

## CITES Brief

The CITES 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP) completed its first week with several items of interest to the State Fish & Wildlife Agencies. Over 150 countries and 200 non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations are attending the CoP. The Regional Association CITES representatives are providing technical information and are enhancing global understanding of the role of state fish and wildlife agencies and of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. These understandings are important because of the potential for CITES decisions to directly impact state fish and wildlife agencies. Ongoing Interactions with country delegates and NGOs continue to increase our recognition as State Fish & Wildlife Agency representatives in this international arena.

As you may already be aware, the US proposed to list the Polar Bear in Appendix I which would effectively end all international trade of this species. The CITES Technical Work Group developed and presented (by WAFWA CITES Rep Bob Broscheid (AZ)) an intervention opposing this listing because trade, for which this treaty is based, is not threatening the sustainability of the Polar Bear in the wild. The states believe that this proposal is in direct opposition to the North American model of Sustained Use Management. There was impassioned debate as well as an alternative proposal put forth by the European Union (EU). Both the original US proposal as well as the EU alternative proposal failed to reach the 2/3 vote necessary for adoption. Feedback from participants indicated that the intervention provided by the CITES Technical Work Group was influential in the vote on the Appendix I listing proposal.

Spotted turtles, Blanding's turtles, and Diamondback terrapin were also proposed for listing in Appendix II by the US. Curtis Taylor (WV), state representative on the US Delegation, presented an informational intervention for the United States concerning the 2010 workshop on "Conservation and Trade Management of Freshwater and Terrestrial Turtles in the United States" which included representation from the Federal Government, State Fish & Wildlife Agencies and experts in turtle exploitation, international trade and species biology. Curtis also outlined the challenges that exist with law enforcement and the conservation of native turtles due to the wide variation in State laws that regulate the harvesting and possession of turtles. Although illegal wild harvest is prohibited via State Fish & Wildlife regulations, an Appendix II listing may enhance State enforcement efforts. All three turtle species proposals for Appendix II listings were adopted by consensus.

On day 2 a report from the Climate Change Working Group was presented. Although there was minor debate about continuing to discuss the role of climate change in CITES, the Parties (Countries) ultimately accepted the report. This decision is supportive of and beneficial to the state fish and wildlife agencies who worked with the USFWS to form the US position on this issue.

The CITES CoP16 continues next week at which point there could be a renewed discussion of the Appendix I Polar Bear listing proposal by the US. The 4 Regional Association CITES representatives will continue to be prepared to oppose this listing and monitor other CITES matters.

Curtis Taylor, State Representative on the US Delegation  
Bob Broscheid, Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies  
Buddy Baker, Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Carolyn Caldwell, Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies  
Jack Buckley, Northeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies  
Deb Hahn, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

# **2013 MAFWA Committee Report on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**

## **MEETING TIME & PLACE**

78th North American Wildlife & Natural Resource Conference, March 2013; Washington DC

CITES Technical Work Group Meeting & AFWA International Relations Committee

CITES 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties March 2013, Bangkok, TH

CITES Technical Work Group Planning/Strategy Meeting, January 2013, Charlotte, NC

AFWA Annual Meeting, September 2012; Hilton Head, SC

Joint State/Federal CITES Meeting & AFWA International Relations Committee

Interagency CITES Coordination Committee, hosted monthly by USFWS in Washington DC

CITES Technical Work Group also conducted business via numerous conference calls

## **CITES TECHNICAL WORK GROUP REPRESENTATIVES**

Carolyn Caldwell- MAFWA (Ohio Division of Wildlife)

Jack Buckley- NEAFWA (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife)

Buddy Baker- SEAFWA (Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries)

Noel Kinler- SEAFWA (Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries)

Bob Broscheid- WAFWA (Arizona Game & Fish Department)

Deborah Hahn- Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

Curtis Taylor- U.S. CITES Delegate Representing the State Fish & Wildlife Agencies and

International Relations Committee Chair (West Virginia Division of Natural Resources)

## **CITES OVERVIEW**

International wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars annually. Trade is diverse, ranging from live animals to a wide array of products derived from them including food products, fur and leather goods, tourist curios, and medicine. CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international trade treaty enacted in 1973 to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten species' survival. CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species to certain controls. These require that all imports, exports and re-exports of CITES species have to be authorized. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need. Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is only permitted in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but for whom trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival. Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES countries for assistance in documenting trade.

International treaties impact state fish and wildlife agencies and represent a continuous and pressing challenge to resource management. Left unchecked, additional regulations and burdensome oversight will result from restrictions adopted through these international treaties. For example, some state management and harvest decisions for bobcats and river otters stem from restrictions dictated by the federal government resulting from CITES actions taken more than three decades ago. The original intent of CITES was to ensure globally sustainable use of natural resources. Over the past decade, NGO participation (e.g., HSUS and the Animal Welfare Institute) has greatly increased and pushed a protectionist/no use approach in CITES for well managed species. Protectionists outnumber sustainable use advocates 6:1.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Office of International Affairs, administers CITES for the United States. The USFWS solicits input and feedback on issues of importance from the state fish and wildlife agencies through the CITES Technical Work Group of the International Relations Committee of AFWA. The Technical Work Group consists of one representative from each of the four regional associations who work on behalf of states in concert with the USFWS on CITES matters. This state-federal partnership has been effectively working since 1994.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

CITES updates presented in greater detail in this document include: 1) Highlights from the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to CITES; 2) North American Native Softshell Species will be Evaluated for Inclusion in Appendix III as a Result of Numerous Asian Softshell Turtle Listings at CoP16; 3) State authorized CITES Furbearer Export Program for wolves and black bears, 4) Biological Reference Points and Identify the Status of the Stock for Fishery Management of Paddlefish; and 5) NCN#7, Letter of Intent Concerning State Fish and Wildlife Agencies Role in CITES and their Authority in the U.S.

## **DIRECTOR ACTION ITEM**

As you know, the CITES Technical Work Group is comprised of one representative from each of the four Regional Associations. The group functions under the leadership of the Chair of the AFWA International Relations Committee and works very closely with the AFWA International Director. I was appointed by the MAFWA Directors in 2003, Buddy Baker (SEAFWA) in 2004, Jack Buckley (NEAFWA) in 2006, and the Bob Broscheid (WAFWA) in 2007. The complexity of the CITES treaty, its interpretation and understanding the implementation processes employed by member countries—including the United States-- can be challenging. Our group works well together and we believe are representing the best interest of the States and fulfilling our duties to our respective Regional Associations and the state fish and wildlife agencies.

### Action:

I plan to retire from the Ohio Division of Wildlife in 2014. It would be my honor to continue to represent the MAFWA on the CITES Technical Work Group for several more years. However, if the Directors do not want me to continue in this capacity, then I recommend transitioning the new CITES Work Group representative beginning next summer. A transitional approach helps to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of the team while allowing time for the new person to delve into the CITES treaty and associated processes.

## **DIRECTOR INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to CITES**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to CITES commemorated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and convened from 3-14 March 2013. The meeting was attended by over 2000 participants representing more than 170 countries and more than 200 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The meeting considered 79 agenda items and 64 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. The most contentious issue of this CoP was the use of secret ballots for voting. The divided positions on the issue were exemplified by divergent views on the number of parties needed to support even initiating the discussions. A series of votes on the Rules of Procedure on the use of secret ballots, including votes on whether and how to even address the issue, led to confusion and contestation, revealing deep divides among parties and regions on the way the CoP makes decisions. During two extra plenary session debates several countries pointed to the role of secret ballots in democracies, which allows voters freedom from coercion while others stressed the difference between individual voters and sovereign states in

international negotiations, viewing the need for public accountability as stronger than fears of political pressure from other countries. In the end, the use of secret ballots was not changed and the rest of the agenda was efficiently and constructively addressed.

Throughout the meeting, the CITES Technical Work Group provided technical information and strived to enhance global understanding of the role of state fish and wildlife agencies and of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. These understandings are important because of the potential for CITES decisions to directly impact state fish and wildlife agencies. The CITES Technical Work Group's interactions with country delegates and NGOs continue to increase our recognition as State Fish & Wildlife Agency representatives in this international arena. Curtis Taylor and the CITES Technical Work Group stayed engaged in issues of importance to the states. We participated in the U.S. delegation daily briefings, several CITES side events focusing on livelihoods, the Asian snake trade, as well as an informal sturgeon work group meeting. We developed and presented an intervention opposing the Appendix I listing because trade, for which the CITES treaty is based, is not threatening the sustainability of the Polar Bear in the wild. This proposal was in direct opposition to the North American model of Sustained Use Management. Proposals by the United States to include Spotted Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, and Diamondback Terrapin in Appendix II were adopted by consensus. Because these species are not commercially harvested from the wild in the Midwest, we do not anticipate the Appendix II listing will be a burden to the states. A letter dated May 17<sup>th</sup> was sent from the USFWS to the States concerning these listings. Curtis Taylor presented a portion of the introduction for the Diamondback terrapin listing proposal and wrote a blog about his role on the U.S. delegation. A full report of the CoP was provided to the Directors in April.

### **North American Native Softshell Species will be Evaluated for Inclusion in Appendix III as a Result of the Numerous Asian Softshell Turtle Listings at CoP16**

Over the past several years there has been significant dialogue between the USFWS and the state fish and wildlife agencies concerning international trade of smooth softshell (*Apalone mutica*), spiny softshell (*Apalone spinifera*), and the Florida softshell (*Apalone ferox*) and the benefits of listing these species in a CITES Appendix. With the listing of many species of Asian softshells at CoP16 there will likely be increased demand for North American native species in international markets. To ensure that trade in this species is legal, the United States is thoroughly evaluating an Appendix III listing. An Appendix III listing could be implemented by the United States if deemed warranted to track the origin and volume of specimens in international trade and to determine if an Appendix II listing is necessary.

### **CITES Furbearer Export Program**

During our meeting with the USFWS in September 2012, the CITES Technical Work Group discussed amending 50 CFR 23.69 to add black bears to the list of species covered by the CITES export program. It was unclear at that time to what extent there is commercial harvest of or trade in black bears across States. The USFWS said that it would be an involved process to begin conducting statewide authorizations for export of black bear but they were willing to consider it. The first question to answer is the extent to which it would be used by the various states. The Fur Resources Technical Committee will be surveying the states to determine the degree of interest/need. If exporting significant numbers of black bear hides or parts is not likely, then the USFWS would continue to issue individual export permits.

The USFWS proposed to amend the list of species in 50 CFR 23.69(a) to refer to the gray wolf generally rather than specify only the Alaska population. The final rule should be published later

this summer. This is just the first step in the process, with the next step being States with harvest seasons applying for approval as a CITES export program for the species. The CITES export program authorization process will take some time and the USFWS doesn't anticipate it being completed for the 2013 harvest season.

#### **Developing Biological Reference Points and Identifying the Status of the Stock for Fishery Management of Paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*) in the Mississippi River Basin**

The CITES Technical Work Group in partnership with USFWS is finishing a range-wide paddlefish project to enhance our knowledge of paddlefish population dynamics, productivity and ability to sustain fishing pressure. The development of biological reference thresholds is critical to responsible stewardship of paddlefish resources in the Mississippi River Basin. Without such measures the paddlefish may experience a serious risk of commercial and biological extinction. Principal Investigator Alexei Sharov (Maryland DNR) is finalizing the study intended to 1) Quantify principal parameters for paddlefish populations (growth, maturity, fecundity, natural and fishing mortality, stock –recruitment relationship, spatial aspects of population parameters variability); 2) Develop a set of biological reference points including thresholds and targets for fishing mortality and population abundance that will ensure population health and sustainability; 3) develop metrics suitable for the definition of population status; and 4) make recommendations for uniform management regulations for commercial and recreational fisheries that will allow them to achieve maximum sustainable yield. Later this year, a workshop for state wildlife and fisheries agencies will present and discuss the results of the assessment.

#### **State Fish and Wildlife Agencies Role in and Their Authority to Manage Wildlife in the U.S.**

The CITES Technical Work Group has submitted a Letter of Intent (NCN #7) for funding to develop and conduct several seminars, a webinar, and outreach materials for state fish and wildlife agencies. Our goal is to help state agency staff better understand the impacts and relationship of international treaties and conventions to their state management authority. Another component of the proposal will include outreach materials to international partners. The materials will explain the role of state fish and wildlife agencies and how conservation is implemented in the US. Increased understanding of the state agencies' role in and authority to manage wildlife will further improve our standing and reputation in international forums.

#### **TIME & PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

AFWA Annual Meeting, September 2013; Portland, OR

Joint State/Federal CITES Meeting & AFWA International Relations Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

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**REPORT ON THE CITES' 16<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**  
**Bangkok, Thailand**  
**March 3-14, 2013**

The following state natural resource agency staff represented regional associations at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP16):

**Buddy Baker** (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries) – Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA)

**Bob Broscheid** (Arizona Game and Fish Department) - Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA).

**Carolyn Caldwell** (Ohio Division of Wildlife) - Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA).

**Deborah Hahn** - Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

**Curtis Taylor**, (West Virginia Division of Natural Resources) chair of the International Relations Committee of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, served as the state fish and wildlife agencies' member of the United States' delegation.

[Unfortunately **Jack Buckley** (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife) the Northeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA) representative was not able to travel to the meeting because he was recovering from injuries associated with a serious fall. Jack remained in contact with the team and was available to assist when necessary.]

Most of the expenses associated with our participation in this meeting were provided through the Multi-State Grant "Protect State Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Authority to Manage Wildlife Resources in Concert With Federal Actions Required by International Treaties and Conventions." Curtis Taylor's expenses were provided by the USFWS.

## **OVERVIEW**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is a trade agreement among countries to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten species survival. The focus of the Treaty is trade. Some of the species which are listed in the CITES Appendices are abundant game species in the United States including bobcats, river otters, black bears, sturgeon and paddlefish. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to CITES commemorated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and convened from 3-14 March 2013. The meeting was attended by over 2000 participants representing more than 170 countries and more than 200 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The meeting considered 79 agenda items and 64 proposals to amend the CITES appendices. The most contentious issue of this CoP was the use of secret ballots for voting. The divided positions on the issue were exemplified by divergent views on the number of parties needed to support even initiating the discussions. A series of votes on the Rules of Procedure on the use of secret ballots, including votes on whether and how to even address the issue, led to confusion and contestation, revealing deep divides among parties and regions on the way the CoP makes

decisions. During two extra plenary debates several countries pointed to the role of secret ballots in democracies, which allows voters freedom from coercion while others stressed the difference between individual voters and sovereign states in international negotiations, viewing the need for public accountability as stronger than fears of political pressure from other states. A proposal to change the quorum for the secret ballot from 10 to one-third was not accepted, as a two-thirds majority was not achieved. Another proposal on the use of secret ballots to decide secret ballots was also rejected. In the end, the use of secret ballots was not changed and the rest of the agenda was efficiently and constructively addressed.

Throughout the meeting, the CITES Technical Work Group provided technical information and strived to enhance global understanding of the role of state fish and wildlife agencies and of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. These understandings are important because of the potential for CITES decisions to directly impact state fish and wildlife agencies. The CITES Technical Work Group's interactions with country delegates and NGOs continues to increase our recognition as State Fish & Wildlife Agency representatives in this international arena. Curtis Taylor and the CITES Technical Work Group stayed engaged in issues of importance to the states. We participated in the U.S. delegation daily briefings, several CITES side events focusing on livelihoods, the Asian snake trade, as well as an informal sturgeon work group meeting. We presented an intervention opposing the U.S. proposal to elevate the Polar Bear to Appendix I. Curtis Taylor presented a portion of the introduction for the Diamondback terrapin listing proposal and wrote a blog (see Attachment 1) concerning his role on the U.S. delegation.

### **Introduction to CITES**

CITES is an international trade agreement among countries (Parties) to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten species survival. The text of CITES was finalized at a meeting of representatives of 80 countries in March 1973, and on July 1, 1975 CITES entered into force. Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties, it does not take the place of national laws, but provides a framework to be respected by each party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to make sure that CITES is implemented at the national level. CITES, with 178 Parties, is among the largest conservation agreements in existence.

Long known as a forum where critical decisions are taken about such high-profile issues as the ivory trade and whale harvest, CITES is increasingly the focus of efforts to protect fish and timber species that are traded globally in profitable commodity markets. Commercial fishing and the timber industry set aside, the international trade in wildlife and flora is big business, estimated to be worth billions of dollars annually and to involve more than 350 million plant and animal specimens every year. Unregulated international trade can push species over the brink, especially when combined with habitat loss and other pressures.

CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species to certain controls. These require that all imports, exports, re-exports, and introductions from the sea species covered by CITES has to be authorized. The species covered by CITES are listed in 3 Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need. Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival. Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade. Appendix III proposals can be finalized without needing to have them discussed and approved at a Conference of the Parties (CoP).

The Parties to CITES are collectively referred to as the CoP. Every 3 years, the CoP meets to review the implementation of the Convention. Meetings of the CoP usually last two weeks and are attended not only by delegations representing CITES Parties, but also by observers, which includes representatives of countries that are not party to CITES, of United Nations agencies, and of other international conventions. Observers



from non-governmental organizations or NGO's (including our state associations) involved in conservation or trade are also allowed to participate at the discretion of the Parties. Although observers may participate in the meeting, they cannot vote. Members of the public may also attend as visitors, although they are not able to participate in the discussions. At each CoP the Parties consider 1) proposals to amend the lists of species in the Appendices, 2) discussion documents and reports from the Secretariat, Parties, Committees and working groups, and 3) administrative provisions that allow the Secretariat to function effectively.

## **CoP16**

### **Climate Change** (CoP16 Doc.27 (Rev.1))

The report from the Climate Change Working Group was presented. Although there was minor debate about continuing to discuss the role of climate change in CITES, the parties ultimately reach consensus that no new action on this issue was warranted and accepted the report. This decision is supportive of and beneficial to the state fish and wildlife agencies who worked with the USFWS to form the U.S. position on this issue.

### **Snake Trade and Conservation Management** (CoP16 Doc. 57 (Rev. 1))

A document was adopted that directed the CITES Secretariat to develop guidance to assist countries in monitoring and controlling captive-breeding operations and in developing non-detriment findings. It also directed member countries to work to eliminate illegal and unreported trade in specimens, whether live or parts and derivatives, of CITES-listed snake species and ensure that CITES permits and certificates are properly issued.

Snake trade, particularly pythons from southeast Asia, continue to receive considerable attention resulting in the decision, subject to external funding, to initiate six different studies to evaluate issues affecting the sustainable trade of pythons. One of those studies will be undertaken by Don Ashley to evaluate traceability systems and recommend ways to improve sustainable sourcing as has been done for crocodilians.

### **Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles** (CoP16 Doc.58.1 (Rev.1))

This document called for the CITES Secretariat to seek funding to establish and convene a CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force, and to exchange intelligence and develop strategies to combat illegal trade. Member countries were also directed to increase enforcement activities to deter, detect and address illegal and undocumented trade in CITES-listed live tortoises and freshwater turtles.

### **Sturgeons and Paddlefish** (CoP16 Doc.60.1 (Rev.1) and 60.2 (Rev. 1))

Two reports were presented concerning the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish. The first dealt with the labeling of "mixed species" caviar, and DNA-based and other forensic methods that could assist in identifying the species in trade. The second related to range states' monitoring and evaluation of stocks with the presumed shift to aquaculture and captive breeding of sturgeons lessening the need to establish complex harvest and export quotas for specimens of wild origin. During these discussions, the Russian Federation lodged a formal complaint referencing the Rules of Procedure but their delegate was unable or unwilling to clarify the specific complaint. In the end, both reports were adopted.

Tracking developments in sturgeons and paddlefish trade has been a priority of the CITES Technical Work Group because of potential impacts to state managed paddlefish fisheries in the United States. The trend in sturgeon trade is having an increased impact on demand internationally for U.S. paddlefish caviar and will result in increased examination of management of state jurisdictional fisheries.

### **Polar Bear, Transfer to Appendix I** (CoP16 Prop.3)

The United States proposed to list the Polar Bear in Appendix I effectively ending all international trade of this species. The U.S. introduced the proposal stating that while climate change is the main threat to the species, an Appendix I listing could contribute to protecting the species. In extensive discussions, parties expressed

divergent views on whether the Polar Bear met the scientific and trade criteria for uplisting. Among supporters, the Russian Federation highlighted its concerns that legal international trade facilitates illegal trade and poaching of Russian sub-populations. In addition, interventions in support were given by the Natural Resources Defense Council (on behalf of the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Humane Society International) and the Center for Biological Diversity. Canada opposed the U.S. proposal, stating that the Polar Bear does not meet the criteria for an appendix transfer and that uplisting the species would put the integrity of the Convention at risk. A compelling intervention was presented by the Inuit representative about the livelihood of his people and the sustainable conservation mechanisms already in place for the Polar Bear. The CITES Technical Work Group developed and presented an intervention opposing the Appendix I listing (see Attachment 2) because trade, for which the CITES treaty is based, is not threatening the sustainability of the Polar Bear in the wild. The states believe that this proposal is in direct opposition to the North American model of Sustained Use Management. There was impassioned debate as well as an alternative proposal put forth by the European Union (EU). Both the original US proposal as well as the EU alternative proposal failed to reach the 2/3 vote necessary for adoption. Feedback from participants indicated that the intervention provided by the CITES Technical Work Group was influential in the vote on the Appendix I listing proposal. The proposal could have been reopened during the plenary session so the CITES Technical Work Group developed and was prepared to present a second intervention (see Attachment 3). The proposal was not reopened and the listing was rejected.

#### **Proposals to Transfer 3 Crocodilians from Appendix I to Appendix II** (CoP16 Prop. 23, 24, & 25)

Three proposals to transfer crocodilians from Appendix I to II failed to achieve the two-thirds majority vote required. These included: Thailand's proposal to transfer the Siamese crocodile and the Saltwater crocodile as well as the Colombian proposal to transfer a single subpopulation of the American Crocodile.

#### **Spotted Turtle, Blanding's Turtle, and Diamondback Terrapin Inclusion in Appendix II** (CoP16 Prop. 29, 30 & 31)

The United States introduced proposals to add the diamondback terrapin, spotted turtle, and Blanding's turtle to Appendix II in an effort to better manage the international trade in a legal and sustainable manner. Curtis Taylor--state representative on the U.S. Delegation-- presented a portion of the introduction for the United States (see Attachment 4). All three proposals were well received and broadly supported before being adopted by consensus.

#### **44 Species of Asian Freshwater Turtles and Tortoises Added to Appendix II, Transfer to Appendix I, or zero quotas established**

Proposals were jointly submitted by the United States and range countries to increase CITES protection for a number of Asian softshell and hardshell turtle species resulting in adoption of new additions to the Appendices, transfer of some species from Appendix II to Appendix I, and establishing a zero export quota in wild caught Roti Island snake-necked turtle effectively banning international trade in this Appendix II species.

#### **Amend Annotation of Ginseng** (CoP16 Prop. 53)

The United States introduced a proposal to amend the annotation to the Appendix-II listings of *Panax ginseng* and *P. quinquefolius* (American ginseng) to exclude manufactured parts and derivatives, noting changes to previous annotations had created confusion in enforcement. The proposal with the added decision was adopted.

**Additional information on CITES and updated information on future meetings may be found on the CITES website: [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org) under Conference of the Parties.**

**Further details from the CoP16 can be found on the Earth Negotiations Bulletin website: [www.iisd.ca/cites/cop16/](http://www.iisd.ca/cites/cop16/)**

## Attachment 1

(written by Curtis Taylor and included in the USFWS CITES CoP16 Blog)

### "The U.S. Delegation: A view from outside the inner circle"

March 9, 2013

*Curtis I. Taylor, a 34-year veteran of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WV DNR), discusses his experience as a U.S. delegate to CITES CoP16. Curtis is the Chief of Wildlife Resources at WV DNR, a Past President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and Chair of its International Relations Committee. He also served on the U.S. Delegation to CITES at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Doha, Qatar.*

First, let me say what an honor and a privilege it is to serve on the U.S. Delegation to CITES. As a Director of a state fish and wildlife agency, the ability to be engaged at an international level brings a new understanding of wildlife management policies and procedures. The fact that I'm at this CoP in Bangkok, Thailand, is testimony to the value that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) places on the partnership it has fostered with state and provincial wildlife agencies.

The Service clearly recognizes that many CITES decisions directly impact regulations and policies promulgated at the state or provincial level. To ensure the success of CITES, it is imperative that the visions agreed upon at this Conference of the Parties be grounded in the ability to transfer these visions to the everyday workings of wildlife conservation. Without the involvement of those that are charged with the on-the-ground implementation of fish and wildlife conservation, decisions made here are merely feel good endeavors placed on a piece of paper. The Regional state/provincial agency association representatives in attendance at the CoP also work closely with the U.S. Delegation. Indeed, proposals brought forth at this Convention may not be adopted based on arguments that the capacity to implement the various proposals is not sufficient and international trade will continue to impact the conservation of endangered species.



*Bobcats, a native furbearer species, are listed in CITES Appendix II. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service works closely with state agencies to manage trade in bobcats.*

To include those entities charged with the conservation of all fish and wildlife in the CITES process is a wise and prudent move by the USFWS. Director Dan Ashe and his staff work tirelessly to make sure state fish and wildlife agencies are fully aware of the intense workings of the CITES process so we can provide guidance on how or if certain proposals can be transferred to the field or if they are even practical. I am appreciative of the opportunity afforded by the Service and can attest to the dedication demonstrated by the USFWS to this unique partnership between the federal and state wildlife agencies.

*To learn more about the Service's work with state agencies, please refer to the recently published Fish & Wildlife News article "[Partnering to Conserve Native Species](#)".*

## **Attachment 2**

(Intervention presented by Bob Broscheid (WAFWA) opposing Proposal 3, Polar Bear transfer from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I)

Thank You Madame Chair-

On behalf of the 4 Regional Associations that comprise the 50 State Fish and Wildlife Agencies in the United States, we appreciate the opportunity to provide this Intervention in opposition of the proposal to list the Polar Bear in Appendix I.

Other interveners and position papers have expressed concerns that the Polar Bear does not meet the criteria for an Appendix I listing and we wholeheartedly agree. However, I will focus my comments on the broader implications of the proposal to Polar Bear conservation, CITES and the worldwide conservation of fish and wildlife species.

The climate change rationale for this listing establishes a new and unfamiliar precedent in the CITES process. Numerous species worldwide will likely be subject to the same fate since all have been identified as being threatened by climate change. Similar to the Polar Bear, many of these species have not, and likely will not, see projected population declines for decades. Those threats, if ever realized, will remain in the distant future and may or may not be exacerbated by trade.

Meanwhile, present-day managers and range states will face significant and unnecessary restrictions under Appendix I, further complicating the implementation of timely and necessary management actions to ensure these populations remain in their biological and sociological carrying capacities.

An Appendix I listing for Polar Bear will also have immediate and devastating impacts to the social, spiritual and economic well-being of those First Nations and their livelihoods. This, in turn, will jeopardize Polar Bear conservation in the future.

The First Nation communities are committed to their shared responsibility to sustainably manage Polar Bear populations. As a result of this successful cooperation, sound scientific, harvest and trade data are available to inform CITES and other important management decisions. This shared responsibility has resulted in a long-term commitment to sustainably manage the Polar Bear. The involvement and active participation of local communities in Polar Bear management have generated significant value and a strong desire- to not only maintain- but increase Polar Bear populations where prudent. It is this approach that supports a model of wildlife conservation that creates significant societal value for the Polar Bear. That value leads to long-term sustainability of Polar Bear and other wildlife populations as well as social and cultural livelihoods by which they mutually depend. It is this approach to conservation that CITES was founded upon and has been successfully working under for the past 40 years. It is the integrity of the CITES process that is endangered if this proposal is accepted.

Madame Chair, the consequences of accepting this proposal are far more reaching than that of the Polar Bear. The real tragedy will be realized by those of us who promote the founding principles of CITES and are committed to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of our natural resources. Thank you Madame Chair.

### **Attachment 3**

(Intervention prepared in case Proposal 3, Polar Bear transfer from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I, was reopened for discussion and a vote during the Plenary Session)

Thank you Mr. Chair,

In the United States, the state fish and wildlife agencies organize regionally. There are four regional associations representing the 50 sovereign states. The four regional associations are opposed to the original proposal to list the Polar Bear in Appendix I as well as the Alternative Proposal of the European Union.

Our Regional Association members include professional biologists and policy makers in the 50 State Fish and Wildlife agencies as well as the provinces of Canada charged with the protection and management of fish and wildlife resources. Our Regional Associations have been instrumental in promoting sound, scientifically based decisions for sustainable wildlife conservation.

CITES is a treaty that focuses on the sustainability of species in international trade. The estimated global Polar Bear population is 20-25,000. Less than 2%- 400 total animals - are in international trade annually. This level of trade has remained constant for more than 2 decades.

The rationale for listing the Polar Bear in App I establishes a new and unfamiliar precedent in the CITES process. Numerous species worldwide will likely be subject to the same fate since all have been identified as being threatened by climate change. Similar to the Polar Bear, many of these species have not, and likely will not, see projected population declines for decades.

The stewardship of Polar Bear by the local Inuit communities and the Canadian government is a modern day conservation success story and should be celebrated. This shared responsibility has resulted in a long-term commitment to sustainably manage the Polar Bear. The involvement and active participation of local communities in Polar Bear management has generated significant value and a strong desire- to not only maintain- but increase Polar Bear populations where prudent. It is this approach that supports a model of wildlife conservation that creates significant societal value for those resources that leads to long-term sustainability and the livelihoods of the local communities who depend upon them. It is this conservation approach that is the foundation of CITES.

Mr Chairman, the consequences of accepting the original or alternative proposals or are far more reaching than that of the Polar Bear. The real tragedy will be realized by those of us who promote the founding principles of CITES and are committed to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of our natural resources.

Thank you.

**Attachment 4**

(presented by Curtis Taylor as part of the United State introduction of CoP16 Proposal 30, Diamondback terrapin inclusion in CITES Appendix II)

Thank you, Madam Chair. We ask that the Parties note the following information.

A 2010 workshop on "Conservation and Trade Management of Freshwater and Terrestrial Turtles in the United States" was convened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and held in St. Louis, Missouri. The workshop participants included representation from the Federal Government, State governments and experts in turtle exploitation, international trade and species biology. The work of the participants was framed by an extensive review of the current status of North American turtle species by the IUCN Freshwater Turtles and Tortoise Specialists Group. This workshop identified conservation concerns for a number of U.S. native species and developed management, scientific and enforcement recommendations. One significant conservation concern was the challenge that exists with law enforcement and the conservation of native turtles due to the wide variation in State laws that regulate the harvesting and possession of turtles. Native North American turtles were the subject of discussions at that workshop. The State Fish and Wildlife Agencies have worked closely with the U.S. Government to stop illegal collection and manage the sustainability of these species.

The workshop revealed that the harvest of the Diamondback Terrapin is strictly regulated by all the states where it occurs. Habitat fragmentation and loss of secure nesting sites are the primary threats to this species. Direct turtle mortality has also been associated with crab traps and studies are currently underway to identify methods to alter trap design and sets to reduce mortality of non-target species. Although illegal wild harvest is prohibited via regulation, an Appendix II listing of the diamondback terrapin may enhance State enforcement efforts.