

CITES TABLE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management

1. Official Designation: Working Table for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Short name: CITES Table

2. Mandate:

In serving as a regional CITES North America forum, this table coordinates preparation for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, as well as for the Convention's committees and working groups. This builds stronger positions and participation as the North American region in CITES meetings leading to improved outcomes for common issues of regional importance. Enhanced communication and information sharing among the CITES Authorities of the three countries facilitates implementation, follow up on commitments, development of initiatives, and strengthening of the coordination and leadership of the North American Region in CITES. This table also considers trade issues related to permitting, shared species, species of concern to individual members, and other significant issues related to international trade in plants and animals.

3. Goal:

Through North American collaboration and cooperation, the CITES Table provides a platform to exchange information, strengthen regional implementation and scientifically based decision-making in order to conserve species included in the CITES Appendices and other species of concern against over-exploitation through international trade, as well to promote conservation through legal and sustainable international trade.

4. Objectives: The CITES Table will:

- Serve as a regional CITES North America forum;
- Coordinate preparation for CITES meetings and participation in CITES working groups;
- Enhance working relationships;
- Promote exchange of information, technology and best practices to strengthen capacities to implement CITES in the three countries;
- Promote elaboration and support of projects on selected species subject to international trade; and
- Identify and address priority actions and opportunities.

5. Leadership and Table Membership: Participation in the CITES Table is limited to government officials and is led by three Co-Chairs representing:

- for Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS);
- for Mexico, the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) and the General Directorate of Wildlife of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (DGVS-SEMARNAT) and
- for the United States, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

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The CITES Table welcomes and encourages input from participants in the three countries, subject to invitation by their country's co-chair. Other participants may include, among others:

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada;
- Natural Resources Canada (Canadian Forest Service);
- Other Environment and Climate Change Canada agencies, such as the Wildlife Enforcement Branch;
- Global Affairs Canada;
- National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change of Mexico (INECC);
- Mexico's National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR);
- Mexico's National Fisheries Commission (CONAPESCA);
- Mexico's National Commission on Natural Protected Areas (CONANP);
- Mexico's Office of the Attorney General for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA);
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service;
- U.S. Agency for International Development;
- U.S. Department of Agriculture-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service;
- U.S. Department of Agriculture-Forest Service;
- U.S. Department of State;
- Office of the U.S. Trade Representative; and
- Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, through their regional CITES representatives.

6. Scope of Subjects Covered:

- Preference will be given to issues that affect all three countries, but bilateral issues are fully welcome, as elaborated under the mandate.

7. Responsibilities of the Co-Chairs and Facilitators:

- **Co-Chairs** should, with the assistance of the Facilitators, work together between Trilateral meetings to:
 - Establish the agenda for the next meeting;
 - Develop the Action Item Report documenting progress on the action items agreed to at the prior year's meeting and submit to the Coordinating Committee in the format provided at least one month before the meeting.
 - Endorse the Working Table's annual meeting report and support the host country Co-Chair in making a brief presentation to the Executive Committee at the annual meeting of actions and recommendations.
 - Throughout the year, promote and facilitate the completion of projects and activities agreed upon at the Trilateral meeting.
- **The host country Co-Chair** for the CITES Table should:
 - In advance of each annual meeting,
 - appoint a Facilitator for their table (the Facilitator may be a regular table participant);

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- coordinate, with the assistance of the Facilitator, a final report and endorsement (signatures) from all the Table Co-Chairs on the progress made in achieving the previous year's working table Action Item Report;
- with input from all countries, develop the agenda to guide the Working Table's discussions at the annual meeting; and
- develop the participant list from all countries to submit to the Trilateral Committee Coordinator (for registration purposes).
- At the annual meeting, designate a Reporter for the meeting to record the agreed upon actions, assignments and deadlines (Action Item Plan). The Reporter takes notes on the discussions of the Table and prepares the summary of action items in the required format (Action Item Plan), including:
 - List of Participants (names, affiliations, titles, telephone numbers, e-mails);
 - Issue/Agenda Item;
 - Action (s);
 - Assigned to;
 - Proposed Completion Date;
 - Recommendation to the Executive Table (if any);
 - Endorsement from the Parties (Signature from three Co-Chairs).
- Coordinate the Spanish /English translation with a translator, as needed, to obtain signatures from the three Co-chairs, and deliver the signed Action Items Report to all Co-chairs, if needed.
- Before the CITES Table convenes, ensure that an interpreter is available for the duration of the working table session (usually provided by regular table participants). Interpreters provide English-Spanish translation for the duration of the working table as needed and translate the Table's summary report.
- Lead and present the end-of meeting summary (Action Item Plan) to the Executive Table, along with the other Co-Chairs of the CITES Table.
- Ensure that the Coordinating Committee is provided with a concise hard copy and electronic copy of the working table's Action Item Plan of the annual meeting, in English and Spanish, if needed.
- Throughout the year, follow up on the status and completion of projects and activities agreed upon at the Trilateral meeting.
- **Facilitators** from each country are designated by their respective CITES Table Co-Chairs before each annual meeting (the Facilitator may be a regular table participant).
 - The host country Facilitator, with the assistance of fellow CITES Table Facilitators, as appropriate, will lead efforts to assist the Table Co-chairs to:
 - maintain coordination among table participants and Co-chairs;
 - ensure continuity of work throughout the year; and
 - assist with follow-up and timely preparation and delivery of agendas and Action Item Plans and Reports, as appropriate.

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8. Meetings:

- The CITES Table will endeavor to meet face-to-face at the annual Trilateral meeting, as appropriate based on the timing of CITES meetings and when feasible. Decisions to participate in annual meetings of the Trilateral Committee will also take into consideration limitations on participation imposed by respective national leadership and may result in a recommendation to hold CITES Table discussions outside of the annual meeting forum.
- The Co-Chairs will meet as needed to advance action items identified by the CITES Table.
- The agenda for the annual meeting will include issues that are of Trilateral concern and agreed to by all Co-chairs.
- Co-chairs are responsible for determining the scope and nature of presentations for each meeting. Co-chairs will endeavor to ensure that the focus is on new bi- or trilateral collaborative efforts, new issues of concern, or new dimensions to existing issues, items requiring input from the chairs and table participants, or key updates.

9. Decision-Making Procedures:

The CITES Table works on the basis of consensus.

10. Access to Information:

All documents, recommendations and other outputs of the CITES Table will be made publicly available, at the discretion of the CITES Table Co-Chairs, through the Trilateral Committee website at www.trilat.org.

11. Follow-up Mechanism:

Action Item Reports, based on summaries of annual meetings, serve as annual work plans. Co-chairs complete the Action Item Reports. These reports are to be reviewed by the tables at the annual meeting, as the first agenda item.

12. Official Languages:

English and Spanish. Interpretation at the tables is provided by Committee members proficient in both languages. Agendas and summaries will be produced in the official language(s) of the host country and will be translated by the Coordinating Committee to be disseminated in both languages, if needed.

These Terms of Reference were reviewed and updated by the CITES Working Table Co-Chairs and are effective as of March 2021.