

Crocodile Specialist Group Steering Committee Meeting
Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Santa Fe, Argentina
(6 May 2018)

CITES

SC66

At the 66th CITES Standing Committee meeting (11-15 January 2016; SC66 Doc. 41), the European Union and Colombia held bilateral discussions regarding trade of *Caiman crocodilus fuscus* skins from Colombia. Colombia has been taking measures to prevent the illegal trade of *C. c. fuscus* skins, and wishes to cooperate with the Parties to ensure the legal origin of the traded species. Colombia agreed with the European Union to undertake the following actions:

1. By 28 February 2016 inform the Parties about regulations and mechanisms which enable the Colombian CITES Management Authority to monitor and control exports of *C. c. fuscus* specimens, with a special attention being given to procedures that ensure that regulations are not circumvented on the occasion of the cutting of the skins.
2. By 31 May 2016 inform the Parties about:
 - the population status and, if available, about studies, which are the basis to implement any future ranching program of *C. c. fuscus*;
 - perspectives and developments to establish a ranching program, starting with selected pilot sites.
3. Establish a relevant export quota based on a non-detriment finding for ranched specimens originating from pilot sites as referred to under recommendation 2 by 31 May 2016.
4. Establish and implement a marking system for ranched specimens, which allow differentiating ranched and captive-bred specimens.
5. Clarify whether the current Colombian legislation prohibits the exports of skins over a certain size.
6. If such a prohibition exists, clarify whether existing legal measures enable seizing and confiscating illegally acquired skins. If this is not the case, adopt measures to seize skins larger than the size limit established by the Colombian legislation and ensure that these skins remain under control of the Colombian authorities. Such measures should be adopted by 28 February 2016 and implemented by 31 May 2016.
7. Report in writing its progress to SC67.

Concerns were raised on the lack of progress made by Madagascar on the implementation of CITES for species of ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.), rosewoods and palisanders (*Dalbergia* spp.).

SC67

At the 67th CITES Standing Committee meeting (23 September 2016), Colombia reported on “Implementation of the Convention Relating to Captive-bred and Ranched Specimens - Trade in *Caiman crocodilus fuscus* Skins from Colombia” (SC67 Doc. 16). The SC noted the report and invited Colombia to provide a progress report at its 69th meeting about the implementation of the Colombian declaration on *Caiman crocodilus fuscus* that was provided at SC66.

The CITES Secretariat (SC67 Doc. 19.1) recommended that the Parties suspend trade in all specimens of CITES-listed species, including *Crocodylus niloticus*, from Madagascar until various actions had been taken by Madagascar with regard to reporting on illegal trade in rosewood. The SC decided to give Madagascar until 31 December 2016 to comply with reporting obligations, but more importantly, SC67 agreed to exclude *C. niloticus* from any potential trade suspension that may be imposed on trade in all CITES-listed species from Madagascar in early 2017.

CoP17

Four amendment proposals were considered at CoP17.

- *Crocodylus acutus* (Colombia): The proposal to transfer the Cispatá Bay population of *C. acutus* from Appendix I to Appendix II was accepted by consensus.
- *Crocodylus moreletii* (Mexico): The proposal to remove the zero quota on wild specimens of *C. moreletii* was accepted by consensus. Mexico is proposing to develop a ranching program with rural community involvement.

- *Crocodylus niloticus* (Madagascar): Following consultation with Parties at CoP17, including the European Union, Madagascar amended the annotation on its proposal to provide clarity and to address some of the concerns raised. Following presentation of its proposal, including the new annotation, Madagascar sought the establishment of a drafting group to refine the annotation. The drafting group, comprising Egypt, EU, USA, CSG, Wildlife Management International and the CITES Secretariat, discussed the annotation, but were unable to reach consensus, mainly due to EU concerns about the “future implementation” of Madagascar’s management program. It appeared that the EU’s concerns did not lie with the annotation, but with future implementation of the program. When the proposal was reintroduced into Committee 1, the EU and USA voiced their concerns about future implementation, and Madagascar withdrew its proposal.
- *Crocodylus porosus* (Malaysia): Indonesia voiced concerns about the wild harvest in the proposal to transfer *C. porosus* from Appendix I to Appendix II, citing concerns of potential illegal trade in wild crocodiles across the border with Sarawak. Korea initially opposed the proposal, but in the interests of reaching consensus, later supported the proposal. It was accepted by consensus.

Other issues discussed at CoP17 included:

- Hunting Trophies CoP17 Docs. 39.1 (European Union) and 39.2 (South Africa) were combined as CoP17 Doc. 68, which led to Resolution Conf. 13.7 (Rev. CoP16) *Control of trade in personal and household effects* being modified such that hunting trophies will no longer be exempt from CITES permitting requirements, unless Parties have bilateral written agreements in place.
- CITES and Livelihoods CoP16 (2013) adopted Resolution Conf. 16.61 *CITES and Livelihoods*, recognising that the implementation of CITES is better achieved with the engagement of rural communities, especially those which are traditionally dependent on CITES-listed species for their livelihoods. The Standing Committee in consultation with the Secretariat, prepared CoP17 Doc. 16, reporting on the SC Working Group on this issue. Rural Communities Committee Recognising the important role that rural communities play in conservation. Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe proposed the establishment of a Rural Communities Committee of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17 Doc. 13).
- Documents 45 *Traceability* and 46 *Pilot testing of a global traceability information system for reptile skins*. Japan and TRAFFIC noted that each supply chain had its own unique characteristics and believed it was important to strike a balance between providing a minimum standard of universal guidance and giving Parties the flexibility to deal with specific circumstances. Indonesia asked that it be clarified that they had not yet participated in the pilot projects referred to in Annex 2 of Doc. 46, indicating that it was still in the process of developing a memorandum of understanding with national stakeholders. The EU stressed the importance of assessing the costs to each stakeholder of implementing any systems under test, and of keeping the AC and SC informed of progress. GS1 offered to lend its expertise in the area of labelling and traceability. Following debate, Brazil, Mexico, Switzerland and the Secretariat were assigned as a drafting group to produce a revised proposal for consideration by Committee 2. A revised Draft Decision on Traceability was subsequently submitted for consideration, and one minor amendment was made before it was adopted.

The CSG took the opportunity to involve members of the Future Leaders Working Group at CoP17, including Matt Shirley, Sergio Balaguera-Reina and Sally Isberg, as observers at the IUCN meetings held each morning, together with Tom Dacey.

SC68

At SC68 (4 October 2016) Carolina Caceres (Canada) was elected as the new SC Chair. She had served as Chair of Animals Committee since CoP16.

EU Review (Colombia)

On 19 May 2017 a European Union delegation visited Colombia, to review trade in *C. c. fuscus* and *Crocodylus acutus* products within the framework of CITES. Sergio Balaguera-Reina (CSG Regional Vice Chair, Latin America and the Caribbean) attended a consultation meeting in Bogota, Colombia.

SC69

At its 69th meeting (27 November-1 December 2017) the SC noted SC69 Doc. 32 and established an intersessional working group on captive-bred and ranched specimens with the mandate to provide advice to the Secretariat, upon request.

Animals Committee

The 13th meeting of the CITES Animals Committee will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, 16-21 July 2018.

SC70

The 70th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee will be held in Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018.

CoP18

The 18th Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP18) will take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 23 May-3 June 2019. Proposals to amend Appendix I or Appendix II pursuant to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP15) must be communicated to the CITES Secretariat by 24 December 2018. Any amendment proposal submitted pursuant to the ranching resolution [Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)] must be submitted by 27 June 2018. A Party intending to submit a proposal to amend the appendices for a species that occurs partly or totally outside of the territory under its jurisdiction and does not intend to consult with range states before submission, must submit it by 27 June 2018.

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