



Our ref.: DM/TDM/DKA  
Your ref.:

Miguel de Serpa Soares  
Under Secretary General for Legal Affairs  
and United Nations Legal Counsel  
United Nations  
New York, NY10017  
USA

Geneva, 18 June 2018

**Subject: RE: Request for contribution (CITES) - Report of the SG on oceans and the law of the sea**

Your Excellency Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 11 May 2018 and the opportunity for the CITES Secretariat to contribute to the Secretary General's report on "Oceans and Law of the Sea" for the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. Pursuant to the suggestions contained in your letter, we are outlining below relevant activities undertaken by the CITES Secretariat with regard to sections, and where possible paragraphs, of General Assembly resolution A/RES/72/73 within the current reporting period:

On Section II. Capacity building, in particular paragraphs 12 and 33:

As reflected in the Voluntary Commitment made by the CITES Secretariat at the UN Ocean Conference (<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=15374>), the Secretariat is working with partners, in particular FAO and several RFMO/RFBs on delivering needs-driven capacity building activities to assist developing countries in implementing the provisions of the convention for marine species.

To that effect the Secretariat in March 2018 renewed its cooperation with the South East Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) to provide training to improve fisheries data collection for 4 member states in the region and training to improve sustainable fisheries management to another 3 member states. In April 2018 the Secretariat engaged FAO to deliver further capacity building activities in the time leading up to CITES CoP18 (Colombo, 23 May-03 June 2019), including legal assistance, training on sustainable fisheries management and trade regulation.

On Section: IX Marine environment and marine resources, in particular paragraph 184

As noted in the Voluntary Commitment, CITES plays a well-targeted role in advancing implementation of SDG 14 as a trade-related measure with effective compliance procedures.

By responding to the capacity building needs identified by the CITES Parties (SDG 14.A), including for the making of scientific assessments (non-detriment-findings), ensuring legal harvesting (legal acquisition finding), reporting and trade monitoring, the capacity building activities undertaken by the CITES Secretariat and its partners will directly contribute to the recovery of the stocks of CITES listed species to sustainable levels (SDG 14.4).

On Section: X Marine biodiversity

In May 2018 at the 13th Informal Consultations of State Parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement the Chief of the Legal and Compliance Team of the CITES Secretariat served as panellist in the Panel on "Science-Policy Interface". As noted in his intervention, Introduction from the Sea, defined as [CITES Article I, paragraph e] "transportation into a State of specimens of any species which were taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any State", is one of the trade transactions regulated under CITES.

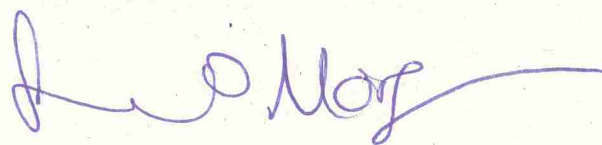
In June 2018 the CITES Secretariat organized a workshop in Brussels with a view to develop guidelines on assessing legality under CITES, which included a working group on "Introduction from the Sea", the proceedings of which will be discussed at the 70th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC70, Sochi, 01-05 October 2018).

With regards to paragraph 266 and 267, the Secretariat notes that the international trade in corals has been regulated under the Convention since its inception, with a view to ensuring that international trade does not contribute to endanger the survival of the species in the wild. Pursuant to instructions by the last Conference of the Parties (CoP17, Johannesburg, 24 September – 04 October 2018) the Secretariat, in collaboration with FAO, is also undertaking a global study on global status, use and trade in both CITES-listed on non-CITES listed precious corals (Order Antipatharia and family Coralliidae).

On Section: XV. Coordination and cooperation, in particular paragraph 359

In April 2018 the CITES Secretariat submitted a letter expressing its interest to become a part of UN-Oceans to the Division on Oceans and Law of the Sea of the United Nations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Morgan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Morgan  
Officer-in-Charge  
CITES Secretariat