

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

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**Trade Monitoring**

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Data on world trade in crocodylians are obtained from CITES annual reports, the Fishery Statistics Division of FAO, and the Crocodile Farmers Association of Zimbabwe. Annual reports to CITES should be submitted by 31 October of the year following that in which the trade occurred and therefore 2016 is the most recent year for which we have reasonably complete data. The deadline for 2016 reports is long past but as usual, some crocodylian-producer countries have failed to submit their reports. Although problematic, this is not necessarily disastrous as the data from an exporting country may be recorded in the annual reports of importing countries. The real problem occurs when both ends of the trade route fail to report adequately.

Annual reports that might improve our understanding of recent trade and that have yet to be received by the CITES Secretariat include: Australia, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Panama and Papua New Guinea for both 2015 and 2016, and Bangladesh, Mozambique, South Africa and United Republic of Tanzania for 2016.

Since the 23rd Working Meeting in Skukuza, skin trade data for 2015 and 2016 has been collated for the FAO Yearbook of Fishery Statistics. Although there have been fluctuations in the species involved in the skin trade, by 2012 it appeared that it had stabilized at around 1.4 million skins entering international trade annually. However, 2013 showed a rise to almost 1.9 million with increased trade in all of the major species. Data for 2014 showed a fall to 1.8 million with a further decrease to 1.5 million in 2015. Preliminary analysis of data for 2016 suggest a value around 1.4 million, but it is too soon to be confident of this.

The untimely death of Don Ashley in 2016 meant that there was no IACTS report that year. However, I maintained contact with the Louisiana Alligator Advisory Council, which decided eventually to instruct the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to continue to fund production of the report to UNEP-WCMC, with me as the sub-contractor analyzing the data. A report catching up the missing year was produced in September 2017 and the report for this year is due for completion in July 2018.

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