



Briefing

81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)

Hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and the Geneva Environment Network

8 October 2026



Agenda

Mission Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)

I. Welcome

- Ms Ivonne Higuero, Secretary-General, CITES
- Mr Kristopher Blake, Chair, CITES Standing Committee

II. Summary and Highlights

- Governing Bodies Unit
- Outreach and Projects Unit
- Legal Unit
- Enforcement Unit
- Science Unit
- Admin & Financial Matters

III. Q & A



78th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC78)
February 2025, Geneva Switzerland



Welcome Remarks

Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)



Ms Ivonne Higuero
Secretary-General, CITES





Welcome Remarks

Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)



Mr Kristopher Blake
Chair, CITES Standing Committee





Summary & Highlights

Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)



Ms Haruko Okusu

Chief, Governing Bodies Unit, CITES Secretariat



Practical Information

Date/Time:

- Monday, 2 November
10h30-13h30 & 15h30-18h30
- Tuesday, 3 November – Friday, 6 November
9h00-12h00 & 14h00-17h00

Venue:

- International Conference Centre, Geneva (CICG)

Languages: E/F/S/Ru

Livestreaming: YouTube (@CITES)

Website:

<https://cites.org/eng/meetings/sc>

(agenda and all documents)

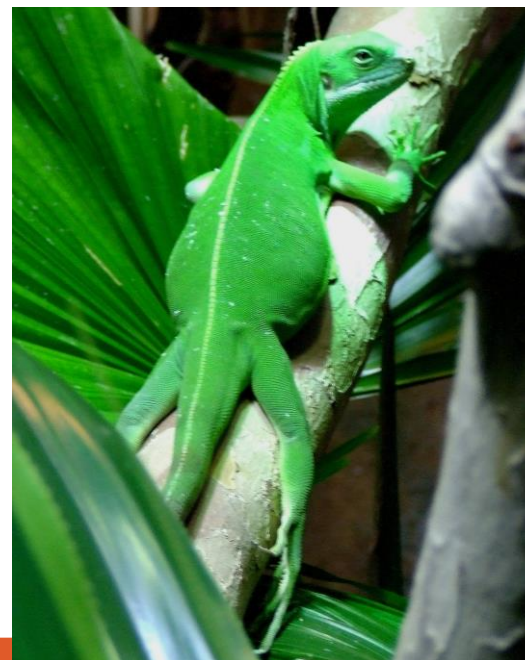
- **Party Registration:** encouraged before 26 October 2026
- **Committee member credentials:** Email or on-site
- **Observer registration:** Closed
- **Media:** Accreditation through form on the meeting webpage
- **In-person registration:** starts on Monday 2 November 08h30

(See Notification to the Parties No.2026/104; additional Notif. on time-saving measures)

Agenda Item 53

Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes [Res. 12.10 (Rev. CoP20)]

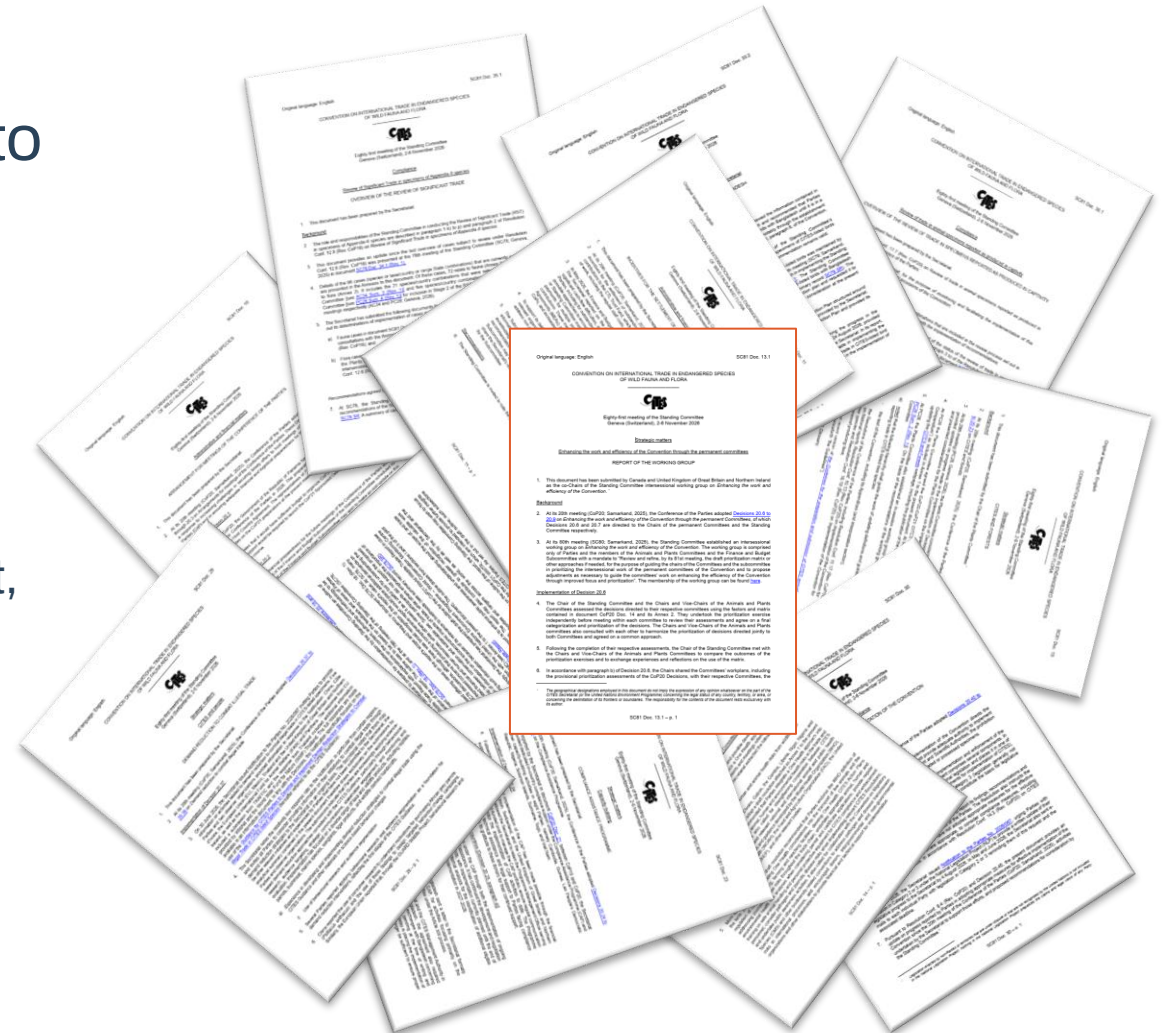
- SC to approve 3 captive-breeding operations
 - Totoaba bred in Mexico – objections by the European Union and the USA
 - Tortoises bred in Italy – objections by Israel, Madagascar and the USA
 - Fiji iguana bred in Canada – objections by Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Tonga and the USA
- Issues raised in the objections:
 - Contribution to illegal trade (totoaba)
 - Legal acquisition of parental stock



Agenda Item 13

Enhancing the work and efficiency of the Convention through the permanent committees [Dec. 20.6-20.9]

- Intersessional WG progressing development of a prioritization framework to support SC/AC/PC better manage workloads and focus
- Broad agreement on key principles
 - ✓ Committee-led, transparent, practical
 - ✓ Based on priority levels
 - ✓ Reflected in Committee workplans, Secretariat effort, and fundraising
- Draft revised prioritization matrix proposed
- SC requested to provide feedback and extend the WGs mandate



Agenda Item 10

Arrangement for the meetings of the Conference of the Parties [Dec. 20.1—20.3]

- Panama has kindly offered to host CoP21; funds needed to support delegate travel
- Continued discussion on strengthening financial preparedness for future CoPs
- Draft guidance
 - ✓ Outlining the steps & timeline of CoP organization
 - ✓ Raising funds in support of the logistical organization of the CoP
 - ✓ Reducing costs of organization, in cases when an offer from a potential host country is not forthcoming





Summary & Highlights

Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)



Ms Kristina Rodina de Carvalho
Chief, Outreach and Projects Unit, CITES Secretariat



Agenda Item 54

CITES Trees Species Programme (Decision 20.31)



- Implementation of the **CITES Tree Species Project**, financed by Germany under the International Climate Initiative (IKI) and the preparation of its **16 subprojects**
- Implementation of **bridging activities on CITES-listed tree species**, financed by the European Union
- Opportunities to leverage the CITES Tree Species Programme to advance complementary areas of CITES work, such as the work on timber identification



Agenda Items 41 and 56

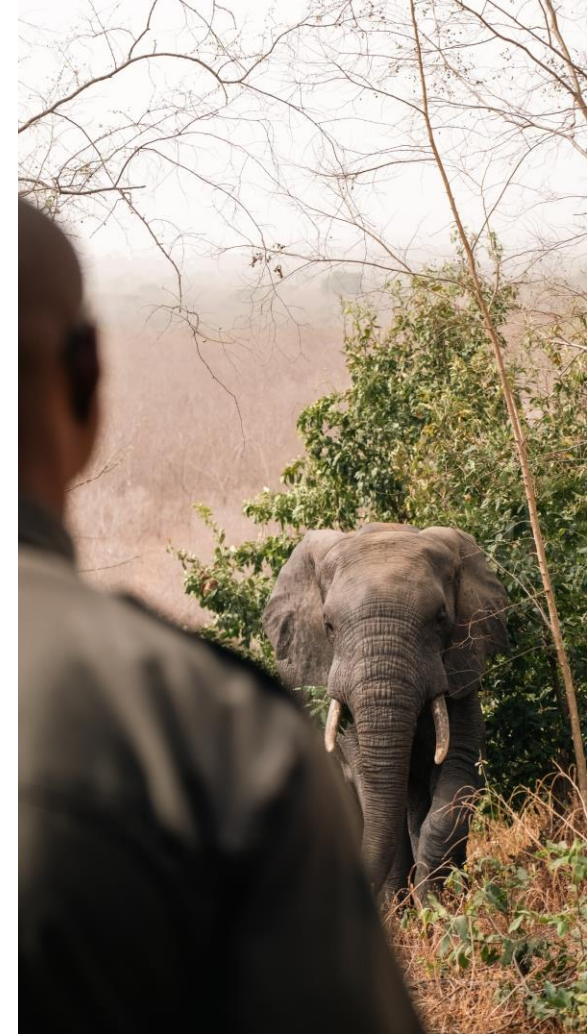
Elephants

Implementation of the recommendations from the Elephants Trade Information Systems (ETIS) Programme review:

- Strengthening ETIS governance, methodological transparency and data validation
- ETIS Standard Operating Procedures: consolidation of procedures for the collection, validation, inclusion, and analysis of ETIS data

Implementation of Resolution 10.10 (Rev.CoP20) on trade in elephants specimens and related decisions

- Poaching pressure in Africa continues to decline
- 2025 recorded the lowest PIKE value since monitoring began
- First-ever separate PIKE analyses conducted for the two African elephant species



Agenda Item 48

Electronic Systems and Information Technology (Decisions 20.127-20.129)

- Progress on growing implementation of electronic permit systems; HS codes for risk-based controls; Electronic Permit Information Exchange and data security; traceability systems; non-commercial movement of musical instruments
- Feasibility assessment of a voluntary global hub for exchange of CITES electronic permit data
- Update on capacity-building and technical assistance in Argentina, Guatemala, and Peru



eCITES Workshop, Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 2026



eCITES Workshop, Lima Peru, May 2026

Strategic and Financial Matters

Item 12. Innovative financing mechanisms (Decision 20.5)

- Review and approve the draft Terms of Reference for the report on innovative financing

Item 14. Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade [Decisions 19.17 (Rev. CoP20) & 20.23]

- Consideration of the need for and development of a Resolution on actions CITES Parties and others could take to advance a 'One Health' approach as it pertains to international wildlife trade



Parson's chameleon (*Calumma parsonii*)
CITES Appendix II © ns777/iNaturalist

Agenda Item 25

United Nations World Wildlife Day



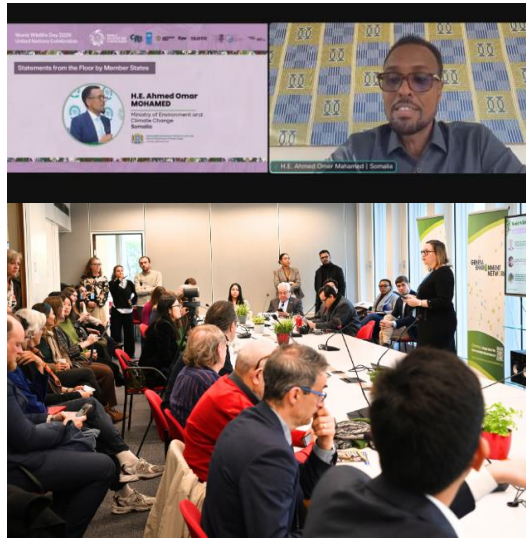
2026: 4 Main Events

- High-Level Event (Online)
- Geneva Environment Network Event
- Botanical Gardens, Geneva
- New York Event (United for Wildlife, Deloitte)

2027: Official Announcement of the Theme coming soon.

Topic:

Human Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence





Summary & Highlights

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Ms Sofie H. Flensburg
Chief, Legal Unit, CITES Secretariat



Compliance Matters (1)

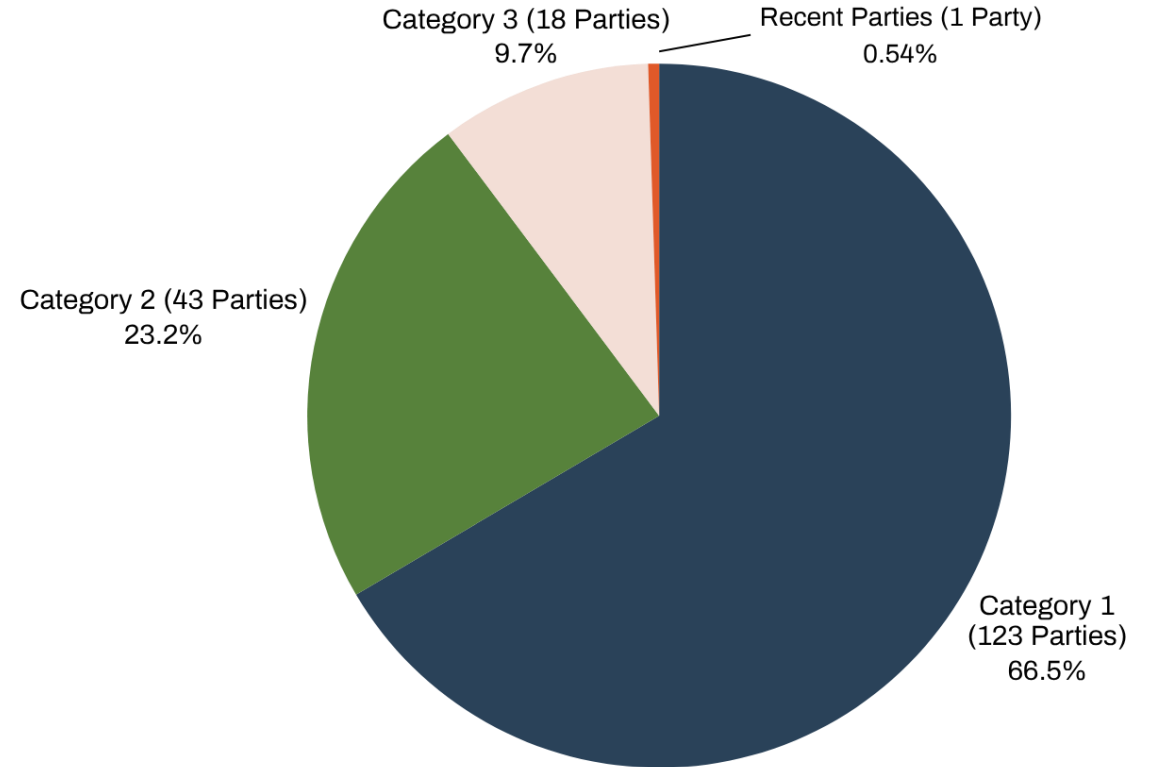
Agenda Item 30

National legislation

- All Parties must adopt national legislation for the implementation of the Convention.
- To be placed in Category 1 of the CITES National Legislation Project (NLP), legislation *must* meet the minimum requirements set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP20).
- If insufficient (or no) progress is reported in developing and adopting national legislation, the Committee may take compliance measures.
- Based on information provided by Parties, the Committee may consider compliance measures with respect to the following Parties: Afghanistan, Belize, Chad, Myanmar and Trinidad and Tobago.

National Legislation Project

September 2026



Compliance Matters (2)

Agenda Item 31.1

National reports

- All Parties must submit annual reports on the imports, exports, re-exports and introductions from the sea they have authorized in the preceding year.
- If a Party has not submitted its annual report for three consecutive years, the Conference of the Parties has agreed that a recommendation to suspend trade should be put in place.
- The following Parties are concerned by this matter:
 - Already subject to recommendation to suspend trade: Afghanistan, Djibouti, Grenada
 - Missing reports for 2022-2024: Antigua and Barbuda, Chad, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone
 - Unless their 2025 reports are submitted by 31 October 2026, the following will also be missing reports for three consecutive years: Comoros, Ecuador, Gabon, Gambia, Libya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Tonga and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Annual reports are due on 31 October



Compliance Matters (3)

Agenda Item 32.2 Scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade

- Decision 20.46 – the Secretariat has developed draft guidance on the **scope** and **application** of recommendations to suspend trade for the consideration of the Committee.

Agenda Item 32.3 Addressing compliance matters by the Standing Committee

- Decision 20.47 – in view of the increasing number of compliance matters, the Committee is to consider options to improve the efficiency, transparency, predictability and fairness of the compliance procedures set out in Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP20).

Agenda Item 23 Compliance Assistance Programme

- Decision 20.24 to 20.26 – progress report on the CAP, including the selection of up to three additional Parties for the present intersessional period.



Compliance Matters (4)

Agenda Item 33 Application of Article XIII

- The Committee will consider the progress in the implementation of the recommendations to address identified compliance issues in the Parties subject to the application of Article XIII. Based on the reported progress, the Committee may adopt revised recommendations. Concerned Parties will be represented at the meeting.

Parties concerned:

- Expedited application of Article XIII for West African rosewood (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) – all range States
- Bangladesh
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Ecuador and Peru
- Guinea
- India
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Nigeria
- Suriname

National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) Process

Agenda Item 34.1 Implementation of the NIAP process

Category A: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Nigeria, Togo, Viet Nam

Category B: Angola, Gabon

Category C: Cameroon, Congo, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

Agenda Item 34.2 Review of the NIAP process

Decision 20.101 – discussion of previous suggestions to improve the process.

Agenda Item 34.4 Guidance on Party-specific compliance measures informed by the ETIS report

Decision 20.102 – suggestion of criteria to be considered by the Committee and the Secretariat for recommending the inclusion of a Party in the NIAP process.





Summary & Highlights

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Mr Barend Van Janse Rensburg
Chief, Enforcement Unit, CITES Secretariat



Agenda Item 33

Totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*) (SC81 Doc. 33.12.2)

Application of Article XIII

- **Report on:**

- ✓ implementation of Decisions on totoabas
- ✓ Mexico's progress with implementation of its compliance action plan (CAP) on totoaba

- **Report from Mexico** on implementation of its CAP - **Annex 1**

- **Observations and conclusions of Secretariat** regarding progress with CAP implementation - **Annex 2**

- China and the United States of America included reporting on implementation of Decisions 20.53 and 20.55, as respectively relevant to them, in their responses to Notification

- **Standing Committee to:**

- ✓ consider if Mexico fully implemented its CAP, or if any further measures or compliance actions are needed
- ✓ review reporting submitted by Parties and the Secretariat and make the necessary recommendations

Agenda Item 37

Enforcement Matters (SC81 Doc. 37.1)

Reporting on various matters:

- Addressing corruption;
- CITES Illegal Trade Database and Annual illegal trade reports;
- CITES directory of laboratories conducting wildlife forensic testing;
- Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES listed tree species; and
- Tibetan antelope.

SC81 invited to consider:

- ✓ recommendations related to the different matters addressed in the document.

International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) (SC81 Doc. 37.2)

- Update on the implementation of Decision 20.14
- Activities delivered under the auspices of ICCWC
- ICCWC Strategic Action Plan 2027-2030 which will be launched an ICCWC side event at SC81

SC81 invited to consider:

- ✓ Parties efforts to combat wildlife crime
- ✓ work of ICCWC and feedback to continuously enhance ICCWC interventions
- ✓ funding support for implementation of the ICCWC Vision 2030 and its Strategic Action Plan for 2027-2030

Enforcement Matters (SC81 Doc. 37.1)

Agenda Item 37

Enforcement

Reporting on various matters, including:

- Addressing corruption;
- The CITES Illegal Trade Database and Annual illegal trade reports;
- The CITES directory of laboratories conducting wildlife forensic testing;
- The Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES listed tree species; and
- Tibetan antelope.

Responses from Parties to a Notification to the Parties on implementation of Decision 19.89 on *Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES listed tree species* – **SC81 Inf. 6**

SC81 is invited to consider:

- recommendations related to the different matters addressed in the document as outlined above.

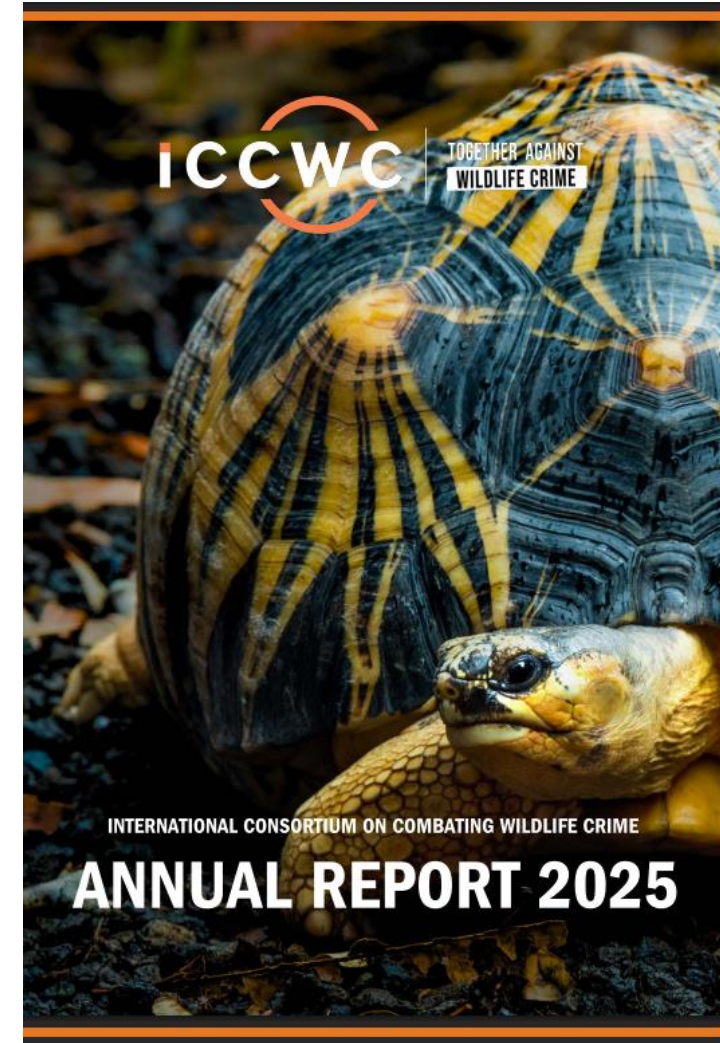
International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) (SC81 Doc. 37.2)

Agenda Item 37

Enforcement

- Update on the implementation of Decision 20.14 and activities delivered under the auspices of ICCWC, with a particular focus on activities conducted since CoP20.
- Information on the development of the ICCWC Strategic Action Plan 2027-2030 which will be launched an ICCWC side event at SC81.
- Other matters.
- ICCWC Annual Report 2025 available in English/French/Spanish – **SC81 Inf. 3**
- Two ICCWC side events: 3 and 4 November (12:15 – 13:45), Room 4

SC81 invited consider recommendations related to: Parties efforts to combat wildlife crime; the work of ICCWC and feedback to continuously enhance ICCWC interventions; engagement in ICCWC initiatives; and funding support for implementation of the ICCWC Vision 2030 and its Strategic Action Plan for 2027-2030.



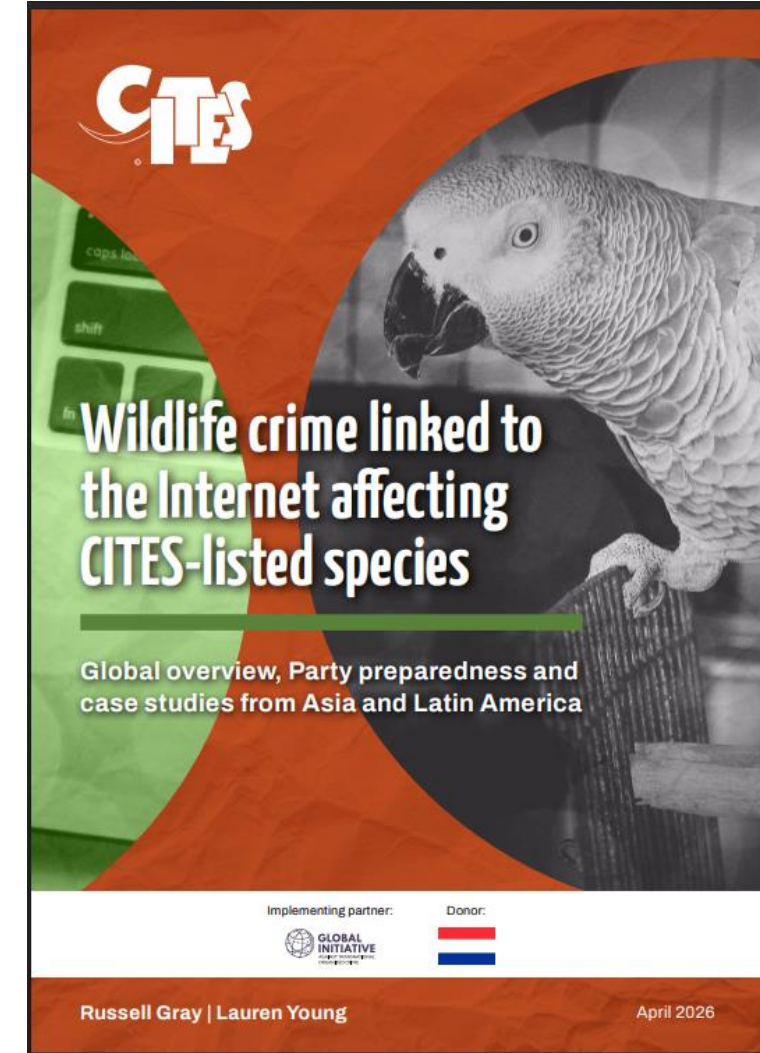
Agenda Item 37

Wildlife crime linked to the Internet (SC81 Doc. 37.3)

- Two regional studies focusing on Asia and Latin America completed - **Annex** to the document
- Two further studies focusing on Africa and Europe will be conducted

SC81 invited to consider:

- ✓ implementation of provisions regarding wildlife crime linked to the Internet in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev CoP20) on *Compliance and enforcement*;
- ✓ amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev CoP20)
- ✓ sharing the studies with relevant national authorities
- ✓ regarding Facebook, which the studies show accounts for the vast majority of wildlife-related listings online.



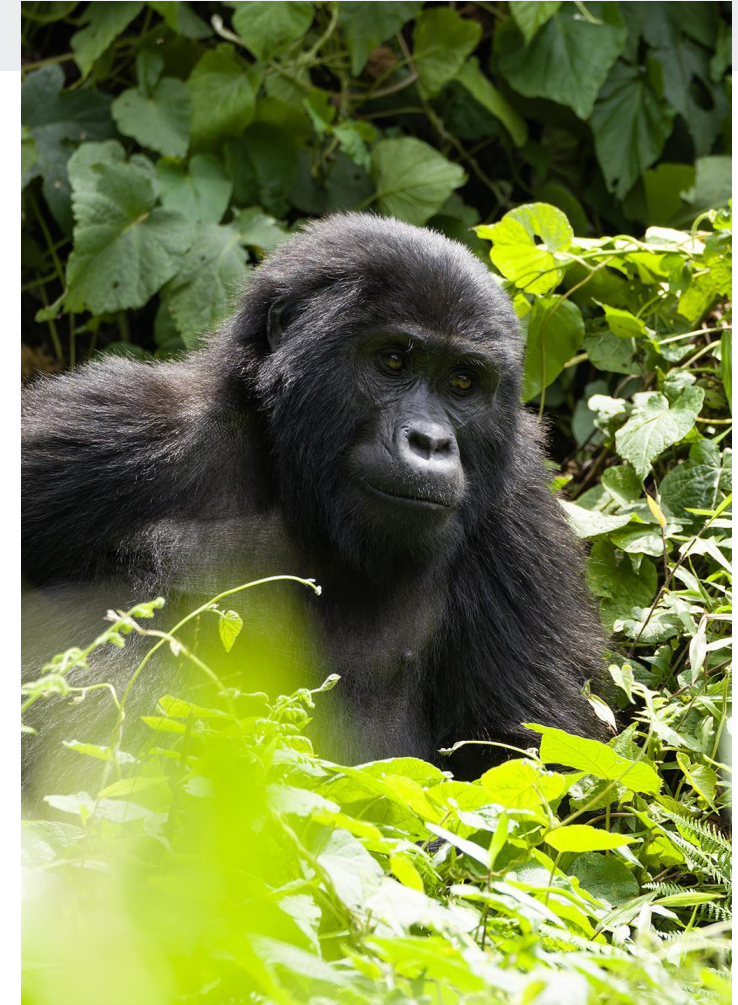
Agenda Item 38

Great Apes (*Hominidae* spp.) (SC81 Doc. 38)

- Information from Parties regarding implementation of relevant Decisions on Great Apes
- Responses to Notification were limited and only one great ape range State responded. As a result, a full assessment of the implementation of Decision 20.77 and Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18) was not possible.
- Terms of Reference and *modus operandi* for the CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force - **Annex** to the document

SC81 invited to:

- ✓ note the responses to Notification and information in the document
- ✓ agree the **Terms of Reference and *modus operandi* for the CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force**
- ✓ encourage Parties to provide financial support for the convening of an in-person meeting of the Task Force



Gorilla beringei beringei
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Agenda Item 58

Tigers (*Panthera tigris*) in captivity (SC81 Doc. 58)

- Reporting to SC81 focus on implementation of Decisions related to tigers in captivity.
- Various other Decisions related to big cats were adopted at CoP20. Reporting on these will be provided to SC82.
- Document SC81 Doc.58 provides reporting on:
 - Implementation of Decision 20.189.
 - Implementation of country-specific recommendations (China, Czechia; South Africa, Thailand, the United States of America and Viet Nam).

SC81 invited to consider:

- ✓ Implementation of Decision 20.189;
- ✓ proposal to be considered by the Committee at SC82, regarding incorporating the Decision 20.189 approach as an Annex to Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP20) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*
- ✓ Noting that responses to a Notification to the Parties that were limited and therefore did not allow for a robust assessment regarding the overall implementation of Decision 20.189
- ✓ recommendations related to the country specific recommendations and the Parties concerned.

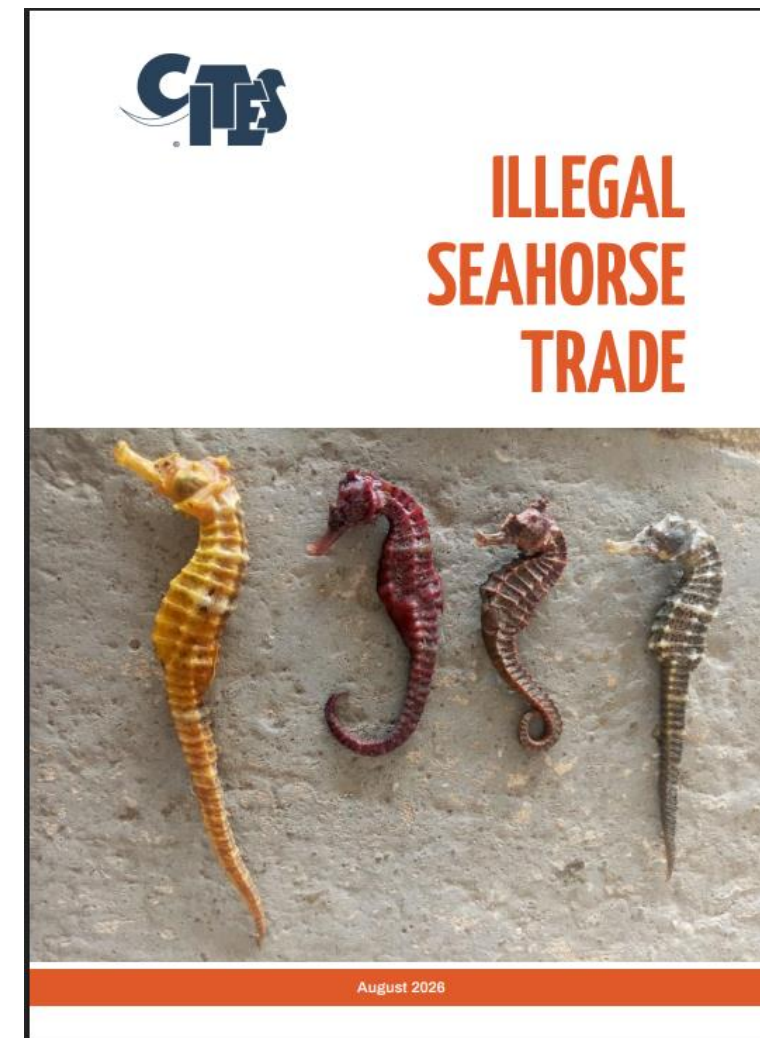
Agenda Item 61

Seahorses (*Hippocampus spp.*) (SC81 Doc. 61)

- Information received from Parties regarding implementation of relevant Decisions on Seahorses.
- **Report on global illegal trade in seahorses** finalized. Includes information on field research conducted in Senegal and Viet Nam – **Annex** to the document.
- Provides a wealth of information for Parties to draw upon to strengthen and inform the measures and activities they deploy to address illegal trade in seahorses.

SC81, *inter alia*, invited to consider recommendations:

- ✓ related to the report that was finalized.
- ✓ Establishment of an intersessional working group on seahorses.



Other documents related to enforcement and illegal trade

Agenda Item 39

Rhinoceroses (*Rhinocerotidae* spp.) (SC81 Doc. 39)

Agenda Item 39

Tortoises and freshwater turtles (*Testudines* spp.) from Madagascar (SC81 Doc. 40.1 and SC81 Doc. 40.2)



Summary & Highlights

Briefing: 81st meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC81)



Ms Thea Carroll

Chief, Science Unit, CITES Secretariat



Agenda Item 7

Report of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees (23 Items) (SC81 Doc. 7)

ANIMALS

16 items reported on, incl.

- Feasibility of an adapted RST process for sharks & rays
- Trade in stony corals
- Ranching of aquatic species
- Quotas for species included in Appendix I
- West African vultures
- CITES-CMS African Carnivore Initiative
- Eels
- Deep-water elasmobranchs
- Sea cucumbers
- Queen conch
- Periodic review of the Appendices

PLANTS

6 items reported on:

- Identification of timber and wood products
- *Boswellia* trees
- Edible tuberous orchids
- Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species
- Periodic review of the Appendices

JOINT MEETING ITEMS & WORKING GROUPS

1 item reported on:
Country-wide Review of Significant Trade

Plants Committee – intersessional working groups: 4
Animals Committee – intersessional working groups: 7
Joint AC/PC intersessional working groups: 2

Agenda Item 19

CITES and forests (SC81 Doc. 19)

- **The CITES Forest Compendium (CoP20-CoP21)**

- One reference point for forest priorities (focus on tree species).
- 18 Resolutions and Decisions on 13 topics.
- Basis for partner synergies and catalyzing timely implementation for tree species.
- Agreed at PC28, and soon available in CITES and forests webpage.

- **Towards improved trade reporting for tree species**

- Revisions proposed to annual report guidelines, based on PC28 recommendations.
- See SC81 doc. 31.2.

- **SC81 is invited to:**

- Note progress.
- Acknowledge challenges for implementing the Forest Compendium, including resource mobilization and means of implementation.

Agenda Item 35 and 36

Review of Significant Trade (SC81 Doc. 35.1; 35.2; 35.3) &

Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity (SC81 Doc. 36.1; 36.2)

Review of Significant Trade (RST)

Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18)

Article IV implementation • NDFs • identification of problems and solutions

98

species/country cases

72 / 26

fauna / flora

26

new cases selected at
AC34 & PC28

Review of trade in specimens reported as produced in captivity

Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP20)

Source codes • legal origin of parental stock • captive-production claims

54

species/country cases

16

ongoing cases

10

new cases selected at AC34

Key issues for SC81:

- **Implementation of recommendations** – assess progress by Parties and determine appropriate next steps.
- **Centrochelys sulcata** – remind range States that Annotation A24 establishes a zero annual export quota for wild specimens traded for primarily commercial purposes.

Agenda Item 36

Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity (SC81 Doc. 36.1; 36.2)

OVERVIEW

- Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP20):
 - Incorrect application of source codes / misuse of source codes
 - Concerns relating to legal origin of parental stocks
- 54 cases of species/country combinations
- 16 ongoing cases
- 10 new cases included in the review – AC34

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF AC

- *Centrochelys sulcata* / Benin
- *Centrochelys sulcata* / Mali
- *Centrochelys sulcata* / Togo
- *Testudo graeca* / Jordan
- *Testudo kleinmanni* / Egypt

SC invited to remind all range States of *Centrochelys sulcata* – Annotation A24: a zero annual export quota applies to specimens removed from the wild and traded for primarily commercial purposes.

Agenda Item 62

Paubrasilia echinata (SC81 Doc. 62.1; 62.2)

SC IWG Report

- Funding
- Main challenges in implementing traceability systems
- Establishing the origin of regulated *Paubrasilia echinata* specimens to be exported/re-exported
- Due diligence – including legal acquisition, chain of custody
- Reporting of seizures
- Awareness-raising initiatives
- Research

PC Chair and Secretariat

Plants Committee considered two Terms of Reference for two studies:

- 1) Traceability of *Paubrasilia echinata* bows, bow blanks and wood stockpiles
- 2) Development of standard conversion factors for *Paubrasilia echinata*



SC81 is invited to

- Consider ToR for traceability study and provide inputs
- Note progress made by the IWG and provide inputs to inform further work
- Remind Parties, IGOs, NGOs, commercial traders and producers, music industry and stakeholders that the CoP urged them to implement decisions on *Paubrasilia*

Agenda Item 55

Endemic species (SC81 Doc. 55)

Trade in threatened endemic species

- >1,800 species covered by responses to a Notification
- >250 species with recorded illegal trade; founder stock concerns raised for 48
- Step wise approach proposed for case studies

SC81 is invited to

- Advise on the draft ToR and template
- Consider first selection of case studies
- Regional members to nominate additional taxa
- Invite Parties to undertake case studies and share the results

Agenda Item 59

Saiga (SC81 Doc. 59)

Information shared on:

- Kazakhstan's legal framework for the sale of saiga horn and derivatives, and the step wise process for implementing the annotation
- Commercial trade, seizures
- Internal market controls for saiga horns, including stockpiles (incl pre-Convention)
- AC34 outcomes: Clarification on trade reported as source code C; positive progress made by Kazakhstan acknowledged – 2026 survey: estimated 4.7 million individuals

SC81 is invited to

- Note key aspects presented in the document

Agenda Item 63

Fungi (SC81 Doc. 63)

Resolving implementation of the CoP12 decision that the Convention applies to fungi

- Scientific and technical advice provided by the Animals and Plants Committees
- Resolutions that may be relevant
- Concerns expressed by some Parties about the legal basis for inclusion of fungi under CITES
- AC/PC recommendation – future proposals to include fungi in Appendices: delayed entry into force

SC81 is invited to

- Consider the concerns raised
- Review the scientific and technical advice
- Develop recommendations to CoP21



Financial Matters

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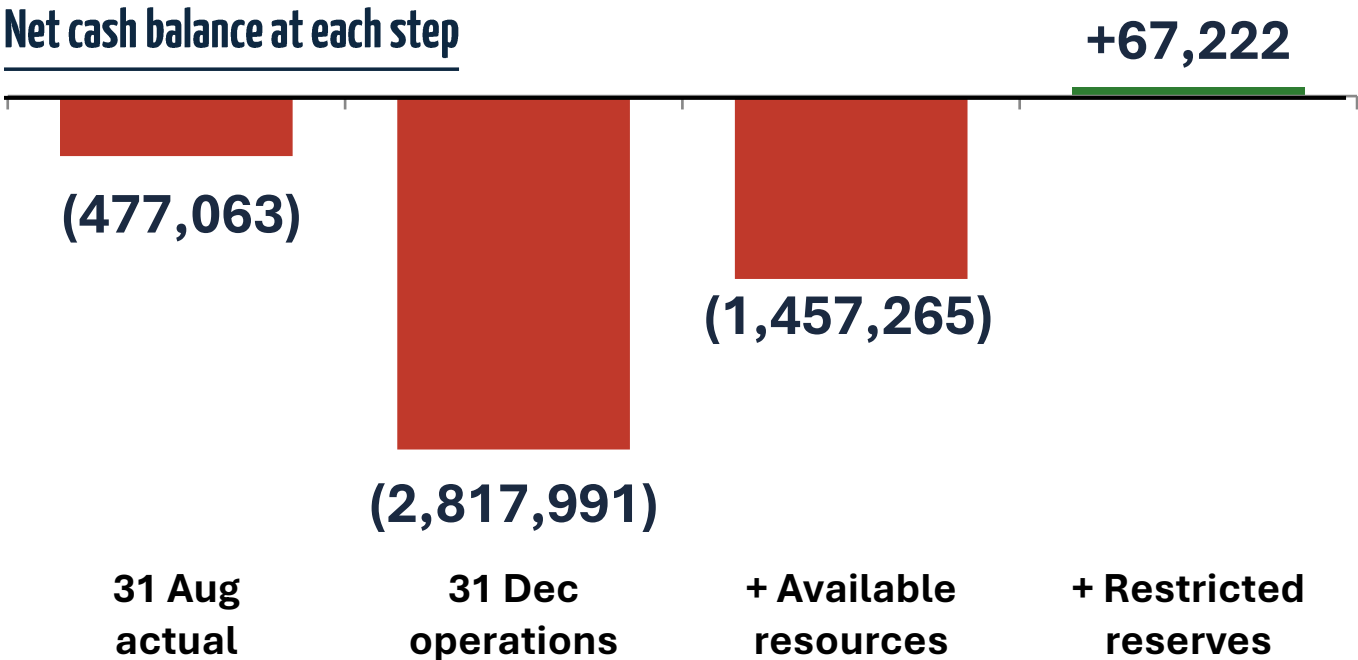


Ms Ivonne Higuero
Secretary-General, CITES



2026 CITES Financial and Liquidity/Cash Status

Operational cash movements: January–August actual & September–December projected



48% of 2026 assessed contributions received by 31 Aug

(2.82M) projected operating deficit at 31 Dec if no contributions received

+0.07M year-end balance, after using ALL available and restricted funds

Balancing 2026 relies on using prior savings and the Working Capital Reserve

Parties with Unpaid Contributions

Parties with unpaid balances for 2026 and prior years for USD 5,000 or above (as of 23 Sept. 2026)

Algeria	Ecuador	Israel	Papua New Guinea	Venezuela
Argentina	Egypt	Italy	Portugal	Viet Nam
Bahamas	El Salvador	Kuwait	Republic of Korea	
Bahrain	Equatorial Guinea	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia	
Bolivia	Gabon	Libya	Somalia	
Burundi	Greece	Luxembourg	Syrian Arab Republic	
Chad	Hungary	Niger	Trinidad and Tobago	
Chile	India	Nigeria	Ukraine	
China	Iran	Pakistan	Uruguay	
Cuba	Iraq	Panama	USA	



Q & A

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Thank You

Merci

Gracias



спасибо



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