



NOAA FISHERIES



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

*The new
framework
for CITES
introduction-
from-the-sea
provisions will
lead to greater
certainty and
consistency in
the issuance of
CITES permits.*

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement signed by 178 nations designed to ensure that international trade in animals and plants does not threaten their survival in the wild. CITES-listed animals or plants taken from the high seas- defined as “the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any State”- are subject to CITES trade provisions. Parties must implement these provisions whenever an Appendix-I or -II specimen is taken from the high seas and transported into a State. The trade in these specimens is referred to as “introduction from the sea.”

A Framework for Implementation

At the most recent CITES meeting (CoP16, in March 2013), the Parties reached agreement on a new framework for implementation of CITES introduction-from-the-sea provisions. This new framework will provide certainty and consistency regarding which CITES documents are issued and which Party is responsible for issuing those documents. It is a pragmatic and effective permitting scheme for CITES specimens taken on the high seas. The new framework is contained in CITES Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16), which addresses introduction-from-the-sea.

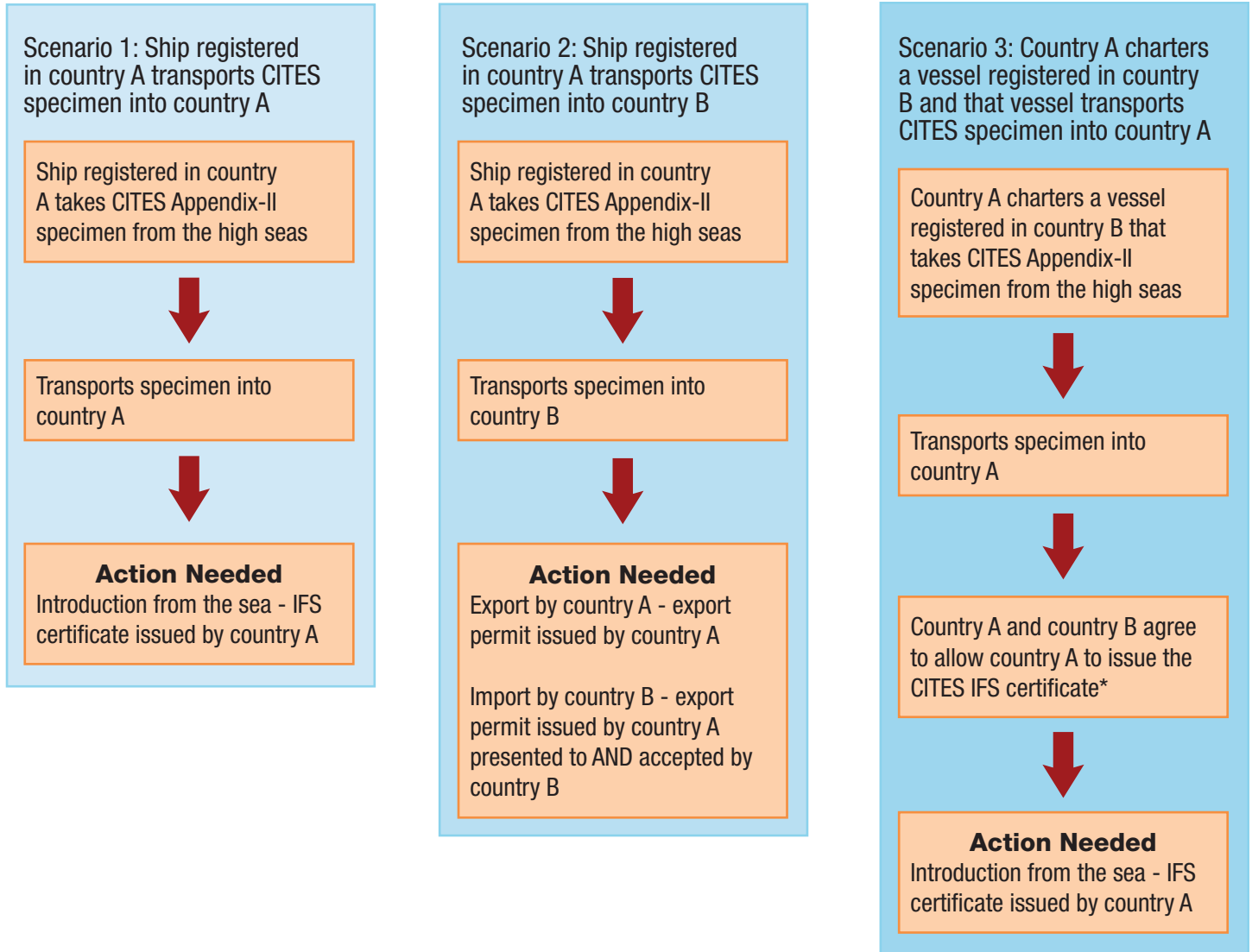
Within the new framework, if a vessel harvests CITES-listed specimens on the high seas and delivers them to the same country in which it is flagged, Parties will treat the transaction as an introduction from the sea and issue an [introduction-from-the-sea certificate](#). Under this scenario, there is only [one country involved in the trade](#) (see [Scenario 1](#)).

If there is [more than one country involved in the trade](#) (the vessel that harvests the specimens delivers them to a country other than the country to which it is flagged), CITES Parties will treat the transaction as an export and require the issuance of an [export permit](#) by the country to which the harvesting vessel is flagged (see [Scenario 2](#)).

Provisions for Chartered Vessels

Some Parties expressed the desire for an exception to this permitting scheme when specimens are harvested by chartered vessels. A narrow exception, to accommodate some chartering arrangements, was incorporated into the new framework. Under the exception, when one country charters a vessel flagged to another country and that vessel harvests CITES-listed specimens on the high seas, the two countries involved could reach an agreement to allow the country that chartered the vessel to issue an introduction-from-the-sea certificate (instead of having the country to which the vessel is flagged issue an export permit). This narrow exception will only be allowed for chartering arrangements under specific conditions, including being consistent with the framework for chartering of a relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organization/ Arrangement (see [Scenario 3](#)).

Introduction from the Sea Framework Scenarios



* Chartering arrangement must be consistent with the framework for chartering of a relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organization/Arrangement and the CITES Secretariat and CITES Parties must be informed in advance.

