

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been submitted by Germany as Chair of the Standing Committee working group on sturgeons and paddlefish.

Background

2. At the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee the documents AC27 Doc. 21.1, AC27 Doc. 21.2 and AC27 Doc. 21.3. referring to sturgeons and paddlefish had been submitted for discussion.
3. With document SC65 Doc. 47 the Chair of the Animals Committee reported to the Standing Committee about the duties of the Animals Committee assigned by Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) and introduced document AC27 Doc. 21.3 submitted by Germany on 'Evaluation of the register of licensed exporters and of processing and repackaging plants for specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species established in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16)'.
4. The Standing Committee agreed to establish an intersessional working group to review Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16), taking into account the proposal in the Annex of document SC65 Doc. 47 and the comments made during the debate, and to report to the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee.
5. The Committee agreed on the composition of the working group as follows: China, France, Germany (Chair), Italy, Japan, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States of America, International Caviar Importers Association (ICIA), IWMC – World Conservation Trust and UNEP-WCMC and a representative of the United States Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA).

Discussion

6. The working group started its deliberations in October 2014. Discussion input was provided by China, France, Germany, Japan, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States of America, International Caviar Importers Association (ICIA), IWMC – World Conservation Trust and UNEP-WCMC. At the very beginning several members of the working group expressed their intention that the resolution's wording should reflect how seriously trade with caviar has been changed over the last years from wild taken caviar to caviar produced in aquaculture.
7. Considering the fact that the decisions which had been agreed upon at SC45 in 2001 in Paris were merely directed to the establishment of quotas in 2001 and 2002 and specifically directed to shared stocks of the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Amur River only and that in 2007 the concept of a collective use of

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

any shared stocks of sturgeons and paddlefish was fully embedded in resolution Conf. 12.7 at CoP 14, the working group discussed whether or not the reference to the outcome of the Paris agreement in the preambular text of the resolution is still of any relevance and should be maintained. The working group concluded that as an historical reference the Paris Agreement as origin of a new regional cooperation approach should be retained in a revised resolution text.

8. Referring to the first CONSIDERING paragraph the representative of the Russian Federation referred to document CoP16 Inf. 53 and document AC28 Doc. 16.3 and proposed to delete this paragraph. The 16th Conference of the Parties did not agree to delete this paragraph. The working group was unable to come to a recommendation without knowing the opinions of all Eurasian range states whether this paragraph should be removed. Hence it was decided to retain this paragraph by taking into consideration that all Eurasian range states can resume the discussion at the meeting of the Standing Committee or at next Conference of the Parties.
9. The working group agreed that the caviar labelling system has proven its effectiveness and therefore proposes to include such a statement as conclusion in a revised text accordingly.
10. Based on the fact of increasing aquaculture operations worldwide the working group proposes to draw the special attention of both management and enforcement authorities to this development and drafted a new paragraph considering this aspect.
11. The initial approach to set up a special Caviar Trade Database to monitor caviar exports and re-exports was reasonable when still trade quotas for wild caviar were agreed and notified. It became operational on 30th November 2007. However it must be noted that from the beginning the database lacked the information of exports coming from some range states - a situation which limited the practical usefulness within the day to day work of CITES Management Authorities significantly. Over the last years the situation changed considerably because no quotas were notified anymore for wild caviar from stocks shared between different range states. The Caviar Trade Database must therefore now be considered as an additional reporting burden to Parties without providing additional advantage for the tracing of wild caviar traded on a quota basis. Hence the working group recommends the deletion of this paragraph and to close the database.
12. The working group discussed whether or not the reference to document CoP12 Doc. 42.1 is still needed as the respective document on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.12 (rev) on conservation of sturgeons had been discussed at CoP 12 with the result that a new resolution, i.e. Resolution Conf. 12.7 (meanwhile Rev. CoP16) was adopted by the Parties and the resolutions Res. Conf. 10.12 (rev) and Res. Conf. 11.13 were repealed. As the working group did not come to a unanimous opinion on this issue it decided to maintain this reference in the resolution text.
13. Based on the proposal submitted by Germany to the Animals Committee in document AC27 Doc. 21.3 to enhance the usefulness of the CITES register of caviar processing and caviar re-packaging plants an intensive discussion in the working group arose. It was unquestioned that the allocation of registration numbers and their use on caviar labels and their international notification does provide to enforcement authorities extremely useful information and should be seen as a core element of any caviar trade management. The majority of the working group members supported the idea to clearly distinguish between registered caviar processing facilities, which are packers, and those plants which only repack caviar. It was underlined by the group that the respective numbering is clearly in the responsibility of the Parties but some members of the working group considered it useful where consistent with the national registration system to amend the registration numbers for processing plants with a letter 'P' and for repacking plants with an 'R'.
14. Considering the fact that over the years the proportion of caviar produced in aquaculture has risen steadily and furthermore to enhance the information provided by Parties to the Secretariat by nominating processing plants, it had been proposed in document AC27 Doc. 21.3 to provide for aquaculture plants in addition to their registration number the list of species held by each respective plant and which are specifically used there for caviar processing. Referring to this item which was only addressed by some members the working group did not come to any conclusion. One member strongly opposed this suggestion by fearing that this requirement could likely end in a registration system similarly installed for Appendix I species under Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP16). Finally there was consensus that it is on a voluntarily basis up to any Parties discretion to provide additional information about their registered plants. The group drafted two different options of this paragraph for further consideration.

15. In document CoP16 Doc. 60.2 the Secretariat had proposed to delete paragraph a) under the first RECOMMENDS of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14). Parties accepted the deletion and the requirement to license legal exporters and to provide respective information to the Secretariat became redundant. The current register on the CITES website is named 'Register of caviar exporters' and accordingly it provides registration numbers both for exporters and for processing/repacking plants. Following the requirements of Resolution Conf.12.7 (Rev. CoP16) Parties are requested to provide registration numbers for plants which either process or repack caviar. Despite the fact that some Parties due to their domestic law claim the registration of caviar exporters and assign registration numbers to them, there is no provision laid down in the applicable resolution to inform the Parties about domestic registration of exporters and numbers dedicated to them. The register needs to be revised to concentrate the information on the core issue of providing in a clear and unambiguous way the registration numbers dedicated to caviar processing and to caviar repacking plants, because this information used for the labelling is of crucial importance to enforcement authorities which control caviar tins in trade. The international registration of any caviar traders that do not process or re-pack caviar must be considered of being redundant. Such traders have to obtain for their exports or re-exports respective CITES documents which provide the certainty that they are according to a special national legal requirement an accepted trader.
16. Another aspect intensively discussed by the working group was the special exemption of 125g caviar under the provision of Article VII, paragraph 3 as personal and household effects. Considering the fact that the caviar trade almost completely shifted from wild sources to caviar produced in aquaculture two members of the working group had proposed to increase the personal exemption again to the 250g for caviar produced in aquaculture (source code C). Restricted to source code C this proposal was supported by some other working group members. At the same time concerns were raised referring to a situation to have two different exemptions for caviar, i.e. 125g for wild and 250g for caviar originating from aquaculture facilities which would result undoubtedly in complicated controls and misunderstandings by consumers. Several arguments were raised against this proposal and working group members draw attention to the fact that caviar tins obtained from domestic markets are frequently missing proper labelling. In the end the majority of the working group came to the conclusion not to propose any changes in this respect but felt it worth to put this proposal to the Standing Committee for further deliberations.
17. To control the caviar trade worldwide, by taking under special consideration the export quotas set for shared stocks, the UNEP-WCMC Caviar Trade Database was established some years ago. Parties were requested to send within one month copies of CITES export documents issued for caviar to UNEP-WCMC and to consult this database before issuing any re-export certificates. From the very beginning this database lacked on copies provided by exporting countries and therefore proved of being impractical for the daily work of management authorities which had to issue re-export certificates in a very short timeframe. Considering the fact that on one hand no quotas for shared stocks have been issued for years and that on the other hand the annual reports regularly provide sufficient information to analyze the caviar trade the working group does now support the proposal made by the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements, document SC65 Com.6 to delete the Caviar Trade Database. As a consequence of this recommendation the respective paragraphs h) and i) under the first RECOMMENDS should be deleted.
18. In paragraph k) first RECOMMENDS Parties are requested to implement the universal labelling system as outlined in Annexes 1 and 2 to the resolution. Especially importing countries are requested not to accept shipments unless they comply with these provisions. The working group by taking into consideration the practical experiences of management authorities over the last years felt it useful to add further explanations to this requirement to make it clear that the labelling requirement must also be met in case the trade occurs under the exemption for personal and household effects. In addition the group took note of cases of labelling where the registration code was not included in the respective CITES register or labelling which missed a registration number. To provide more guidance to enforcement authorities the working group proposes now an amendment to this paragraph.
19. A controversial discussion took place referring to the necessity to establish a special quota setting system for Acipenseriformes species. Taking into consideration the particularity of shared stocks in special water basins the quota setting process as defined in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) was unquestioned referring to caviar. Contrary to that some members of the working group raised concerns whether this requirement should in future also include quotas for meat of the respective species. The working group came to the decision to maintain the quota setting requirement for shared stocks as it is for caviar and meat.
20. Referring to the definition of shared stocks the working group felt it useful to establish a new annex to the resolution to clarify which basins are used and which stocks of species are shared between different

Parties. The working group orientated itself on document AC27 Doc. 21.1 and proposed to include this as Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16).

21. Considering the reports which the Secretariat had provided to meetings of the Animals Committee in previous years (documents AC 24 Doc. 13.2, AC 25 Doc 16.1, AC 27 Doc. 21.1 and AC 28 Doc. 16.1) and the fact that no export quotas had been notified for caviar and meat from stocks shared between range states since 2011 and that the Animals Committee was informed with document AC28 Doc. 16.3 submitted by the Russian Federation that following a decision made by the Commission on aquatic bioresources of the Caspian Sea that the range states of the Caspian Sea will not commercially fish sturgeon species or establish quotas in 2015 and 2016 the working group started a discussion whether the direction to the Secretariat embedded in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) to provide at each meeting of the Animals Committee a written report on the export quotas as well as the scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas is deemed still to be necessary or whether the trade in sturgeon products could be completely included in the Significant Review Process on basis of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13). The working group concluded that in such cases where the special procedure outlined in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) shall apply the reporting requirement directed to the Secretariat could be reduced to such years only during which quotas have been set.
22. In consequence to the proposed amendment which refers to reporting requirements of the Secretariat the working group felt that the reporting requirement directed to the Animals Committee are dispensable and proposed the deletion of the respective paragraph. Nonetheless the Animals Committee shall inform the Standing Committee about any new developments and problems whenever deemed to be required.
23. Referring the operational paragraph *CALLS UPON the Range States...* and the subsequent paragraphs a) and b) one working group member referenced to CoP16 Inf. 53 and proposed to delete these paragraphs. However having taken into consideration the discussions held at CoP 16 the working group realized that Parties had rejected in 2013 a similar proposal to delete this chapter. Moreover the working group concluded that this item goes beyond its mandate. Given the complexity of this chapter the working group agreed that a proper evaluation of such a deletion could only be discussed with a wide involvement of range states as claimants.
24. During the discussion of Annex 1 to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) the working group felt it useful to amend the list of definitions by adding a definition for the term 'harvest' to make clear that harvest cannot be reduced to fish of wild origin only but should be defined to include any roe removal to process caviar irrespective of whether the fish has been taken from the wild or from an aquaculture plant. Accordingly a draft definition was included.
25. Another proposal submitted by a member of the working group was to include the 'Year of harvest' into the labelling requirement for repacked caviar. However this proposal was not supported by the majority of the group and therefore no amendment was proposed.
26. Furthermore the working group recognized that uncertainties about the definition of the term 'country of origin of caviar' do exist. This is mainly the case due to the existence of a wide variety of specialized sturgeon aquaculture facilities which could encompass separated production stages with international trade of fertilized eggs, fingerlings and sturgeons of different age classes and subsequent caviar production in countries which might be different from the country in which the sturgeons were bred in captivity. This situation has increasingly confronted CITES authorities with the challenge to define the country of origin for caviar with a lot of different situations. Considering the fact that caviar labelling also requires the information about the country of origin to be included in the label this also needs to be clarified for all caviar producers. Members of the working group raised the question either whether caviar should be dedicated to the country where sturgeons were bred in captivity or to the country in which a registered processing plant harvests sturgeon eggs to process caviar. Group members referred to the definition of 'Country of origin' which is provided in the 'Instructions and Explanations ' part of Annex 2 (the standard CITES form) attached to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16). Other group members raised the opinion that a solution should be based on reality and that a practical approach is needed to avoid confusion. The group did not come to a final conclusion but felt that this question would merit further discussion by the Parties. Therefore the problem that the explanation on the term 'Country of origin' given in Annex 2 to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16) might need in respect of caviar an amendment shall be submitted now to the CITES Standing Committee for consideration and further clarification.

Summary

27. The Standing Committee working group on sturgeon and paddlefish discussed Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) taking into account the Annex to document SC65 Doc 47, additional items and the comments made during the debate at the 65th meeting of the CITES 65th Standing Committee.
28. It was the intention of the group that the resolution should recall specifically how seriously trade with caviar has been changed since all sturgeon species had been included in the Appendices from wild taken caviar to caviar nowadays mostly produced in aquaculture for the international trade and to draw explicitly the perception of both management and enforcement authorities to this development and the control of aquaculture facilities.
29. In case where the working group didn't reach consensus or a clear majority it was decided to take a careful approach when proposing deletions or draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16).
30. With this report the working group provides the arguments for proposed amendments or deletions to the resolution. In addition this report also concludes items which the working group had discussed but it had been unable to reach an unanimous or majority decision. The group felt it useful to include those differing proposals and respective arguments to inform the Standing Committee about the discussions held and to table the proposals to the Standing Committee and the Parties.
31. The working group proposes to amend Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16). A draft text is attached as Annex to this report.

Recommendations

32. The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - a) consider the report of the Standing Committee working group on sturgeons and paddlefish;
 - b) consider the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) presented in the annex to this report; and
 - c) make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to the Parties for further consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

**Proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16)*
*Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish***

NB: Text to be deleted is crossed out. Proposed new text is underlined.

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.12 (Rev.), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997) and amended at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000), and Resolution Conf. 11.13, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting;

AWARE that sturgeons and paddlefish of the Order Acipenseriformes represent a valuable renewable biological and economic resource that in recent years has been affected by such negative factors as illegal fishing and illegal trade, regulation of water flow and decrease in natural spawning sites;

RECALLING the concepts endorsed and the progress made toward conservation of Acipenseriformes in the Caspian Sea under the 'Paris Agreement' approved at the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee (Paris, June 2001);

NOTING the need for further research and the importance of scientific monitoring of the status of stocks and an understanding of their genetic structure as the basis for sustainable fisheries management;

CONSIDERING that Eurasian range States of Acipenseriformes species are in need of funds and technical assistance in order to develop regional management and monitoring programmes for conservation, habitat protection, and the combating of illegal fishing and trade;

RECALLING that Article VI, paragraph 7, of the Convention provides that specimens of species listed in the Appendices may be marked to assist in identifying them;

CONSIDERING that the labelling of all caviar in trade ~~would be~~ has proven to be a fundamental step towards the effective regulation of trade in caviar ~~specimens~~ of sturgeons and paddlefish;

NOTING that, in order to assist the Parties in identifying legal caviar in trade, marking should be standardized and that particular specifications for the design of labels are fundamental, should be generally applied and should also take into account marking systems currently in place and anticipated technological advances in marking systems;

CONSIDERING that the trade in caviar from aquaculture operations is steadily increasing worldwide Management and Enforcement authorities should pay special attention to the development of sturgeon aquaculture facilities in their countries;

CONSCIOUS that there is a need for improvement of monitoring of caviar re-exports in relation to the original export and the level of exports in relation to annual export quotas;

~~WELCOMING the establishment of the caviar trade database by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC);~~

RECOGNIZING that Parties take into account domestic markets and illegal trade when issuing export permits, re-export certificates or when setting export quotas;

RECOGNIZING that the setting of export quotas for sturgeon specimens from shared stocks requires transparency;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

URGES the range States of species in the Order Acipenseriformes to:

- a) encourage scientific research and ensure adequate monitoring of the status of stocks¹ to promote the sustainability of sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries through appropriate management programmes;
- b) curtail the illegal fishing of and trade in sturgeon and paddlefish specimens by improving the provisions in and enforcement of existing laws regulating fisheries and export, in close collaboration with the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization;
- c) explore ways of enhancing the participation of representatives of all agencies responsible for sturgeon and paddlefish fisheries in conservation and sustainable-use programmes for these species;
- d) promote regional agreements between range States of sturgeon and paddlefish species aiming at proper management and sustainable utilization of these species; and
- e) in the case of range States of sturgeons in the Eurasian region, take into account the recommendations in documents CoP12 Doc. 42.1 and SC61 Doc. 48.2 when developing regional conservation strategies and action plans;

RECOMMENDS, with regard to regulating trade in sturgeon products, that:

Option 1:

- a) each importing, exporting and re-exporting Party establish, where consistent with national law, a registration system for caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants in its territory and provide to the Secretariat the list of these facilities and their official registration codes and clearly state whether it is a processing or a repacking plant. Where consistent with the national registration system Parties should add 'P' to registration numbers for processing plants and 'R' for repacking plants. The list should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should ~~distribute~~ include this information ~~via a Notification to the Parties and include it~~ in its register on the CITES website;

or

Option 2:

- a) each importing, exporting and re-exporting Party establish, where consistent with national law, a registration system for caviar processing plants, including aquaculture operations, and repackaging plants in its territory and provide to the Secretariat the list of these facilities and their official registration codes and clearly state whether it is a processing or a repacking plant. Where consistent with the national registration system Parties should add 'P' to registration numbers for processing plants and 'R' for repacking plants. Where appropriate Parties should on a voluntary basis include in their notification of caviar processing aquaculture plants the sturgeon or paddlefish species used in the respective plant. The list should be updated when changes occur and communicated to the Secretariat without delay. The Secretariat should ~~distribute~~ include this information ~~via a Notification to the Parties and include it~~ in its register on the CITES website;
- b) importing countries be particularly vigilant in controlling all aspects of the trade in specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species, including the unloading of sturgeon specimens, transit, re-packaging, re-labelling and re-exports;
- c) Parties monitor the storage, processing and re-packaging of specimens of sturgeon and paddlefish species in Customs free zones and free ports, and for airline and cruise line catering;
- d) Parties ensure that all their relevant agencies cooperate in establishing the necessary administrative, management, scientific and control mechanisms needed to implement the provisions of the Convention with respect to sturgeon and paddlefish species;
- e) Parties consider the harmonization of their national legislation related to personal exemptions for caviar, to allow for the personal effects exemption under Article VII, paragraph 3, of the Convention and consider limiting this exemption to no more than 125 grams of caviar per person;

- f) all caviar from shared stocks subject to export quotas be exported before the end of the quota year (1 March – last day of February) in which it was harvested and processed. For this purpose the export permits for such caviar should be valid until the last day of the quota year at the latest. Parties should not import caviar harvested or processed in the preceding quota year;
- g) no re-export of caviar take place more than 18 months after the date of issuance of the relevant original export permit. For that purpose re-export certificates should not be valid beyond that 18-month period;

~~h) Parties supply to UNEP-WCMC copies of all export permits and re-export certificates issued to authorize trade in caviar, no longer than one month after they have been issued, for inclusion in the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database;~~

~~i) Parties consult the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database prior to the issuance of re-export certificates;~~

- j) where available, Parties use the full eight-digit Customs code for caviar, instead of the less precise six-digit code which also includes roe from other fish species;
- k) Parties implement the universal labelling system for caviar outlined in Annexes 1 and 2 and importing Parties not accept shipments of caviar whether for commercial or for non-commercial purposes or under the exemption for personal and household effects unless they comply with these provisions;
- l) caviar from different Acipenseriformes species not be mixed into a primary container, except in the case of pressed caviar;

RECOMMENDS further, with regard to catch and export quotas, that:

- a) Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States³ which are listed in Annex 3 to this resolution unless export quotas have been set in accordance with the following procedure:
 - i) range States have established export quotas for caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species for that quota year, which starts on 1 March and ends on the last day of February of the following year;
 - ii) the export quotas referred to in subparagraph i) have been derived from catch quotas that are based on an appropriate regional conservation strategy and monitoring regime for the species concerned and are not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild;
 - iii) the catch and export quotas referred to in subparagraphs i) and ii) should be agreed amongst all States that provide habitat for the same stock of an Acipenseriformes species. However, where a stock is shared by more than two States, and if one of these States refuses to participate or does not participate in the shared-stock quota agreement meeting convened in accordance with the agreed decision of all these States, the total and country-specific quotas for the shared stock may be agreed by the remaining range States. This situation must be substantiated in writing by both sides to the Secretariat for information to the Parties. The State not having participated may only export caviar and meat from its allocated quotas after it has notified the Secretariat that it accepts them and the Secretariat has informed the Parties. If more than one range State refuses to participate or does not participate in the process mentioned above, the total and country specific quotas for the shared stock cannot be established. In case of a stock shared by only two range States, the quotas must be agreed by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, they may call upon a mediator, including the CITES Secretariat, to facilitate the process. They shall have a zero quota until such time as they have reached consensus;
 - iv) range States have provided to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year, the export quota referred to in subparagraph i) as well as the scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas under subparagraphs ii) and iii);
 - v) if the quotas have not been communicated to the Secretariat by the deadline indicated in subparagraph iv) above, the relevant range States have a zero quota until such time as they

communicate their quotas in writing to the Secretariat and the Secretariat in turn informs the Parties. The Secretariat should be informed by the range States of any delay and shall in turn inform the Parties; and

- vi) the Secretariat shall communicate the agreed quotas to the Parties through its website within one month of receipt of the information from the range States;
- b) the Secretariat make all the information mentioned in subparagraph iv) available to Parties upon request; and
- c) if a range State of a shared stock of a species of Acipenseriformes decides to reduce its quotas established in accordance with this Resolution under stricter domestic measures, this shall not affect the quotas of the other range States of this stock;

DIRECTS the Secretariat in cases where range states of shared stocks have agreed on export quotas in the previous year to provide ~~at each to the~~ subsequent meeting of the Animals Committee a written report, based on information submitted by the range States concerned as requested in subparagraph a) iv) above, including references to relevant documents, on its activities related to the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish;

DIRECTS the Animals Committee, in collaboration with the Secretariat, interested Parties, international organizations and relevant experts, to monitor progress on the relevant provisions of this Resolution and to inform the Standing Committee about new developments or problems as and when required; ~~carry out on a three-year cycle starting in 2008, and using information from preceding years, an evaluation of the assessment and the monitoring methodologies used for stocks of Acipenseriformes species subject to the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a), above;~~

URGES range States to cooperate with the Animals Committee and the Secretariat with a view to implementing the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a), and the paragraph DIRECTS the Animals Committee above;

~~DIRECTS the Animals Committee to provide to the Standing Committee its recommendations on actions to be taken based upon the above-mentioned monitoring of progress and three-year cycle evaluation;~~

CALLS UPON range States, importing countries and other experts and appropriate organizations, such as the IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Animals Committee, to continue to explore the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species to assist in the subsequent identification of the origin of specimens in trade and the development and application of methods for differentiating wild from aquaculture origin caviar in cases where DNA-based methods are not useful;

CALLS UPON the range States of Acipenseriformes species:

- a) to collaborate in the development and implementation of strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks and for ensuring sustainable fishing, and
- b) to seek cooperation with Parties, United Nations specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and other expert stakeholders in supporting these strategies;

URGES Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the industry and other donors to assist with securing financial and other resources for the range States of Acipenseriformes to develop and implement strategies, including action plans, for the conservation and management of shared Acipenseriformes stocks; and

REPEALS the Resolutions listed hereunder:

- a) Resolution Conf. 10.12 (Rev.) (Harare, 1997, as amended at Gigiri, 2000) – *Conservation of sturgeons*; and
 - b) Resolution Conf. 11.13 (Gigiri, 2000) – *Universal labelling system for the identification of caviar*.
-

Annex 1

CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar

- a) The uniform labelling system applies to all caviar, from wild and aquaculture origin, produced for commercial and non-commercial purposes, for either domestic or international trade, and is based on the application of a non-reusable label on each primary container.
- b) The following definitions apply in relation to trade in caviar:
 - Caviar: processed unfertilized eggs (roe) of Acipenseriformes species.
 - Harvest: removal of unfertilized eggs (roe) from specimens of Acipenseriformes species for further processing to become caviar.
 - Lot identification number: a number that corresponds to information related to the caviar tracking system used by the processing or repackaging plant.
 - Non-reusable label: any label or mark that cannot be removed undamaged or transferred to another container, which may seal the container. If the non-reusable label does not seal the primary container, caviar should be packaged in a manner that permits visual evidence of any opening of the container.
 - Pressed caviar: caviar composed of unfertilized eggs (roe) of one or more sturgeon or paddlefish species, remaining after the processing and preparation of higher quality caviar.
 - Primary container: tin, jar or other receptacle that is in direct contact with the caviar.
 - Processing plant: facility in the country of origin responsible for the first packaging of caviar into a primary container.
 - Repackaging plant: facility responsible for receiving and repackaging caviar into new primary containers.
 - Secondary container: receptacle into which primary containers or groups of primary containers are placed.
 - Source code: letter corresponding to the source of the caviar (e.g. W, C, F), as defined in the relevant CITES Resolutions. Note that, among other situations, for caviar produced from a female born in captivity and where at least one parent originated in the wild, the "F" code should be used.
- c) In the country of origin, the non-reusable label should be affixed by the processing plant to any primary container. This label must include, as a minimum: a standard species code as provided in Annex 2; the source code of the caviar; the ISO two-letter code for the country of origin; the year of harvest; the official registration code of the processing plant (e.g. xxxx); and the lot identification number for the caviar (e.g. yyyy), for instance:

HUS/W/RU/2000/xxxx/yyyy

- d) When no repackaging takes place, the non-reusable label referred to in paragraph c) above should be maintained on the primary container and be considered sufficient, including for re-export.
- e) A non-reusable label should be affixed by the repackaging plant to any primary container in which caviar is repackaged. This label must include, as a minimum: a standard species code as provided in Annex 2; the source code of the specimen; the ISO two-letter code of the country of origin; the year of repackaging; the official registration code of the repackaging plant, which incorporates the ISO two-letter code of the country of repackaging if different from the country of origin (e.g. IT-wwww); and the lot identification number, or CITES export permit or re-export certificate number (e.g. zzzz), for instance:

PER/W/IR/2001/IT-wwww/zzzz

- f) When caviar is exported or re-exported, the exact quantity of caviar must be indicated on any secondary container in addition to the description of the content in accordance with international Customs regulations.
- g) The same information that is on the label affixed to the container must be given on the export permit or re-export certificate, or in an annex attached to the CITES permit or certificate.
- h) In the event of inconsistencies between information on a label and a permit or certificate, the Management Authority of the importing Party should contact its counterpart in the exporting or re-exporting Party as soon as possible to establish whether this was a genuine error arising from the complexity of information required by these guidelines. If this is the case, every effort should be made to avoid penalizing those involved in such transactions.
- i) Parties should accept shipments of caviar only if they are accompanied by appropriate documents containing the information referred to in paragraph c), d) or e).

Annex 2

Codes for identification of Acipenseriformes species, hybrids and mixed species

Species	Code
<i>Acipenser baerii</i>	BAE
<i>Acipenser baerii baicalensis</i>	BAI
<i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i>	BVI
<i>Acipenser dabryanus</i>	DAB
<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>	FUL
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	GUE
<i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	MED
<i>Acipenser mikadoi</i>	MIK
<i>Acipenser naccarii</i>	NAC
<i>Acipenser nudiiventris</i>	NUD
<i>Acipenser oxyrhynchus</i>	OXY
<i>Acipenser oxyrhynchus desotoi</i>	DES
<i>Acipenser persicus</i>	PER
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	RUT
<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i>	SCH
<i>Acipenser sinensis</i>	SIN

<i>Acipenser stellatus</i>	STE
<i>Acipenser sturio</i>	STU
<i>Acipenser transmontanus</i>	TRA
<i>Huso dauricus</i>	DAU
<i>Huso huso</i>	HUS
<i>Polyodon spathula</i>	SPA
<i>Psephurus gladius</i>	GLA
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus fedtschenkoi</i>	FED
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus hermanni</i>	HER
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus kaufmanni</i>	KAU
<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	ALB
<i>Scaphirhynchus platyrhynchus</i>	PLA
<i>Scaphirhynchus suttkusi</i>	SUS
Mixed species (for 'pressed' caviar exclusively)	MIX
Hybrid specimens: code for the species of the male x code for the species of the female	YYYxXXX

Annex 3

Overview about stocks shared by range states and the respective species (see: AC27 Doc. 21.1)

<u>Shared stock</u>	<u>Range states</u>	<u>Species</u>
<u>Caspian Sea</u>	<u>Azerbaijan</u> <u>Islamic Republic of Iran</u> <u>Kazakhstan</u> <u>Russian Federation</u> <u>Turkmenistan</u>	<u><i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser nudiventris</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser persicus</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser ruthenus</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser stellatus</i></u> <u><i>Huso huso</i></u>
<u>North-West Black Sea and Lower Danube</u>	<u>Bulgaria</u> <u>Romania</u> <u>Serbia</u> <u>Ukraine</u>	<u><i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser nudiventris</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser ruthenus</i></u> <u><i>Acipenser stellatus</i></u> <u><i>Huso huso</i></u>
<u>Saint John River / Bay of Fundy</u>	<u>Canada</u> <u>United States of America</u>	<u><i>Acipenser oxyrinchus</i></u>

<u>Amur / Heilongjian River</u>	<u>China</u> <u>Russian Federation</u>	<u>Acipenser schrenckii</u> <u>Huso dauricus</u>
<u>Azov Sea</u>	<u>Russian Federation</u> <u>Ukraine</u>	<u>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</u> <u>Acipenser nudiventris</u> <u>Acipenser ruthenus</u> <u>Acipenser stellatus</u> <u>Huso huso</u>

* Amended at the 13th, 14th and 16th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

¹ The term 'stock' is regarded, for the purposes of this Resolution, to be synonymous with 'population'.

² At CoP13 it was agreed that this recommendation would not apply to those range States where there is no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks. It was also agreed, however, that the Secretariat or any Party would bring to the attention of the Standing Committee or Conference of the Parties any significant changes in the harvest or export of sturgeon products from such stocks.

³ Quotas do not have to be established for specimens from endemic stocks, i.e. stocks not shared with other countries, and captive-breeding or aquaculture operations. Quotas communicated for such specimens are voluntary quotas