

Minutes

**7th MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS OF THE
COMPETENT CITES MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES**

Brussels, 22 June 2017

Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of the previous meeting

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Summary of conclusions of the 6th Expert Group meeting

The summary of conclusions of the 6th Expert Group was tabled for information.

Nature of the meeting

The meeting gathered representatives of the CITES Management Authorities of 26 EU Member States.

3. Update on on-going activities

- The Commission informed the Expert Group that the intra-EU Commission process had been launched for the adoption of a new "suspension Regulation", which would replace Implementing Regulation 2015/736; the adoption is expected by the end of 2017.
- The Chair mentioned that an updated version of the [Reference Guide on EU Wildlife Trade Regulations](#) had been published on the website of the European Commission on wildlife trade and thanked the Expert Group for the contributions.
- The Chair reminded the Member States that all documents discussed at the Expert Group Meeting are made public.

4. EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking

4.1 Achievements

The Commission informed about the conclusions of the last Council of Justice and Home Affairs (18/05/2017) where it had been decided that environmental crime would become for the first time a priority in organised crime, singling out wildlife trade and waste trafficking.

In this context, the Commission (DG Home) would organise from 29-30/6/2017 a workshop on the Multiannual Strategic Plan on Environmental crime for the next four

years with the objective of identifying priorities to enhance the involvement of all enforcement agencies against environmental crime.

The Chair stressed the ongoing review of the Environmental Crime Directive led by DG Justice, planned to be finalised by the end of the year. Member States were invited to provide the Commission with information on prosecution cases for onward transmission to DG Justice.

The Commission stressed that wildlife trafficking would take for the first time a clear stand in the conclusions of the G20 meeting in July 2017.

The Commission recalled its obligation to report to the Council and the EP by July 2018 on the progress made in implementing the EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking.

4.2 Next steps (in particular in relation to a possible new initiative on EU trade in ivory)

The Chair recalled that the Action Plan had set clear instructions for tightening controls on ivory trade and the suspension of export of raw ivory from the EU. In this context he underlined the importance to widely share the two Commission guidance documents¹ published on 17/5/2017 (JO 2017/C 154/06 and 2017/C 154/07) among their national stakeholders.

Working with Member States, the Commission is now gathering data on the extent of legal and illegal ivory trade in, to and from the EU, in order to guide possible future initiative at the EU level on this issue. The Commission is also considering the possibility to launch a public consultation on that matter.

5. Guidance documents

5.1 Overview document

The Chair informed the Group that works were under progress.

5.2 Guidance document on the EU regime governing intra-EU trade and export of ivory

This item was discussed under 4.2.

5.3 Guidance document on Worked Specimens

The Commission thanked the Member States for their efforts in contributing to the guidance document on this issue, which was published on 17 May 2017.

5.4 Review of guidance on rhino horns

The Chair stressed the need for updating the guidance on rhino horns. The item was deferred to the next meeting.

¹ Cf. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/pdf/guidance_ivory.pdf and http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C_.2017.154.01.0015.01.ENG&toc=OJ:C:2017:154:TOC

5.5 State of play regarding guidance documents on legality of timber and legal acquisition

The Commission explained the state of play of the guidance documents and that further work would still needed to be done. The item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. Implementation of CITES listings agreed at CoP17 (with a particular focus on *Dalbergia* and grey parrots)

Dalbergia

The group discussed the main challenges linked to implementing the CITES listings for *Dalbergia* species agreed at CITES CoP17. A lot of implementation challenges had been experienced by a number of Member States, not only in respect to musical instruments but to tools and spare parts containing *Dalbergia*. For the majority of the EU Member States, the new listing had translated into considerable additional work. It also created important burden for some economic sectors (in particular the music instruments producers, traders and retailers).

The issue had also been discussed at the Enforcement Group on 12/6/17 and in the SRG of 21/6/2017.

The Chair concluded that:

- the questions around the annotation to the listing of *Dalbergia* would be raised at the Plants and Standing Committees, as well as with third countries, with a view to defining a way forward to address these questions in the CITES context;
- an electronic working group would be created, composed of management and scientific authorities from EU Member States, with a view to sharing information on the challenges associated with the implementation of the listings and the solutions to address them.

Grey parrots

The group discussed the implementation of the listing for the grey parrot.

The Chair explained that a first draft of a questionnaire to gather more data on the breeding and trade in this species in the EU was under finalisation and that Member States would be consulted in the near future.

Member States stressed the relevance of gathering data on the amount of birds and their annual production in the EU as well as the number of commercial facilities in the Member States.

7. Definition of pre-Convention specimens for intra-EU trade purposes

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

8. Identification methods for Annex A birds (source code C)

The Group exchanged views on their experiences with the marking of certain Annex A birds.

9. Imports into the EU of salamanders infected by the pathogene Bsal

The Commission (DG SANTE) presented the scope of the draft Commission Decision on the import of salamanders infected by the pathogene Bsal.

The Commission invited the Member States to consult their veterinary counterparts on the draft Decision. The Commission would inform the Member States about the adoption.

10. Any other business

10.1 Reporting obligations illegal and legal trade

In the light of simplifying the reporting process, the Commission had sent on 31/5/2017 a letter on the reporting of seizures which was recalled by the Chair. The letter suggested to the Member States to continue to report under the current format to EU-TWIX and that EU-TWIX would adapt the data to the CITES reporting format and transmit it to the Commission. The Commission would finally submit all annual illegal trade reports from the Member States to the CITES Secretariat by copying the EU Member States.

As a second item and following the Enforcement Group meeting of 12/6/2017, the Chair suggested to change the requirement for reporting on significant seizures from a six-month to a yearly basis. This would imply for Member States to report quite early in the year but allow for a summarizing analysis at the end of the same year and thus to make the best of the resources.

The Commission requested Member States to provide further comments on the reporting obligations and their related deadlines by 25/08/2017.

10.2 other issues

One Member State tabled for discussion a case relating to the definition in Article 54 of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006. The group agreed that, if the conditions under Article 54 are met, an offspring could be considered as born and bred in captivity when it has been bred by a breeding stock coming from the wild.

A number of specific points relating to the implementation of the EU wildlife trade regulation were raised by some Members of the Group. In view of their specificities, these Members were invited to share their requests with the group in writing to the Commission which would then convey them to the group for feedback.

Conclusions / recommendations / opinions and next steps

Conclusions and next steps have been indicated above for each agenda point.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Expert Group was scheduled for 18 September 2017.

ATTENDANCE LIST
of the
7th MEETING OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS OF THE
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MEMBER STATE	ORGANISATION	PARTICIPANTS
BELGIUM	Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain and Environment	2
BULGARIA	Ministry of Environment and Water	1
CROATIA	Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection	1
CZECH REPUBLIC	Ministry of the Environment	1
	Permanent Representation of CZ to the EU	0
	Agency for Nature Conservation	0
CYPRUS	Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment	0
DENMARK	Ministry of Environment	1
GERMANY	Bundesamt für Naturschutz	1
	Federal Ministry for the Environment	1
ESTONIA	Ministry of Environment	2
IRELAND	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	1
GREECE	Ministry of the Environment and Energy	1
SPAIN	Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad	2
FRANCE	Ministère de l'écologie, de l'Energie et de la Mer	3
	Ministère des Affaires étrangères	0
ITALY	Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare	2
	Arma dei Carabinieri	1
LATVIA	Nature Conservation Agency	1
LITHUANIA	Environmental Protection Agency	1

LUXEMBOURG	Ministry for sustainable Development and Infrastructures - Environment department	1
HUNGARY	Ministry for Rural Development	2
MALTA	Environment & Resources Authority	2
NETHERLANDS	Ministry of Economic Affairs	2
AUSTRIA	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management	1
POLAND	Ministry of Environment	2
PORTUGAL	Instituto da Conservação da Natureza	2
ROMANIA	Ministry of Environment and Forestry	0
SLOVENIA	Ministry of Environment	1
SLOVAKIA	Ministry of Environment	1
FINLAND	Finnish Environment Institute	2
	Ministry of Environment	0
SWEDEN	Swedish Board of Agriculture	1
	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency	0
UNITED KINGDOM	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	2