

CITES CoP19 Highlights: Tuesday, 22 November 2022

Listing proposals on horned lizards, helmethead gecko, saiga, African lion, West African vultures, and songbird trade were some of the issues discussed today.

Committee I

Proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17): NAMIBIA introduced CoP19 Doc.87.1.

SENEGAL, LIBERIA, the US, MALI, the UK, GABON, INDIA, and others opposed the document, stressing that to amend the listing criteria to include socio-economic considerations would significantly undermine the Convention's conservation outcomes. BOTSWANA, JAPAN, ZIMBABWE, and others supported the document.

Committee I voted to reject the document, with 31 for, 86 against, and 11 abstained.

Panthera leo: The Secretariat introduced CoP19 Doc.72. UGANDA, MALI, ZIMBABWE, LIBERIA, and others agreed with the recommendations.

Committee I agreed to the document.

Saiga spp.: The AC Chair presented CoP19 Doc.76. The US supported the proposal. CMS highlighted the cooperation between CITES and CMS.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Accipitridae spp.: The Secretariat introduced CoP19 Doc.58 on West African vultures.

MALI, NIGER, the US, NIGERIA, SENEGAL, the EU, BURKINA FASO, and others supported the draft decisions.

Committee I agreed to the draft decisions with minor edits.

Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes spp.): The AC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.74.

MALI, the US, the EU, MALAYSIA, and SINGAPORE supported the document and highlighted the global scope of illicit songbird trade.

Committee I agreed to the draft decisions in Annex 1 as originally submitted, including the renewal of relevant draft decisions.

Conservation of Amphibians (Amphibia spp.): The AC Chair presented CoP19 Doc.60. He sought an extension of Decisions 18.194 to 18.196.

Committee I agreed with the proposal.

Proposals to amend the Appendices: Tarentola chazaliae: Mauritania presented CoP19 Prop.16 (Rev.1) for the inclusion of helmethead gecko (*T. chazaliae*), in Appendix II. MALI, the EU, INDIA, SOMALIA, COSTA RICA, and SOMALIA supported the proposal

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Phrynosoma platyrhinos: The US introduced CoP19 Prop.17 for the inclusion of desert horned lizard (*P. platyrhinos*) in Appendix II, highlighting that the species is threatened due to habitat loss caused by land use and coastal development.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Phrynosoma spp.: MEXICO introduced CoP19 Prop.18 to include horned lizards (*Phrynosoma spp.*) in CITES Appendix II. SENEGAL, MALI, NIGER, and many other parties supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Tiliqua adelaidensis: AUSTRALIA introduced CoP19 Prop.19 to include the pygmy blue-tongued lizard (*T. adelaidensis*) in Appendix I. NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal by consensus.

Epicrates inornatus: The US introduced CoP19 Prop.20 to transfer the Puerto Rican boa (*E. inornatus*) from Appendix I to Appendix II following a periodic review. COSTA RICA, the EU, SENEGAL, and CAMBODIA supported the downlisting.

Committee I agreed by consensus to the proposal.

Crotalus horridus: The US introduced CoP19 Prop.21 to include the timber rattlesnake (*C. horridus*) in Appendix II. MALI, PANAMA, LIBERIA, SRI LANKA, and others supported the proposal. The EU and SWITZERLAND opposed it. CoP19 Prop.21 was withdrawn from consideration.

Chelus fimbriata and C. orinocensis: PERU introduced CoP19 Doc.22 to include the Amazon matamata (*C. fimbriata*) and Orinoco matamata (*C. orinocensis*) turtles in Appendix II. GUATEMALA, COSTA RICA, SENEGAL, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Chelydridae spp.: The US introduced CoP19 Prop.23 to transfer the alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*) and the common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) from Appendix III to Appendix II.

COSTA RICA, MALI, the UK, GUATEMALA, CHINA, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I voted to accept the proposal, with 82 for, 32 against, and 11 abstaining.

Graptemys spp.: The US introduced CoP19 Prop.24 to transfer five species of broad-headed map turtles (*G. barbouri*, *G. ernsti*, *G. gibbonsi*, *G. pearlensis*, and *G. pulchra*) from Appendix III to Appendix II. Many parties supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Rhodiola rosea and R. crenulata: The EU presented CoP19 Prop. 45 to include rhodiola (*R. rosea* and *R. crenulata*) and all other species of the genus in CITES Appendix II.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Standard Nomenclature for Rhodiola spp.: The EU presented CoP19 Doc.84.4 requesting the PC to consider the nomenclature issues related to *Rhodiola spp.*

Committee I agreed.

Orchidaceae: Switzerland introduced CoP19 Prop.52 to amend annotation #4 for orchid species (Orchidaceae) in Appendix II.

CHINA, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, CANADA, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I adopted the proposal with amendments.

Centrolenidae spp: COSTA RICA presented CoP19 Prop.34 for the inclusion of 12 species of glass frogs from the family Centrolenidae in Appendix II.

KUWAIT, GAMBIA, MALI, and others supported the proposal. The EU and CANADA noted that international trade is not a threat to this species.

Committee I agreed to the proposal by consensus.

Agalychnis lemur: PANAMA introduced CoP19 Prop.35 to include the lemur leaf frog (*A. lemur*) in Appendix II with a zero annual export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes.

MEXICO, SEYCHELLES, UK, SENEGAL, MALI, the EU, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Laotriton laoensis: The EU introduced Prop.36 (Rev.1) to list the Laos warty newt (*L. laoensis*) in Appendix II with a zero export quota for wild-taken specimens traded for commercial purposes.

By consensus, Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Batagur kachuga: INDIA introduced CoP19 Prop.25 (Rev.1) to transfer the red-crowned roofed turtle (*B. kachuga*) from Appendix II to Appendix I. COSTA RICA, SRI LANKA, and others supported the proposal.

By consensus, Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Cuora galbinifrons: VIET NAM introduced CoP19 Prop.26 to transfer the box turtle (*C. galbinifrons*) with two non-typical subspecies (*C. g. bourreti* and *C. g. picturata*) from Appendix II to Appendix I.

MALAYSIA, INDIA, and others supported the proposal.

Committee I agreed to the proposal.

Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species: Committee I Chair asked for comments on CoP19 Com.I.3, prepared by the drafting group on medicinal and aromatic plant species on the basis of document CoP19 Doc.82.

Committee I agreed to the draft decisions.

Marine turtles: Committee I Chair asked for comments on CoP19 Com.I.4, prepared by the working group on marine turtles (*Cheloniidae spp.* and *Dermochelyidae spp.*) on the basis of CoP19 Docs. 64.1 and 64.2.

Committee I agreed to the document.

Committee II

Interpretation and implementation matters: Regulation of trade: Purpose codes on CITES permits and certificates: The SC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.42. The UK and the EU supported re-establishing an intersessional working group.

Committee II agreed to the document with amendments.

Guidance for making legal acquisition findings: CANADA presented CoP19 Doc.40 and Doc.40.Add. The US recommended that the draft decisions invite parties to provide input on both the rapid guide and on digital solutions.

Committee II adopted the documents as amended.

Transport of live specimens: Improving implementation of the transport regulations: The US introduced CoP19 Doc.52.

Committee II agreed to the document as amended.

Electronic systems and information technologies and authentication and control of permits: SWITZERLAND introduced CoP19 Doc.41.

Discussion of this item to continue on Wednesday.

Labelling system for trade in caviar: The SC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.45. The EU provided comments on the mandate of the intersessional working group

Committee II agreed to the document with the EU amendment.

General Compliance and Enforcement: Domestic markets for frequently illegally traded specimens: The SC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.39. GEORGIA proposed expanding study to all Appendix II species.

Committee II agreed to the document with amendments.

Enforcement: The Secretariat introduced CoP Doc.33.

Committee II accepted the document and its draft decisions.

Annual illegal trade reports: The Secretariat introduced CoP19 Doc.34, which presents an analysis of CITES annual illegal trade reports.

Committee II adopted the proposed amendments and draft decisions.

Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species: The SC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.35. The US and SINGAPORE supported the document, with the US providing a small amendment.

Committee II agreed to the document as amended.

Demand reduction to combat illegal trade: The SC Chair introduced CoP19 Doc.38.

SENEGAL and many others welcomed the document.

Committee II agreed to the document with amendments.

Exemptions and special trade provisions: Registration of operations that breed Appendix I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes: The US introduced CoP19 Doc.55.

Committee II agreed to the draft decision proposed by CANADA.

Strategic Matters: Action plan on gender related matters: MEXICO reported back on CoP19 Com.II.3, prepared by the working group on the action plan on gender related matters on the basis of CoP19 Doc.25. She noted INDONESIA did not agree with the use of the term “all genders,” and instead recommended the exclusive use of the term “women and girls.” INDONESIA, KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA, and others objected to the definition of gender in the document, proposing that “gender” should be defined according to national laws.

Committee II called for a vote by secret ballot on INDONESIA’s proposal, which was rejected with 50 in favor, 51 against, and 4 abstaining.

Committee II then called for a vote by secret ballot on the original proposal, which was adopted with 73 in favor, 29 against, and 4 abstaining.

Communications concerning amendments to the Appendices received by the Depositary Government after the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties: BELGIUM reported back on CoP19 Com.II.4, prepared on the basis of CoP19 Doc.88 and information document CoP19 Inf.17 (Rev.1). Committee II agreed to the proposed amendments.

Totoaba macdonaldi: The US reported back on CoP19 Com. II.5, produced with MEXICO in relation to CoP19 Doc.29.2.1.

Committee II agreed on the compromise suggested by both parties.

In the Corridors

The magnetic mass amusement from the FIFA 2022 World Cup, the Earth’s most popular sports tournament, could be clearly seen on the distracted faces of some delegates: some were caught half-listening to the Committee deliberations, half-scrolling through soccer updates. Rather than considering vote outcomes, one delegate was overheard speaking of how Messi’s Argentina lost to Saudi Arabia. This passion was of no surprise to South and Central American countries, including Panama, where soccer and biodiversity are both an integral part of daily life: delegates were welcomed to the Convention Center by a big screen showing live football games from Qatar, and a photo was circulating of an African cheetah kicking a soccer ball.

Earlier last week, the Chair of Committee I had asked delegates through a test vote: “Do you intend to watch the 2022 World Cup during CITES’ sessions?” It would not be hard to guess who voted yes. Cognizant of the draw, the Chair of Committee I promised “drinks and dinner” to parties to safeguard a quorum for the late evening session, rightfully alarmed by Committee II’s experience of losing quorum three times on Monday evening. He thus made it clear that though he would not referee delegate preferences, skipping essential work would definitely be seen as offside.