



Our ref.: /
Your ref.:

Anne Larigauderie
Executive Secretary
Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services
10th Floor,
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1,
53113 Bonn,
Germany

Geneva, 24 October 2018

IPBES Assessment of the Sustainable Use of Wild Species and development of the next IPBES work programme

Dear Ms ^{Anne}Larigauderie,

Thank you for your letters of 12 July and 14 September.

The seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee (Rosa Khutor, Sochi, Russian Federation, 1-5 October 2018) took note of your invitation and request and charged the CITES Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairs of the CITES Animals, Plants and Standing Committees, with replying.

Regarding the call for requests, inputs and suggestions on short-term priorities and longer term strategic needs that require attention and action by IPBES as part of its future work programme, your attention is drawn to the continued dearth of knowledge about the conservation status of the CITES-listed species that are traded internationally, particularly in biodiversity-rich developing States. Such knowledge generally needs to be on a species and range State specific level as it at this level that CITES operates. Additional information and guidance is also needed for managers of ecosystems and species, in order to maintain the use of species at biologically sustainable levels.

Many CITES Parties are of the opinion that the thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species that IPBES is now beginning could be very valuable in providing new insights for the implementation of the Convention.

Concerning the assessment, we draw your attention to the following materials which may be of use to IPBES in this exercise:

- CITES non-detriment finding process (<https://www.cites.org/eng/prog/ndf/index.php> and <https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-16-07-R17.pdf>)
- Review of Significant Trade (<https://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-12-08-R17.pdf>)
- Livelihoods (<https://www.cites.org/eng/prog/livelihoods>)
- Traceability of specimens in trade (https://www.cites.org/eng/prog/Cross-cutting_issues/traceability)

Time does not permit a full explanation of these, but specialist staff from the CITES Secretariat would be pleased to advise the authors and reviewers on the functioning of these programmes and tools and indicate associated issues, needs and priorities. Whilst the remit of CITES is limited to certain species used in international trade, it could contribute to the assessment process by suggesting case studies that demonstrate challenges and solutions which may have wider application.

On the questions which the IPBES assessment could address, we note that many of the questions in paragraph 7 of the scoping statement for the assessment (IPBES/6/INF/8) are very apposite for CITES and partially overlap with the additional suggestions below. We suggest the following additional questions:

- How can developing countries better harness existing knowledge of their biodiversity at species level and apply it to sustainably manage species in international trade?
- What extra challenges are faced in assuring the sustainable use of resources shared between neighbouring States?
- What sustainable use policies can be put in place when the knowledge of the species concerned is low, or where use is primarily small scale, such as informal or artisanal? How can small scale artisanal offtake be taken into account in the management of a resource that is also harvested commercially?
- How can sustainability be measured? In particular, how could CITES Parties know when they have succeeded, rather than just knowing when it seems that they have failed?
- How can the species-based and ecosystem-based approaches be integrated in a complementary and mutually supportive manner?
- Are there review processes in other fora that regularly assess sustainability that CITES could learn from, and could CITES sustainability review processes be of relevance in other fora?
- How can the particular challenges related to the use of marine species in a sustainable manner be addressed? Further, what are the similarities and differences between the challenges and successes from different sectors and realms, e.g. terrestrial vs. marine ecosystems or timber vs. fisheries and what, if any, lessons are transferrable?
- How and under what circumstances, can the production of specimens of species produced by artificial propagation, breeding in captivity or through biotechnology, contribute to sustainable use and *in situ* conservation of wild populations?
- What role do socio-economic factors play in ensuring sustainable use in the CITES context?
- To what extent do compliance measures, such as those employed by CITES, contribute to assuring sustainable use of wild species?

Regarding the processes under CITES which might consider the key messages of the assessment once completed, we offer the following:

- It would be desirable if the 32nd meeting of the CITES Animals Committee and 26th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee, scheduled for mid-2021, would be able to prepare some input from the CITES Parties to drafts of the assessment report.
- We understand that it is anticipated that the final assessment report will be adopted by IPBES in the first quarter of 2022 and hope that this will be in time for consideration at 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES which is expected to be held in that year.

In keeping with the action-orientated nature of CITES, we hope that the recommendations, whilst policy-relevant rather than policy-prescriptive, will nevertheless be clear, pragmatic and practical.

For our part, these comments and observations are made in the spirit of the Memorandum of Cooperation signed between our two secretariats on 7 March 2017.

You will be encouraged to learn that the recent 70th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee agreed to propose to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties next year, that the current short-term Decisions of the Conference of the Parties regarding interactions with IPBES be converted into a long-term Resolution. This is a further sign of the growing importance of the cooperation between CITES and IPBES.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D.H.W. Morgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and the last name "Morgan" clearly legible.

David H.W. Morgan
Officer-in-Charge