



## Report

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### Workshop “Showcasing successful livelihoods experiences: assess and address impacts of CITES- decisions on livelihoods”

Cispata Bay, Colombia  
February 11 and 12 2015

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#### BACKGROUND

The Chair of the Working Group on CITES and Livelihoods, represented by Peruvian authorities, and the CITES Secretariat have been in contact with the Organization of American States (OAS) in order to perform, with its support, the duties in Decisions 16.17 and 16.25 adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP16, Bangkok, March 2013). These duties include facilitating the organization of parallel events and a workshop showcasing successful livelihood experiences of poor rural communities benefiting from CITES-listed species. It also includes designing a handbook for the implementation of the toolkit and guidelines mentioned in Decision 16.20 and Resolution Conf. 16.6.

The venue selected for this workshop and the alliance with the General Secretariat of the OAS responds to the mandate set forth in Decision 16.25 and the commitment assumed by the Member States of the Organization of American States on capacity-building for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity through the support of projects and the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)<sup>1</sup>.

#### OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of the workshop was to exchange successful experiences in the evaluation of both positive and negative impacts after implementing the species listed in the CITES appendices, as well as to analyze the positive impacts on the livelihoods of poor rural communities and how to mitigate negative impacts within this framework. The specific purpose was to discuss the application of CITES Decision 16.25 in order to improve and ratify a quick handbook developed by the General Secretariat of the OAS and CITES, including tools and guidelines.

#### Participants

See Appendix 1.

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<sup>1</sup> (AG / RES. 2312 (XXXVII-O/07 and AG / RES. 2644 (XLI-O / 11) the (GS / OAS)

## **Venue of the Workshop**

The workshop took place on the coast of the Cispatá Bay in San Antero, a municipality of Córdoba (a department in Colombia), so that the emblematic Colombian case of the *Cocodylus acutus* population recovery (otherwise known as *caimán aguja* [in Spanish] or American crocodile [in English]) could be used as an example to validate the usefulness of the handbook being developed. Moreover, because the workshop was held at this site, participants were able to learn firsthand about the views of local communities regarding the implementation of CITES and Livelihoods.

## **OPENING**

Mr. Reynaldo Torres Martínez, mayor of San Antero (Cispatá Bay), provided the opening remarks, followed by Juan Carlos Vásquez, on behalf of the CITES Secretariat, Claudia S. de Windt, on behalf of the OAS General Secretariat, and Antonio José Gómez, representing Colombia's Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

## **Site-Visit**

Following the opening session, the group departed to the field visit to a training center run by *Corporación Autónoma de los Valles del Sinú y San Jorge (CVS)* located at the Cispatá Bay, the main environmental authority for the region. At the training center, participants were able to learn about each stage of the work performed and hear from members of the community about their experiences on the recovery process of the *Cocodylus acutus*. Later, a night tour was organized through the mangroves of the Bay to reintroduce and release 20 *Cocodylus acutus* back to their natural habitat.

## **Presentations**

The participants of the Workshop were asked to introduce themselves and share with the group one word to signify what the field visit had meant to them and the link between wildlife and livelihoods.

## **Session I: Presentation of tools to assess and address impacts of CITES listings on the livelihoods of the poor (documents 1 and 2).**

During the first session, Juan Carlos Vásquez, on behalf of the CITES Secretariat, presented a summary of the agreements reached in Bangkok (CITES COP16, 2013). He reminded all those present that the Parties had adopted Resolution 16.6 on CITES and Livelihoods as well as decisions 16.17 and 16.25. These provisions lay the foundation for the voluntary implementation of practical and rapid assessments of the impacts of implementing the CITES-inclusion of a species, as well as develop guidelines to mitigate negative impacts. Another point discussed was the need to maximize positive impacts. In this regard, the working group addressed the question of which tools are necessary in order to assess such impacts. Mr. Vásquez explained that the CITES Secretariat and the General Secretariat of the OAS joined efforts to draft a user-friendly handbook that sets forth the tools and guidelines based on the COP 16 document Inf.21 "CITES and Livelihoods Toolkit and Guidelines".

Mr. Vásquez explained that the first part of the document (CoP16 Inf. 21) focuses on the tools already in existence for the assessment of impacts and contains a bibliography of the main methodologies already available. The first part concludes with a summary of the recommendations arising from the working group meeting held in Nazca in 2012, including six steps to be followed when implementing a rapid assessment. Following, he explained the content of the second part of the document, which specifies the steps for mitigating the negative impacts on the basis of five key factors.

Mr. Vásquez mentioned that the structure of the aforementioned document follows the same structure as the handbook that is currently being drafted, which reiterates the importance of its validation. He also posed preliminary questions to the participants, addressing what steps the handbook should follow and if they can be considered applicable to all species. Mr. Vásquez also asked the participants to identify which elements should be considered and had not been mentioned.

Lastly, Mr. Vásquez stressed how significant this workshop is for CITES, since experts and relevant authorities are aware of what positive experiences exist and of best practices, yet for most of them it is not clear how they are connected, and it is important to be able to identify the linkages.

During his speech, Mirbel Epiquién, who serves as Director General for the Sustainable Management of Forestry and Wildlife in Peru and chair of the Working Group on CITES and Livelihoods, mentioned the efforts that the working group has put forth since 2004, when an amendment to Resolution 8.3 was passed regarding the importance of keeping in mind the possible repercussions [of species inclusions] on the livelihoods of poor rural communities. He presented the achievements and tools offered and pointed out that the handbook presented in this workshop will be applied to two cases in Peru, one relating to plants and the other relating to animals. Lastly, the Chair of the working group stressed how important it is to obtain a document that is practical and effective in its implementation and not dense or technical in nature.

**Session II: Presenting** the handbook for the application of tools and guidelines to assess and mitigate the impacts of CITES listings in the livelihoods of the poor.

In her presentation, Claudia de Windt, Chief of Environmental Law, Policy and Good Governance, Department of Sustainable Development at the OAS, stated that the issues addressed in the workshop are very important to the General Secretariat of the OAS and indicated that concern regarding the organization of these events arose during the Summits of the Americas process and as part of the search for incentives that promote compliance with environmental laws and sustainable development.

Ms. de Windt pointed out that Peru's efforts with vicuna have driven this endeavor, as they illustrate how important it is for communities to connect with the species in their environment in their daily lives and that regulations will go unobserved in the absence of incentives or if the concerns of local communities are not addressed. Ms. de Windt explained that the process of

drafting the Handbook handed out to workshop participants (as a draft) seeks to attain a more understandable, practical and simplified document that can be used by a wide range of beneficiaries in different sectors. She also stressed that even though the Handbook is based on the working group's documents, it contains additional elements, such as the incorporation of principles from the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development (ISP). Two case studies have been carefully put together as supporting material and included with the Handbook.

Afterwards, Rodrigo Martínez, expert consultant at the Department of Sustainable Development, explained in detail the contents of both parts of the handbook ([http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/DSD/ELPG/Eventos/PARTE1\\_guia.pdf](http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/DSD/ELPG/Eventos/PARTE1_guia.pdf) and [http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/DSD/ELPG/Eventos/PARTE2\\_guia.pdf](http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/DSD/ELPG/Eventos/PARTE2_guia.pdf)). Participants made the following contributions in the ensuing debate, to be included in the handbook. Nonetheless, it was agreed that additional contributions would be submitted in writing within a given timeframe.

#### **Suggestions regarding the Handbook:**

- To update the case studies included in the handbook's annexes. Perhaps some cases could be chosen for inclusion in the handbook. A case could be presented at each step of the handbook and then updated versions of the cases would be included in the annexes.
- To clearly state in the introduction, who the handbook's users will be, if its target audience is environmental authorities or the communities. The handbook's framework and restrictions must be established, that is, what is understood as "livelihood". In the same fashion, the handbook must define the criteria to be followed by the user in order to choose an impact-measuring methodology.
- The introduction could also establish how the handbook ties in with other CITES-run activities. This Handbook, for example, should explain other CITES activities in its introduction, and state that it is a tool to aid in designing and making decisions regarding Non-detriment findings.
  - Many of the interested parties are listed on page 9. Who is the handbook's target audience? Poor rural communities.
  - It is important to define "livelihood". What is it we want to know about livelihoods? "Livelihoods" are defined in the first CITES and Livelihoods Toolkit and Guidelines.
- Be specific about the verbal tense to be used in the handbook. It is a tool to be used at will. The CITES-mandate is to measure the impact of what has been in fact decided and not what will be decided. But the goal is to have a tool available that will also enable assessing the impact of future inclusions. It is important to ensure that this tool can be applied both to assess the impact of future inclusions and the impact of inclusions that are already in place. Case studies can therefore refer to future inclusions in the Appendices and to inclusions that have been in place for quite some time.
- The section on methodology for the annexes can be modified to use tables explaining each step, enabling the user to carry out a rapid assessment. The idea is for the handbook to have an introduction that is 1 to 2 pages in length and as straightforward as possible, and then include the 6 steps. Each step could take into account an applicable methodology and regain the CITES survey designed to determine whether the questions are relevant or not.

- These handbooks must describe the steps to determine what information users are looking for and where to find it. For example, communities may be interested in information that an intermediary or exporter may have.
- How can we define impacts and what impacts do we wish to assess? What might the impact be in cultural, social or economic terms, or in terms of food safety vis-à-vis the natural environment?
- To assess the viability of publishing an online version of the Handbook with an option menu.
- To refer to the UNDP-developed social and environmental diagnostic tool.
- To make *risk* the focus of the Handbook once again. This is about analyzing communities that are at risk of getting involved in illegal or borderline illegal activities, which may not only have a negative impact on their current livelihood but also on their social structure or subsistence.
- How do poor rural communities express their needs through these tools? Mechanisms to protect community processes have to be designed.
- These impacts are being measured by what sort of poor rural communities and by which actors within those communities?
- There could be mention in Handbook Part II of the challenges and bottlenecks of national policies.
- The delegate from South Africa suggests implementing a pilot study with these tools to see to what extent they are useful and draft a report in one year. He must run this by the authorities.
- Juan Carlos Vásquez will consult with the CITES Secretariat about obtaining funds for this working group to meet in South Africa in October/November 2015 or March/April 2016.

### **Session III. Case study on livelihoods: Implementation of the guidelines and handbook.**

A plenary session was held to explain the background of the *Cocodylus acutus* case in Cispatá Colombia and Giovanni Ulloa, biologist and expert, presented its main challenges, limitations and opportunities. Alejandro Larriera, crocodile expert and Deputy Chairman, of the Crocodile Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (CSG/SSC/IUCN), also participated in this session. He shared his experience from the Santa Fe project and highlighted the involvement of interested parties and several key aspects: the value chain, necessary investments and social organization, among others.

### **WORKING GROUPS**

Next, workshop participants split into four groups to analyze four case studies, as follows: *Cocodylus acutus*, shark (taking into account the recent inclusion of five species in Appendix 2-CITES), bush meat and mahogany.

Videos of the rapporteurships by each working group can be found here: <http://www.oas.org/es/sedi/DSD/ELPG/Eventos/CITES.asp>.

### **Workshop conclusions:**

- There is a need for political will, suitable laws and scientific knowledge in order to find solutions. Public policies must be well articulated to mitigate the impact that a species inclusion in CITES may have on the livelihoods of poor rural communities and to improve their living conditions, particularly for vulnerable communities.
- Improving the tool and trying to run pilot tests in each country is essential. The working group on CITES and Livelihoods must act as a permanent commission of sorts for the continuous improvement of the tools. Workshop participants proposed several suggestions towards this end and in regard to possibly holding meetings to review cases prior to the Conference of the Parties that will take place in South Africa.

**Relevant links and press coverage:**

- <http://www.noticiascaracol.com/gente-que-le-pone-el-alma/san-antero-cordoba-comprendio-que-los-cocodrilos-valen-mas-vivos-que#>
- <http://www.reporterosasociados.com.co/2015/02/expertos-internacionales-discuten-uso-de-especies-protegidas-por-comunidades-como-medios-de-subsistencia/>
- <http://www.elheraldo.co/region/cispata-esta-lista-para-exportar-piel-de-caiman-184035>
- <http://elmeridianodecordoba.com.co/region/item/79844-termin%C3%B3-taller-internacional>
- <http://www.miregiondecordoba.com/index.php/cor/item/5513-cispata-esta-lista-para-exportar-piel-de-caiman>
- [http://amadoucrosnoticias.blogspot.com/2015/02/san-antero-cordoba-posible-exportador\\_15.html](http://amadoucrosnoticias.blogspot.com/2015/02/san-antero-cordoba-posible-exportador_15.html)
- <http://www.taringor.net/medio-ambiente/en-cispata-cordoba-16-paises-se-convencieron-de-la-conservacion-del-cocodrilo-183813>
- <http://www.eje21.com.co/secciones-mainmenu-2/1-ltimas/105968-expertos-internacionales-discuten-uso-de-especies-protegidas-por-comunidades-como-medios-de-subsistencia-.html>
- <http://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/cordoba/20-paises-se-dan-cita-en-cordoba-para-analizar-preservacion-del-caiman-aguja-184670>
- <http://www.sanantero-cordoba.gov.co/apc-aa/view.php3?vid=1090&cmd%5B1090%5D=x-1090-2709653>

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