed on Appendix I of the Convention with the exception of the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, where they are included in Appendix II. Under specified conditions, these countries are permitted to trade in live animals, hides, hair, ivory, and other elephant-related products.

At the 12th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CITES convention in Santiago, Chile in 2002, Parties voted to approve the sale of 60 tons of ivory from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa subject to several conditions including designation of a trading partner and oversight of the sale by the CITES Secretariat. At present, Japan is the only designated trading partner, although China hopes to be accepted at a later date. At the 55th Standing Committee meeting just prior to this COP, Parties agreed that conditions had been met and the sale could proceed.

Immediately prior to COP 14, the African elephant range states conducted a Range State Dialogue meeting to discuss proposals for additional trade by countries with Appendix II elephants as well as proposals to impose a moratorium on ivory trade for 20 years, as submitted by Kenya and Mali. Deliberations on this emotional topic carried on into the COP itself and were often heated, sometimes divisive and always intense. In the end a consensus was achieved with the 171 Parties to CITES agreeing that the previously agreed one-off sale of legally-acquired ivory stocks from four countries in Southern Africa would include the addition of all registered, government-owned stocks of ivory of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, as of 31 January 2007. The proceeds from the sale will go towards elephant conservation and community development. Following this sale a nine-year period will commence in which no proposals can be made for additional commercial ivory sales.

In a move to ensure that ivory issues will not continue to dominate future Conferences of the Parties, as they have for nearly two decades, it was also agreed that decisions on ivory sales from elephant populations listed on Appendix II will be taken under a specific decision-making mechanism that will be developed by the intersessional executive body of the Convention, the CITES Standing Committee. Dr Holly Dublin, Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, hopes that this decision may result in a refocusing of energies and commitment to the management of Africa's elephants across their range and to controlling unregulated domestic ivory markets around the world, which have plagued conservation efforts to date.



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Progress for tiger conservation

The endangered tiger (*Panthera tigris*) is listed on CITES Annex I as well as listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species with an estimated 2,500 mature individuals living in small populations across East and Southeast Asia. Effective global tiger conservation is therefore especially dependent on a regional strategy for conservation of tigers, transboundary cooperation between range states, trade regulation and its coordinated enforcement of controls on trade in tiger products.

At COP 14, tiger range states took a major step towards regional collaboration to conserve this charismatic species. The consensus decision calls for improved international cooperation in conservation and trade control through development of an agreed conservation strategy by all range states and the development or improvement of regional enforcement networks. The decision further restricts captive breeding of tigers to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers, and stipulates that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives. Given that tigers are coveted in the region, in particular for their use in traditional medicine, this is a particularly important aspect of the agreed decision.

Pau Brazil included in CITES Annex II

Pau Brazil, the tree which gave its name to Brazil and an important source of wood for musical instruments has been added to CITES Appendix II. Formerly an important source of dye, Pau Brazil has more recently become one of the preferred woods for making violin and cello bows. It has been severely depleted by harvesting and is now listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The Pau Brazil proposal was adopted with an amendment which would exempt musical instruments from CITES controls. An Appendix II listing means international trade is regulated by both importing and exporting countries and may help Brazil enforce national regulations.

Other tropical timber proposals were withdrawn following strong livelihood concerns from range states. The proposal to include Spanish cedar (*Cedrela odorata*) and related *Cedrela* species, important South and Central American timber trees on Appendix II raised concerns about the impacts on livelihoods in many of the range states by the countries concerned. Proponents also withdrew proposals to list three species of Rosewood (*Dalbergia species*), an important tropical timber tree from Central America. Parties called, however, for effective measures discouraging illegal trade in wildlife and natural resources, whilst allowing sustainable use of healthy species populations that generates income and opportunities for local communities.

Despite their withdrawal of the timber proposals, both proponents and range states agree that action is needed to reverse the decline in these species. The situation facing Spanish cedar is particularly worrying. Once a common tree and found throughout Central and South America, it has been suffering from over-exploitation for a long time and, more recently, from extensive habitat loss. The situation for the Rosewoods is similar. Conservation measures are currently being developed in several range states, including sustainable forestry management plans and commercial plantations, but more is needed to halt the declines.

IUCN recognized as a key technical advisor

IUCN, and in particular IUCN Species Survival Commission Specialist Groups, were specifically recognized both for their role in preparations for the meeting and also in their potential role in carrying out many of the COP 14 decisions. IUCN was cited as a partner or source of information in almost 40% of the official COP documentation and a rapid survey undertaken during the meeting confirmed participants' strong support for IUCN as a technical advisor to the Convention. This increased recognition comes along with increased responsibility to deliver information and support to Parties in their efforts to implement the Convention at the national level.

The next Conference of the Parties will be held in 2010 in Qatar.

Italy's dedication to forests

Interview with *Dr Aldo Cosentino*, Director General, Ministry for the Environment, Italy, by *Tamas Marghescu* (IUCN ROFE)

TM: As a Party to CITES, Italy strongly supports the Convention in its key role to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. What was Italy's most important contribution prior to and during the recent 14th Conference of the Parties in The Hague?

AC: During the preparation of the last Conference of the Parties to CITES, the Italian Government supported the efforts of the Dutch Government, host of the last meeting, to highlight the importance and necessity of sustainable management of timber and marine species.

We consider CITES listing of timber species as an essential management tool for this valuable resource. However, it is also imperative to enforce agreed trade controls. Our Ministry worked on a background paper on timber shipments to tackle existing enforcement problems during trade. One of the most important findings was the need to increase the capacity of customs officials to better identify the kind of timber and to determine precisely the quantity of each shipment.

Italy therefore pleads for a new holistic and comprehensive identification manual for timber species. For a fast and cost-saving development and production, we suggest merging existing manuals into a new one including the updates from the latest CITES meeting. This manual should be complemented with clear guidelines on how to measure exactly the quantity of timber shipments and which systems to use. However, such a manual still needs to be developed. Next to capacity and enforcement problems, CITES authorities, in states exporting and importing CITES-listed timber species, each day face the challenge of complying fully with existing Convention provisions, including those detailed in the different annotations.



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Italy finally prepared the document on “Physical inspection of timber shipments” which urges CITES parties to identify existing timber identification tools for CITES-listed species and look-alike species and indicate how these can be accessed by CITES authorities. On the basis of these tools and technological developments, gaps and elements for further work can be identified. The German CITES delegation, in its capacity as holding the current EU Presidency, presented the document on behalf of the 27 member states of the European Union in The Hague.

A drafting group discussing enforcement problems came up with very encouraging results. They are included in the CITES document CoP14 Com.II 18 (Draft decisions of the Conference of the Parties on physical inspection of timber shipments). In my opinion, this Working Group represents an important step forward towards a correct and effective worldwide application of the Convention – a Convention which is based on the ecosystem approach. I sincerely hope that, in the future, such exchange of information and experience between CITES parties will allow us to manage timber species better and more sustainably.

TM: What do you consider as challenges for the management of natural resources? On what issues should CITES concentrate to stay one of the most important biodiversity-related UN conventions contributing to the 2010 biodiversity target?

AC: In my opinion, one important challenge is the effective use of Information Technologies (IT) in the area of natural resource management and trade. We should increasingly use these new technologies to manage our knowledge on the status of CITES species and their trade volume as well as to intensify the process of enforcing regulations.

CITES is in the process of developing a system for Electronic Permitting. The relevant CITES working group is chaired by Italy. The group recently analysed the findings of a questionnaire submitted to those CITES parties which had already implemented different kinds of Information Technologies within their CITES management system. Thanks to the invaluable contribution of the participants, the results have, in my opinion, the potential to improve dramatically the way we implement CITES.

I strongly believe therefore that we are improving our ability and capacity to protect this beautiful global heritage that we have in common, that is the basis of our lives and that we call biodiversity.



photos p. 7 © Customs Investigation Brussels Airport

CITES enforcement at Brussels airport

Interview with **Pol Meuleneire**, Customs investigation officer at Brussels Airport, by **Dirk Hendricks** (IUCN ROFE)

DH: With more than 70 airlines and cargo enterprises connecting Brussels airport to the rest of the world, could you please briefly describe and characterize the CITES enforcement work of your customs unit?

PM: The customs unit at Brussels airport consists of five staff members. Before we physically check the cargo, we try to identify suspicious shipments from their accompanying papers. Our controls are also based on previous experience. Shipments from Africa destined for southern European countries for example, regularly contain goods falling under the CITES regime such as skins and ivory products since there is a market in these countries.

Typical wildlife products that we find include caviar, ivory products, dried seahorses, elephant hair bracelets, corals as well as skin and leather products from pythons or crocodiles.

We also find live animals and plants such as turtles, monkeys and orchids which we take either to the nearby shelter or to the zoo in Antwerp. For example, we seized 45 pancake tortoises (*Malacochersus tornieri*; listed on CITES Appendix II) in a small package sent without a licence from Tanzania via Amsterdam to Brussels. Each tortoise is worth up to EUR 370. Since we found them early, all of them survived. Otherwise, mortality rates can be very high.

Unfortunately, we are seldom able to send them back to their country of origin to release them back in wild. However, the number of live animals and plants smuggled in cargo has strongly declined in the last years. Birds especially are not found any more due to the avian flu scare.

Although our staff members do not receive special CITES training, we seize quite a lot of illegal shipments due to our experience and support

from our CITES experts. We also actively exchange experience and information on ongoing smuggling trends with customs units at other airports since many smugglers ship their goods using the same methods to different airports. Our unit regularly produces the "Customs Airport News" in which I inform my European colleagues of latest seizures.

DH: What was, in your opinion, your most remarkable seizure?

PM: Following a tip, we seized more than 600 poison frogs (*Dendrobatidae*; listed on CITES Appendix II) from three Dutch persons who were known for illegally selling amphibians and reptiles. After monitoring passenger lists for more than two weeks, we identified three passengers coming from Panama via Madrid to Brussels through their membership in a reptile club. When we searched their luggage, we found huge numbers of film rolls. Strangely, all of them seemed unused. When we opened them, we found up to three frogs in each roll; each of them worth around EUR 300 on the black market. The smugglers were arrested.

DH: What kind of improvements and/or changes would you like to see in your unit?

PM: Although we are quite successful in our work, I would very much welcome receiving more pre-arrival information on cargo content and its origin and destination. It regularly happens that carriers arrive with their shipments at the airport shortly before the flight and request the airline to send it immediately. Airlines understandably like to fulfil the wishes of their customers, leaving us with little time to check accompanying papers.

We need to maintain a high number of regular hands-on controls of shipments. For that, I would also welcome more staff members. Physical controls are of utmost importance and cannot be substituted by risk analysis of cargo papers. In order to be successful, it is necessary to have a detailed look at shipments, and check for details and irregularities that you cannot find in the accompanying papers.

It is also necessary to address the rising volume of internet trade which makes controls more difficult. This is particularly true for caviar and ivory products. In most cases, the contents of parcels are wrongly declared or camouflaged. For example, ivory sculptures or hanko are made to look antique or made to look like wood. They are also hidden in porcelain statues and declared as African art. Another trick is to wrongly declare or mark packages as diplomatic cargo.

Sustainable wild collection of medicinal and aromatic plants

The need for an international standard

By Britta Pätzold,¹ Danna Leaman,² and Susanne Honnef,

¹WWF Germany and TRAFFIC; ²IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group, IUCN Canada

The International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) is a joint initiative of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), WWF Germany, TRAFFIC, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), IUCN Canada, and the IUCN Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG), and aims to promote appropriate management of wild plant populations to ensure plants used in medicine and cosmetics are not over-exploited. The objective of the standard is: to provide a framework of principles and criteria that can be applied to the management of MAP species and their ecosystems; to serve as a basis for monitoring and reporting; and to recommend requirements for sustainable wild collection of MAP.

Principle 1. Maintaining wild MAP resources

Wild collection of MAPs shall be conducted at a scale and rate and in a manner that maintains species and populations over the long term.

Principle 2. Preventing negative environmental impacts

Negative impacts caused by MAP collection activities on other wild species, the collection area, and neighbouring areas shall be prevented.

Principle 3. Complying with laws, regulations, and agreements

MAP collection and management activities shall be carried out under legitimate tenure arrangements, and comply with relevant laws, regulations and agreements.

Principle 4. Respecting customary rights

Local communities' and indigenous peoples' customary rights to use and manage collection areas and wild-collected MAPs shall be recognized and respected.

Principle 5. Applying responsible management practices

Wild collection of MAPs shall be based on adaptive, practical, participatory, and transparent management practices.

Principle 6. Applying responsible business practices

Wild collection shall be undertaken to support quality, financial, and labour requirements of the market without sacrificing sustainability of the resource.

Wild collection of the strawflower *Helichrysum* in Bosnia and Herzegovina - an example

The Balkans are the most important countries in Europe for the collection and export of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAP) and have a long tradition of wild collection. Although legal frameworks for the collection and commercial use of MAP exist, implementation of control mechanisms by state institutions for harvesting and trade is poor. Control of collected amounts can be achieved only in part through organic certification.

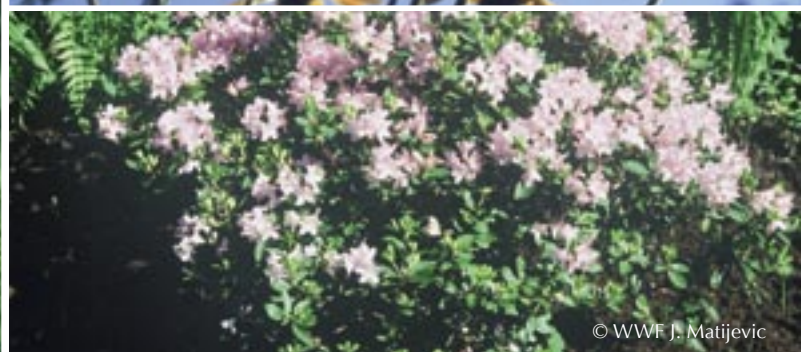




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A field consultation was undertaken to Trebinje in the south-east of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the area where Radovan Andelic' and his company *Andelic d.o.o.* harvest wild plants to produce certified organic essential oils - primarily for export - and medicinal herbs for the domestic market.

The focus of this field consultation was *Helichrysum italicum*, an aromatic dwarf shrub belonging to the daisy family (*Asteraceae*). The plant grows in the Mediterranean in open, dry and stony places with bushy vegetation of low density, coverage and height. It is mainly collected for commercial purposes, not for local use and is used mainly in cosmetics and aromatherapy. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the plant is almost solely harvested on state-owned land, once or twice a year.

Currently *Andelic d.o.o.* obtains its raw plant material from about 120 families. Collecting herbs is in most cases an additional rather than a main source of income for the local people.

A workshop organized as part of the field consultation in Trebinje revealed a strong interest in and need for a standard such as the ISSC-MAP. Local companies in particular, but also harvesters and representatives from authorities, science and development agencies, were keen for such a standard to be applied. They agreed, however, that this would be best met by the State rather than by private initiatives owing to overlapping responsibilities at government level, and poor law enforcement through local authorities. Workshop participants also pointed out that the implementation of sustainability criteria must be enforced through the supply chain by external buyer companies, which requires consumer awareness. Further co-operation with local companies is envisaged in the upcoming pilot implementation phase.

Arnica Arnica montana

Arnica has been used for medicinal purposes for centuries. Its primary agents are various essential oils (over 50), flavonoids, and bitter agents. Depending on the application, the flowers, roots and whole plant are used in preparations that are almost exclusively applied externally. In herbal medicine, Arnica is mainly used as a stimulant for the heart, to improve blood circulation, to mitigate rheumatism and to control bruising.

The plant is both wild-collected and cultivated. The natural habitat of wild Arnica ranges throughout the European continent, from south Norway southwards to south Portugal, from the Apennine Mountains to the Carpathians. However, populations are decreasing in size and number especially in Central Europe, owing to over-exploitation and habitat destruction. Arnica is a fairly sensitive plant with special habitat demands. It grows only in poor, neutral to acid soils, mostly in mountain meadows with extensive grazing. Intensive farming is deadly to this species and the plant does not re-migrate into the old habitat for decades. In most central European countries, Arnica is endangered and now protected.

Outlook: Pilot implementation of the ISSC-MAP (2007-2010)

Currently a concept is being developed aimed at carrying out a pilot implementation of the ISSC-MAP in several projects in a variety of diverse settings worldwide. In this pilot phase, on-the-ground experience will be obtained which will be incorporated both within the standard, and in the development of related guidance. Funding for the pilot implementation is only partly secured; it is also hoped to obtain funds to carry out an assessment of consumer interests.

All ISSC-MAP-related documents can be downloaded from the project website: www.floraweb.de/MAP-pro/



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CITES COP 14: Conservation and trade from a Central and Eastern European perspective

By Dr Marton A. Kelemen, – CEEWEB CITES WG chair, Association Milvus Group – Romania, and Borys Kala, – PTOP Salamandra – Poland

The 14th Conference of the Parties (COP) to CITES was the first CITES COP ever organized in the European Union (EU). This is amazing given the fact that the EU is the top global importer of CITES specimens. The EU can also claim significant achievements in wildlife-trade law enforcement. However the EU is facing significant challenges regarding the implementation of its wildlife trade legislation, partly due to the recent enlargement of the Union with twelve Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries.

To safeguard the implementation of wildlife trade regulations in this region, CEEWEB (the Central and Eastern European Working Group for the Enhancement of Biodiversity) - a coalition of conservation NGOs, created the CITES Working Group (CITES WG). During the last CITES COP, our working group focused on those decisions and proposals which targeted species or problems relevant to our region.

The CEEWEB CITES WG particularly welcomes the decision of the CITES COP to raise internet trade issues on the CITES agenda. It also foresees concrete actions concerning this trade such as seeking external funding to organize a workshop on wildlife trade via the internet to consider implementation and enforcement issues and make recommendations for action to tackle illegal trade in wildlife resulting from the use of the internet.

This decision is coherent, among others, with the *CEETES* report (Assessment of CITES implementation in Central and Eastern European Countries) that the CEEWEB CITES WG published prior to the CITES meeting. This report highlights that "...in case of certain groups of CITES specimens, the scale of internet trade is similar to or even greater than regular trade". It therefore highlights the imminent necessity to tackle the internet trade problem under CITES.

The *CEETES* report analyses the status of CITES compliance and enforcement in Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia and

Montenegro, and Slovakia and identifies deficiencies and urgent needs of CITES implementation in the region. One part of the report examined the situation and trends of internet trade, monitoring the retail and e-commerce of CITES specimens/products on respective websites over a one-year period.

Some COP 14 proposals concerned the listing of certain marine species for which countries in Central and Eastern Europe are important range states. The Swedish proposal to include the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) in CITES Appendix II was accepted by the COP with a large majority, thus recognising the serious concerns about the long-term survival of the species in the wild.

In contrast to the European eel, the German proposal to list the spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) and the porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*) on CITES Appendix II were rejected by the COP. Most opponents of the proposal criticised the little proof of domestic conservation efforts inside the EU. The outcome of discussions on shark conservation may be a disappointment for the EU, but highlights the necessity of prior conservation measures to build up a successful listing proposal. If the EU will succeed with successful shark conservation in their territorial waters, we consider that there are significant chances finally to include the two shark species during the next CITES COP in Qatar.

Representatives of Central and Eastern European range states of the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) regarded the rejection of the US proposal to delete the bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) from CITES Appendix II as a success. Although most participants recognised that the bobcat does not meet the biological criteria for an Appendix II listing, the majority of delegates were concerned that a down-listing would result in severe enforcement problems with regard to trade in look-alike species such as the Eurasian lynx or even the critically endangered Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*).

In general, delegates of the last CITES COP sent a strong message on key conservation efforts to the global community that may significantly change the state of play during future CITES meetings. The moratorium on commercial whaling will be sustained; and African states were able to reach a compromise on the ivory issues that will last for the next decade.

We therefore conclude that the majority of decisions taken during CITES COP 14 are a success for species conservation, especially regarding the Central and Eastern European region. However, the failure to include the spiny dogfish, porbeagle, red corals and certain tropical timber species in CITES Appendices made the taste of victory a little bitter.





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CITES: science versus emotionalism?

By *Dr Yves Lecocq*, Secretary-General of the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE)

Adopted back in 1973 in Washington DC, USA, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora – best known by its acronym CITES – is the oldest legal instrument for the conservation of nature worldwide. CITES seeks to regulate international trade in wild animals and plants (live or dead, parts or derivative products) in order to ensure that such trade does not threaten their survival, and this through the establishment of a regulatory framework that is to be implemented by each Contracting Party (currently 172). CITES recognises the legitimacy of sustainable consumptive use of natural resources, such as forestry, fishing but also hunting and other forms of harvesting wild animals or plants. This is also the case for the European Commission, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and many other key players in the conservation movement. One landmark in this respect is the IUCN Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources (Amman, October 2000): “Use of wild living resources, if sustainable, is an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use provide incentives for people to conserve them”.

Over the years, certain (mainly North American and European) animal and nature protection NGOs have increasingly tried to present CITES as an instrument simply for banning all trade in wild species. Their views are coherent with the stance of the animal rights’ movement, which will always advocate zero use of animals because their fundamental philosophy is based more in the field of animal ethics than wildlife conservation. To them, it is wrong for people to kill any animal, regardless of the conservation status of the species and even if the gains on killing one single specimen benefits the overall stock of the species. Scientific evidence is completely irrelevant from this perspective, which is a respectable one but which should at least be presented (and discussed) in an honest way, i.e. as a moral concern and not as a conservation matter.

This polarisation between on the one hand those in favour of well regulated trade based on sustainable use as a tool for conservation and development, and the other camp that wishes to stop all exploitation of wild biological resources on ethical or emotional grounds, was once more clearly felt at the 14th CITES Conference of the Parties, held in early June in The Hague, Netherlands. Together with well over 100 other international and national NGOs and interest groups, FACE participated as an observer at this event (just as it was present at the six previous CITES Conferences) and closely witnessed this ongoing proc-

ess of polarisation, lobbying and trying to influence the outcome of the discussions in committees and in plenary.

Kenya represented once more the leading position within CITES opposing, on principle, the use of wildlife – an approach which is consistent with this country’s internal policy (e.g. a ban on all hunting since 1977), even though it has experienced a dramatic decline in biodiversity in the last three decades, in particular outside its National Parks. Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, holding opposite views on the matter and allowing well regulated use of wildlife, have instead achieved an impressive conservation record, leading to the recovery of formerly endangered species (such as the Black rhino).

Namibia for instance has witnessed in the last ten years the quadrupling of its elephant population, an increase that was achieved through the sustainable use of wildlife. The one-off sale of the 60 tons of government-owned ivory, authorised – after long discussions and negotiations - by the recent CITES Conference, can be seen as an African-based solution that will benefit conservation and the local communities living among the elephants and other wildlife. Sustainability becomes an important matter for community-based conservation as the income gained by the rural households through activities like hunting and ecotourism, provides incentives for the continuation of wise management of natural resources.

FACE, representing some 7 million hunters in 36 European countries, firmly believes that in Europe too, the sustainable use of wildlife helps in the maintenance and improvement of habitats as well as managing the species that inhabit them. As an economic incentive for local stakeholders, who take into account scientific data and population dynamics, there is the assurance that the species that they hunt today will be around for future generations to benefit from and enjoy.

FACE further feels that decisions on hunting and wildlife management should be taken on the basis of scientific and objective criteria. At the CITES Conferences of the Parties, the European Commission and the EU Member States usually take into account scientific data, facts, numbers and population dynamics. While not systematically supporting use of wildlife, the EU tends to reward Range States that have attained significant conservation success by allowing them to use their wildlife in a sustainable manner and according to strict quotas and conditions.



European Mammal Assessment

Europe is one of the best studied regions of the world, but no overall view of the conservation status of mammals across the continent had been compiled. Therefore, the European Union commissioned the World Conservation Union (IUCN) to assess all mammals of continental Europe against the IUCN Red List criteria in order to identify Europe's most threatened mammals and help set conservation priorities.

The European Mammal Assessment (EMA) is the first comprehensive assessment of the conservation status of mammals at a European level. The study documents that nearly one in every six mammal species is now threatened with extinction.

The population trends are equally alarming: over a quarter (27%) of all mammals have declining populations and a further 33% had an unknown population trend. Only 8% were identified as increasing, including the European bison, thanks to successful conservation measures. Europe is now home to the world's most threatened cat species, the Iberian Lynx, and the world's most threatened seal, the Mediterranean Monk Seal, both classified as Critically Endangered.

Europe contains a rich diversity of mammals ranging from the small and rarely seen nocturnal shrews and voles to the elusive brown bear. But the results of the European Mammal Assessment are clear: while some 15%, or almost one sixth, of mammals are threatened in Europe, the situation of marine mammals is even bleaker: some 22% are classified as threatened with extinction. The true number is likely to be even higher, as almost 44% were classified as Data Deficient due to missing

information. By comparison, 13% of European birds are threatened.

Within the European Union, six species have been classified as Critically Endangered. The most threatened category includes the Arctic fox and the European mink, which both have very small and declining populations. Only 150 Iberian Lynx survive today and the Mediterranean Monk Seal population has decreased to 350-450 individuals.

The main threats to European mammals are habitat degradation and loss such as deforestation or wetland drainage, followed by pollution and over-harvesting. For marine species, pollution and accidental mortality from fisheries by-catch or ship collisions are the main risks. These threats are most severe in the enclosed seas of the Baltic, Mediterranean and Black Sea.

Mammals are one of the most important groups of species on earth in terms of evolution, ecology and economic impact. They occupy nearly all of the planet's ecosystems and play critical roles in ecosystem dynamics, including as predators and keystone species.

To reverse the decline of Europe's mammals, the study recommends urgent implementation of the EU's nature conservation policies, to develop species action plans and integrate nature conservation into the EU's land-use policies.

The full report including case studies is available on www.iucneurope.org or from the IUCN Regional Office for Europe (eucomms@iucn.org).

Mediterranean freshwater biodiversity

By *Sandra Simoes*, IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation

Within the framework of the project “Integration of freshwater biodiversity into the development process throughout Africa: mobilising information and site demonstrations”, the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med) is coordinating the assessment in Northern Africa.

The project will enable water-resource managers and environmental planners throughout Africa to integrate information on freshwater biodiversity within the development process in order to conserve and sustain use of freshwater biodiversity throughout Africa in the face of widespread plans for large-scale water-resource developments, and to safeguard the livelihoods of people dependent upon the goods and services provided by biodiversity in inland waters. Currently, that information is inaccessible due to its disorganised and dispersed state.

The specific objective is to ensure that environmental planning for water-resource development throughout Africa is based on the integration of reliable information on the status, distribution and ecological requirements of freshwater biodiversity for priority taxonomic groups such as: Fishes, Aquatic Plants, Molluscs, Odonata (dragonflies) and Crustacea (crabs and crayfishes). Best practice mechanisms for integrating biodiversity data into the development process will be demonstrated at selected sites such as Moulouya River, Morocco.

IUCN-Med is extending the assessment to the whole Mediterranean basin. To this end, the Centre is calling for voluntary experts to submit



their expressions of interest to uicnmed@iucn.org to contribute to the Red List assessment of freshwater species in the Mediterranean Region for the following groups: Fishes, Aquatic Plants, Molluscs, Odonata (dragonflies) and Crustacea (crabs and crayfishes).

The next Red List workshop is scheduled for October 2007 in Porto, Portugal to focus on Freshwater Molluscs.

Launching of a Mediterranean Red List of Molluscs

IUCN-Med launched a Mediterranean Red List of Freshwater Molluscs during the World Congress of Malacology which took place from 15 to 20 July 2007 in Antwerp, Belgium.

Since 1999 the IUCN Red List has become a tool used by many different organisations interested in assessing the changes in the status of biodiversity. The species data is being gathered using standardised software based on Microsoft Access, so that entry conforms to the documentation standards required by the IUCN Red List. In the future the assessments will eventually extend to Marine and Terrestrial Mediterranean Molluscs.



New partnership between the World Conservation Union and the Convention on Biological Diversity

Ahmed Djoghalf, Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), and Tamas Marghescu, on behalf of IUCN's Director General Julia Marton-Lefèvre, signed a Memorandum of Understanding between IUCN and the SCBD on 11 July 2007.

The memorandum will support the further implementation of the *Message from Paris* which aims to raise awareness of the link between biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction both at the policy and implementation level.

IUCN and the SCBD will develop a common message to raise awareness in developing countries and among the donor community on the contribution of biodiversity to development goals. They will support an enhanced dialogue between the environment and development communities to better implement biodiversity conservation in overseas aid. It is also planned to cooperate further on the implementation of the Poverty Reduction and Environmental Governance Initiative aiming at mainstreaming biodiversity considerations into the development policies and strategies of regional organizations such as the African Union.

IUCN will also form a partnership with the SCBD on island biodiversity and climate change, as well as on innovative financial mechanisms to support long-term sustainable management of natural resources.

Sailing to Barcelona

On the occasion of the fourth World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008, the World Conservation Union invites governments, organizations, sailors and boat owners passionate about the marine environment and its species to take part in a parade of sailing boats and research vessels criss-crossing the sea in front of the Congress venue. The parade will mark the prelude to the IUCN World Conservation Congress and contributes to the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the World Conservation Union.

Your ship will deliver your strong and concrete commitment to marine conservation to the rest of the world on issues such as the establishment of new protected areas in your country's coastal areas or territorial waters, fishing moratoria for certain species and areas, increased research activities and/or other outstanding contributions to saving the marine environment.

The sailing ships will arrive on 4th October 2008 in the Forum Harbour where mooring areas have been reserved for you for one week. The mooring areas can accommodate all sizes of ship ranging from 10m x 3.5m to 80m x 18m.

The parade of sailing ships will start in the afternoon of 5th October 2008 at the Forum Harbour. Several thousand congress participants and the citizens of Barcelona will follow the parade from the Parc del Auditoris and other shore areas.

IUCN offers you tailor-made possibilities to bring your message to the world. The IUCN Congress team will help you to develop your unique presentation and assist you with ideas and logistical questions.

For further information, please contact: sailingtobarcelona@iucn.org

IUCN Pan-European Programme 2009-2012

The IUCN statutes call for a Programme Plan to be approved by the General Assembly. The Programme is developed in consultation with



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members and partners and provides the overall framework and planning tool for the conservation work undertaken by the IUCN Commissions and Secretariat during a four-year period between World Conservation Congresses.

The five Thematic Priority Areas within the IUCN Programme 2009-2012 are:

- Conserving the diversity of life: ensuring sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity from local to global levels;
- Changing the climate forecast – integrating biodiversity considerations and opportunities into climate change policies and practice;
- Naturally energizing the future – implementing ecologically sustainable, equitable and efficient energy systems;
- Managing ecosystems for human well-being – improving livelihoods, reducing poverty and vulnerability, and enhancing environmental and human security through sustainable ecosystem management;
- Greening the world economy – integrating ecosystem conservation values into economic policy, finance and markets.

The IUCN pan-European Programme 2009-2012 should reflect these five global IUCN priorities and what IUCN's constituency, in particular members in Europe, wishes to see the Programme deliver.

Based on the situation analysis for the Pan-European Region (http://www.iucn.org/places/europe/rofe/rofe_at_work/iucn_programme.html), recommendations for action have been formulated, in response to the major drivers of change for biodiversity. These recommendations have served as the basis for formulating concrete results for the Pan-European region. These results represent the strategic objectives that we aim to achieve within the four years from 2009 and can become more specific either geographically or thematically through the use of sub-results.

The results in the draft IUCN European Programme 2009-2012 take into account the core competences of the IUCN Regional Office for Europe and the opportunities for working in close cooperation with the IUCN members, Commissions and National Committees in Europe.

To develop a European Programme 2009-2012 that guides the work of IUCN in Europe for the coming years, we would like to have valuable input from the IUCN constituency and therefore we present the following timelines.

The draft European Programme 2009-2012 (www.iucneurope.org) is open for online consultation from July 23–September 21, 2007 through an internet-based survey. In this open consultation, all IUCN European members, National Committees and other IUCN partners are invited to give their ideas and suggestions for the priorities of IUCN in Europe, taking into account the major drivers of change for biodiversity in the pan-European region and the role of IUCN. After integrating the feedback from this consultation into the Programme a final round of online consultation will take place in November and the final European Programme 2009-2012 will be submitted by mid-December 2007.

For more information, please contact: paul.grigoriev@iucn.org

Launch of the exhibition "Nature - Our Precious Web"

This joint initiative between Countdown 2010 and GEO (the feature magazine), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) was opened on this year's World Environment Day on 5th of June 2007 in Berlin's Natural History Museum, Germany.

This newly designed exhibition explains the importance of biodiversity and how vital it is for everyone. In eight panels and 80 pictures, Countdown and its partners describe the significance of the intricate web of life that sustains life on Earth and what we can do to keep it.

The exhibition highlights seven focal areas for urgent action to meet the challenge of achieving the 2010 biodiversity target:

1. The rate at which the various components of biological diversity are lost is to be reduced;
2. The functional capacity of intact ecosystems is to be preserved;
3. The principal threats to biodiversity are to be tackled;
4. The sustainable use of biodiversity is to be broadened;
5. Traditional knowledge relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is to be maintained;
6. Fairness and equity in the sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources are to be ensured; and
7. Financial and technical assistance is to be mobilized, especially for developing countries.

Planned exhibition locations are the forthcoming Conferences of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Germany in

New staff

ROfE cordially welcomes **Mr Yves de Soye** who joined the Outermost Regions and Overseas Territories Programme in the EU Liaison Office as Programme Officer for Climate Change and Biodiversity. Yves holds a Masters in Biological Sciences from the Universities of Bonn and New South Wales in Sydney, as well as a Masters in Business Administration from the *Instituto de Empresa* in Madrid. In previous posts, he has managed a conservation project in the Philippines, headed the parrot conservation foundation of the zoological garden *Loro Parque* in Tenerife, and was a Development Manager with BirdLife International in Cambridge. He also brings 20 years of personal involvement in climate change to his position.

Countdown 2010 is delighted to welcome **Mr Andras Krolopp** as the Deputy Head of Countdown 2010. Andras holds a degree in environmental management and a teacher's degree in Biology and Geography. For the past nine years, Andras was general secretary of CEEWEB. He has previously worked

May 2008 and Japan in 2010 as well as the fourth World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.

For further questions or booking requests please contact Wiebke Herding (wiebke.herding@countdown2010.net).

The European Green Belt is moving forward – along and across borders

Since the launch of the European Green Belt initiative in September 2004, numerous bilateral and international projects have been implemented in the adjacent 23 countries. For instance, GIS maps and databases of all important protected sites are available now. The Green Belt Book describes the genesis of the initiative and presents case studies. The website (www.europeangreenbelt.org) is growing into a valuable platform for the Green Belt community.

The history of Europe's division into two political and military blocs, and the transformation of the former border into an ecological backbone provides excellent stories for public relations purposes. No wonder, the interest from the media is quite high, resulting in articles in magazines and newspapers like „natur+kosmos“ or „Universum“. NGOs are using this public relations potential to highlight their efforts in lesser developed border areas. From autumn 2007, a BBC-NDR-ORF film will be produced for broadcasting in 2009.

The Green Belt initiative will bring together its main stakeholders from 18–21 November in Bratislava, Slovakia, for a pan-European meeting. This workshop will serve to exchange examples of best practice, but also lead to an aligned commitment for joint activities on the ground.

For more information, please contact: Katharina.Diehl@iucn.org



with ECNC in Tilburg and Budapest. Andras brings more than 13 years of thematic and management experience of NGO cooperation in various fields of nature conservation to the Countdown team.

ROfE is pleased to welcome **Mr Paul Grigoriev** into the position of Regional Programme Coordinator. Paul holds degrees in biology (Bachelors), natural resource management (Masters) and protected area planning (PhD). He has worked for provincial and federal protected area agencies in Canada for a dozen years as a resource management specialist and conservation biologist. For the past ten years he has been an independent consultant specializing in protected areas and biodiversity conservation issues. The bulk of the work has been in GEF protected area and biodiversity conservation project and programme development and evaluation in numerous countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and Central America. Clients have included IUCN, WWF, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

Calendar of Events August - November 2007

The meetings listed below are events organised or sponsored by IUCN, or in which IUCN is participating.

August

12 - 18 Stockholm, Sweden
World Water Week

September

3 - 14 Madrid, Spain
UNCCD COP

5 - 8 Malaga, Spain
IUCN Mediterranean members meeting

6 - 7 Warsaw, Poland
Forests and Forestry in the Context of Rural Development

9 - 11 Berlin, Germany
Gleneagles Dialogue
Third Meeting of the Energy and Environment Ministers

19 - 21 Beijing, China
International Conference to promote the Development of Non-Timber Forest Products and Services (ITTO)

25 - 28 Murcia, Spain
European Symposium on Marine Protected Areas as a Tool for Fisheries Management and Ecosystem Conservation

30 - 3 Bratislava, Slovakia
European Green Belt meeting

October

2 - 4 Azores, Portugal
CBD Expert Workshop: High Seas Marine Protected Areas

10 - 12 Belgrade, Serbia
Environment for Europe Conference

15 - 19 Porto, Portugal
Freshwater Biodiversity Assessment Workshop

22 - 25 Dubrovnik, Croatia
ACCOBAMS MOP3

November

5 - 7 Warsaw, Poland
Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

7 - 9 Lisbon, Portugal
EU Development Days

12 - 13 Lisbon, Portugal
EU Presidency Conference on European Business & Biodiversity
Developing the EU initiative on business & biodiversity

18 - 21 Bratislava, Slovakia
Pan-European Green Belt Meeting
Networking- for nature and development

19 - 21 South Africa
68th Meeting of the IUCN Council

27 - 30 Strasbourg, France
Bern Convention Standing Committee

29 - 30 Lisbon, Portugal
Nature Directors Meeting 2007

October 2008

5 - 14 Barcelona, Spain
4th World Conservation Congress

IUCN's vision

A just world that values and conserves nature.

IUCN's mission

To influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

ROfE's mission

To foster and fortify a European network of excellence in environmental research, policy and best practice, with the aim to:

1. Contribute to IUCN's global mission
2. Support the integration of biodiversity conservation into economic development
3. Support innovative initiatives for the multi functional, sustainable use of natural resources

ROfE's structure

The Regional Office for Europe (ROfE) is the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Permanent Representation in Brussels. Through its Programme offices in Belgrade, Moscow, Tbilisi and Tilburg, and in cooperation with European members and other parts of the IUCN constituency, ROfE implements the European Programme. The Programme area covers 53 countries and stretches from Greenland to Kamchatka.

The IUCN European Programme goal for 2005 – 2008 is to contribute to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 through an ecologically sustainable Europe – a political commitment made by European Heads of State and Environment Ministers.

Together as IUCN in Europe, we strive to meet our goals for a sustainable Europe by utilising local expertise and the strength of the global IUCN network.

For a history of IUCN and an explanation of the global structure please visit www.iucn.org

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