

CITES Sustainable Users Group (CSUG) MEETING 11am-1pm

3 August 2017, Rm G1, Horizon House, Bristol.

Minutes

Attendees:

1. Drew Bain (Guild of Taxidermists)
2. Wing Chan (Defra)
3. Jim Collins (SUN) ,
4. Kate Fisk (Christie's)
5. Matt Ford (Specialist Wildlife Services)
6. Mike Gates (Owl Society)
7. Simon Hewitt (APHA)
8. Martin Jones (Hawk Board)
9. Elaine Kendall (Defra)
10. Tracey King (OATA)
11. Alison Littlewood (JNCC)
12. Jenny Lomas (ABO)
13. Kim McDonald (Guild of Taxidermists)
14. Chris Newman (REPTA)
15. Grace Readings (Defra)
16. Calum Rivers-Cole (Defra)

17. Martin Sims (NWCU)
18. Elif Skinner (Defra)
19. Dominic Whitmee (OATA)
20. Simon Woods (APHA)

Dialling-in:

21. Mark Dodgson (BADA)
22. Stacey Hughes (Defra)
23. Paul McManus (MIA)
24. Grant Miller (Border Force)
25. Rose Simpson (RBG, Kew)
26. Noeleen Smyth (RBG, Kew)
27. Annelies Stevens (Christie's).

Apologies:

Martyn Denney (Cyclamen Society),
Philip Knowles (JCS Livestock),
Barbara Minnikin (APHA),
Henriette Okafor Wright (Burberry)

Action point 1: EU Illegal Wildlife Trade event on 8 Feb 2017

EK advised that John Scanlon had clarified his comments. The Group agreed to leave this for now.

1. Agree minutes of meeting on 19 April and action point update.

AP1 IWT and the Commission

EK and Elif Skinner will return to the commission with the comments raised, such as those by Dominic Whitmee regarding a UK group to look into IWT at a UK level. EK planned more constructive meetings with trade representatives and stakeholders concerning the IWT.

AP2 Charging Checks

Simon from APHA opened saying that charging will need consultations and work with ministers and he can therefore hold no position till ministers organise a response, which at best was suggested sometime in April 2018. However expect delays as this process has been slowed due to EU exit and ministers are therefore working with other issues so therefore expect the date to become later as a result.

AP3 Restricted ports of entry

EK and Graham Irving agree to meet and discuss the issue, after CSUG (concerning long journeys causing harm to CITES-listed animals on way to designated ports).

AP4 Taxidermy A10

The issue over how taxidermy A10s are issued in the UK and other member states was raised and discussed further with Alison Littlewood of JNCC. The following discussion led to subsequent questions, which members agreed to take back to their team and answer at a later date.

AP5 comments from trade representatives regarding what they would like to see changed, reviewed or implemented post EU-exit.

EK asked the room if anyone had any follow up points to add to the agenda for the meeting. After a short discussion nothing was added to the agenda.

All action points from the previous meeting completed

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1. Corporate update

EK referred

. To staff changes-

- Elif Skinner to take over from Mark Baxter.
- Grace to work full time with CITES team.
- Stacey leaving, to be replaced by Calum-Rivers-Cole.

APHA mentioned their increased demand for applications which has seen a 35% increase, and therefore they ask for patience as they begin their new recruitment campaign to relieve the pressure.

Action point 1:

Martin Jones asked for Defra to circulate "tree" of contacts for new Defra staff including IWT team.

2. EU and international meetings – review and forward look.

- 34th Enforcement Group meeting, 12-13 June 2017

Grant Miller (Border Force) gave an update. The points he elaborated on were:

- Denmark, where Danish boarder force had been seizing higher numbers of medical plants coming into the country from South Africa and the USA.
- Germany and Spain, where both countries were reporting higher numbers of fish scales coming into their countries from abroad to be used as decoration.
- Germany also mentioned the increase in seizures of samples from Eastern countries in particular Turkey.

Grant followed by mentioning that the overview of seizures was open to all EU trade partners, but that the data in the EU on significant seizures wasn't clear and that increased specification and relevant data was required.

GM also reported case details of significant seizures:

- Germany seized 1.2 ton of ivory carvings valued at around 8 million US dollars. It was being traded by Vietnamese people on Vietnamese airlines from West Africa to Vietnam. All carvings dated from around 1950/60.
- An operation in Austria that seized 75 ivory tusks, each dating pre 1978.

- Grant mentioned that the UK Heathrow case was settled.
- Grant similarly referred to the Rhino shooting at a French zoo, but was unable to delve into details as this case is still on going.
- The next issue came from a number of member states such as: the UK, Holland, Germany and Sweden. All were complaining about the music industry not complying and not gaining the required permits, which was leading to daily shipment seizures.
- An issue arose around the trade of parts coming from Brazil and Portugal heading down the Iberian coast however as its ongoing this is all Grant could disclose.

Questions-

Paul McManus raised the issue of batch licences, the response was that the issue had been raised previously and would only elongate the process and make checks more uncertain.

Kim McDonald raised the issue over being able to identify Indian rosewood from Brazilian rosewood. He stated that the issue was leading to the destruction of non-endangered rosewood, which was leading to the loss of many antiques and how many people find the Article 10 application too complicated so simply don't apply.

GM responded saying how this issue isn't a small trader issue rather more a company issue, with big named companies making no effort and that you need to start big and this should begin to solve the issue.

Paul (MIA) then asked for more education to be available to members. And he suggested that more communication between Border Force and MIA might aid the situation.

Group agreement lead by Elaine where by resources may be made available between BF, MIA, Defra and APHA to organise some form of meeting or education to help inform members of the groups into licencing.

Scientific Review Group (SRG79) meeting, 21 June 2017

Madagascar was the big talking point surrounding the trade of reptiles, mammals and redwood into the UK from non-EU ports such as Hong Kong. This issue is undermining the EU policy and effects legitimate trading.

Alison Littlewood (AL) mentioned how Madagascar had disbanded its scientific authority and was no longer following its predetermined quota settings.

The UK is attempting not to place a negative opinion onto Madagascar however there is some consideration to refuse significant trade with Madagascar if things don't improve, but for the moment the UK maintains trade.

78th Management Committee / 7th Expert Group, 22 June 2017

Dominic Whitmee (DW) asked about the salamander disease issue. Asking where it is? Numbers infected? What tests are in place?

Elaine says that the meeting looked at the salamander case as a health issue and asked for input from Alison from JNCC. Alison advised that JNCC vets are aiding in this issue.

Action Point 3 - JNCC to look into the issue

Feedback on (i) 29th Animals Committee and (ii) 23rd Plants Committee meetings.

Alison Littlewood (AL) Provides feedback on the animal committee meeting.

AL commented that there was limited progress made on many of the agenda due to the meeting being so soon after COP 17. Despite this the meeting was a success with 20 species/country combinations selected and 8 species previously selected retained due to concerns over sustainability.

Dominic asks specifically about Bandai fish. Alison will ask her colleague Vin for comment on the issue.

Action Point 4 – Vin to respond on the issue if possible.

Rose Simpson (RS) (KEW) provides feedback on the Plants committee (23rd - 27th July)

Rosewood again the main issue up for discussion, with many issues mentioned before with species identification, propagation, and name/specification issues.

A big musical instrument manufacturer's input/attendance at the conference. Mainly over rosewood, and the possibility of changing wood for instruments, after the removal of rose wood parts, which had been suggested. Although no action taken as approval needed, this will be referred to the Standing Committee.

Action Point 5 – Referral of replacement of Rosewood instrument replacements to standing committee

RS Successful meeting however it requires work, and the Madagascar report mainly on rosewood concerns is available on the CITES website.

69th Standing Committee meeting, 27 Nov-1 Dec 2017

EK and ES to attend. Any party wishing to submit a document must have done so by September. EK also recommended another meeting of the CSUG before the Standing Committee.

Anyone wishing to attend SC69 as an observer will need accreditation letters from the UK MA, please send requests to Calum Rivers-Cole at Calum.Cole@defra.gsi.gov.uk .

3. Updates

- UK ivory controls
EK gave a short update on the matter, explaining that Elephant poaching maintains a high priority for this government and that next steps will be sent out when finalised.

Paul McManus (PM) (MAI) asked for consultation date.
EK explained that at this stage Defra does not have any further information to give but as soon as they can stakeholders will be informed.
- COTES
Grace Readings (GR) updated everyone that the COTES Regulations project is progressing well with the aim to finalise sometime in the autumn.
DW raised a question over commencement date.
GR replied explained that no one can be certain due to changes being made. Extra consultations is not needed as little is likely to change. It is important that we get these regulations laid to make new legislation for EU Exit for COTES a simple process. The group agrees on a quick resolution.
- Charging regime
Already covered.
- EU Exit
EK explained the EU law will be used to create the same provisions in UK law. This means that any changes which traders might want to introduce will have to wait until after Exit; the CITES team are happy to receive any ideas.

A legislation discussion followed between EK and Jim Collins (JC) (SUN) over the five bird rule and the result was a decision to maintain the rule just under UK law.

EU Regulation on invasive, alien (non-native) species (particularly species selection).

EK referred to correspondence between Jim Collins and the invasive team. DW raised an issue with EU law, and how the changes being implemented into EU law are only going to need unpicking in the future post Brexit. He would rather just implement UK laws and avoid any need for “unpicking”.

JC (SUN) continued raising a point regarding plant specification, and how plants are specified by block not on a species by species basis and how this can lead to frustration in the community as some plants that pose no threat are banned because they are simply in the same block as an invasive species.

- We intend to publish a consultation document setting out our intended enforcement regime to support domestic implementation of the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation in autumn 2017, with the resultant SI coming into force in early 2018.

Species listing under the regulation:

- *“Until the UK formally leaves the EU, there is still a legal obligation to comply with EU law and all prohibitions and obligations under the EU IAS Regulation continue to apply. The UK voted in favour of the first update to the list of species of Union concern as it was deemed to be in the best interests of managing a wide range of invasive non-native species at an EU level which present environmental, economic and social risks.”*
- *“Once we leave the EU, the expectation is that the UK will regain control over the list of species that prohibitions apply to. It may therefore be possible to add or remove species from the list if there is robust scientific justification for doing so and this may mean that we are better able to reflect risks and priorities in the UK.”*

ACTION Point 6: CITES team agreed to feedback traders views to Invasive species team

4. Implementation issues

- Licence turnaround times questioned, APHA responded referencing their earlier point and said they are working at full capacity so issues are expected.

5. Preparation for Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) CoP12, 23-28 Oct, Manila, Philippines.

EK informed the CSUG that Defra will be attending and gave an invitation for feedback on agenda items.

A question was raised to have more meetings prior to the CoP and the idea was accepted.

Action Point 6 – Organise new meeting before CoP 12.

6. AOB and next meeting.

Action point 7 - JC asked for Management Committee dates from EK

Organisational chart input.