



European Commission



Proceedings of the

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar

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Brussels, Belgium

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Section 1 - Introduction

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Outline

OUTLINE

AIM

The aim of the workshop is to bring together law enforcement authorities from caviar producing States, consumer and transit countries and representatives from concerned international organisations, to identify the main problems relating to illegal trade in caviar and to come up with possible approaches to combat poaching and illegal trade in caviar.

BACKGROUND

Since 1997, all species of sturgeon have been listed in the Appendices of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Since then, a number of conservation measures have been put in place in producing and importing countries to improve enforcement measures to combat illegal trade in caviar. Despite these efforts, however, illegal trade in sturgeon products and especially in caviar remains of serious and growing concern.

According to trade reported by CITES Parties, more than 1 300 t of caviar were traded legally between 1998 and 2004 at the global level. Of these, 45% (591 t) were imported by the European Union, 24% (313 t) by the USA and 13% (175 t) by Switzerland. However, illegal trade in sturgeon products, in particular caviar is thriving. Caviar is compact, easy to conceal, and extremely valuable. A large portion of the global caviar trade is thought to be illegal and although it is impossible to accurately estimate the volume of illegal trade, some believe the illegal trade in caviar outweighs the legal trade by several times. Large seizures of illegal caviar around the world indicate that there is a thriving black market in the luxury roe that is threatening the survival of sturgeon species. The seizures also demonstrate that caviar smugglers are well-organised and use sophisticated methods and the illegal caviar trade is considered to have strong links with organised crime groups.

Given that the EU is one of the principal markets for illegally traded caviar, it was agreed at the 53th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee that the EU Enforcement Group would take the lead in addressing this issue. As a result, the European Commission is organising this international sturgeon enforcement workshop.

PARTICIPANTS

The workshop will include participants from range States (Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, China, Ukraine), trading countries (The United Arab Emirates, Turkey), consumer states (EU Member States, USA, Switzerland, Japan, Canada) and for certain sessions, also other stakeholders such as representatives from the caviar trade sector and NGOs. Accordingly, around 100 participants are expected.

AGENDA

The workshop will consist of a series of presentations and working groups, and is organised into the following 3 sessions:

- 1: Description of the current situation and identification of the main problems.
- 2: Search for solutions for the identified problems.
- 3: Summarising learning points and identifying actions to combat illegal trade.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Outline

On Day 2, participants will be divided into four working groups to discuss the following subjects:

1. Control of domestic markets, aquaculture operations, re-exports, airlines and cruise ships
2. Registration, marking, identification of caviar and distinguishing legal from illegal
3. Legislative gaps and weaknesses, national and international
4. Combating the caviar criminals; information exchange and international co-operation

LANGUAGE

The working language of the meeting will be English. Russian translators will be provided for the plenary sessions.

OUTCOMES/ ACTIONS

One of the expected outcomes of the workshop will be for participants to elaborate and agree on a set of practical measures that will assist countries in combating the illegal trade in caviar. These will – for example - include measures that will

- improve the international co-operation, co-ordination and information exchange among the relevant enforcement authorities;
- improve the enforcement of national laws and the identification and prosecution of offenders;
- strengthen the collaboration with international organisations such as the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-Interpol, the World Customs Organisation WCO, FAO and others;
- allow for the identification of the source and origin of caviar throughout the chain of custody, through labelling, improved use of DNA testing and sharing of information on authorised imports and exports on a real time basis,
- facilitate increased technical and financial support to range States in controlling illegal trade and control poaching,
- etc.

Subject to the views of the workshop delegates, these set of measures will be adopted in the form of a Workshop Declaration or Action Plan that will also restate the countries commitment to the implementation and enforcement of CITES Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish and proposes ways of how these activities can be financially supported.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Agenda

AGENDA

DAY ONE - Tuesday, 27 June 2006

09.30 **Registration and coffee**

10.30 **Welcoming/Opening remarks** (10 min)

Soledad Blanco, Director for International Affairs & LIFE – Directorate-General for, European Commission

10.40 **Introduction to the workshop** (20min)

Hugo Schally, Head of Unit for Environmental Agreements and Trade, Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission

John M. Sellar, Senior Officer, Anti-smuggling, Fraud and Organized crime, CITES Secretariat

PART 1: Description of the current situation and identification of the main problems

11.00 **Sturgeons – an introduction to the species, its management and history of trade** (40 min)

Mohammad Pourkazemi, Chairman, IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group

11.40 **Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States** (1h30)

Brief introductions (five minutes each) Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Romania and the Russian Federation, followed by a question-and-answer and panel discussion session with the presenters serving as the panel members.

13.30 **Lunch break** (1h30)

15.00 **The CITES Secretariat's perspective** (1h)

The results of enforcement-assessment missions, observations regarding patterns and methods of illegal trade and the work that remains to be done

John M. Sellar, Senior Enforcement Officer, CITES Secretariat

16.00 **Coffee break** (20 min)

16.20 **Regulating domestic caviar markets and traders – the non-range State perspective** (30 min) United Arab Emirates and Switzerland (10 min each with 5 min questions)

16.50 **Tracking legal trade in caviar: a new CITES database on caviar trade** (20 min)

Gerado Fargoso, UNEP-WCMC

17:10 **Lessons learned from caviar investigations – *modus operandi*, useful investigation techniques, difficulties faced and legislative inadequacies** (1h20)

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Agenda

Presentations by Canada, an EU Member State, the Russian Federation and the United States of America (10 minutes each), followed by a question-and-answer and panel discussion session with the presenters serving as the panel members.

18.20 **Closing of day one**

18.30 **Cocktail buffet**

DAY TWO Wednesday 28 June 2006

Session open to traders and NGOs

09.00 **Summary of day one** (10 min)

09.10 **The implications of Resolution Conf. 12.7 – registration and labelling** (20 min)
Stephanie Theile, TRAFFIC

09.30 **Molecular genetic profiling and other identification and marking systems** (20 min)
John Sellar, CITES Secretariat

9.50 **The trader's perspective** (20 min)
Armen Petrossian, International Caviar Importers Association

10.10 **Caviar and consumer awareness: the role of NGOs in discouraging the consumption of illegal caviar** (20 min), Dean Martin, SeaWeb

Open session ends

10.50 **Coffee break** (20min)

11.10 **International law enforcement – sources of assistance** (40 min)
Interpol and the World Customs Organization (15 min each and 5 min questions)

PART 2: Finding solutions to the identified problems

11.50 **Introduction to part two of the workshop** (10 min)
Finding solutions to problems. Preparation for working groups.
Working groups to discuss the following subjects:

1. Control of domestic markets, aquaculture operations, re-exports, airlines and cruise ships
2. Registration, marking, identification of caviar and distinguishing legal from illegal
3. Legislative gaps and weaknesses, national and international
4. Combating the caviar criminals; information exchange and international co-operation

12.00 **Participants divide into four working groups** (1h)

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Agenda

- 13.00 **Lunch break** (1h30)
- 14.30 **Working groups continue** (1h30)
- 16.00 **Coffee break** (20min)
- 16.20 **Working groups report back in plenary** (40min)
10 minutes per working group
- 17.00 **Discussions and questions regarding working group outputs and identification of commitments and actions to combat illegal trade** (1h)
- 18.00 **End of day two**
- 19.15 **Departure for Dinner**

DAY THREE - Thursday, 29 June 2006

Part 3: Final conclusions and summary of results of the workshop

- 9.00 **Introduction to day three** (10 min)
- 9.10 **Final conclusions and recommendations of the workshop** (1h30)
Final discussions summarising learning points and identifying actions to combat illegal trade.
- 10.40 **Coffee break** (20 min)
- 11.00 **Final conclusions and recommendations (continued)** (1h30)
- 12.30 **Closing speeches** (30 min)
CITES Secretariat and DG Environment, European Commission
- 13.00 **End of workshop**

BACKGROUND PAPER

Caviar, the renowned gourmet delicacy, is the unfertilised roe of sturgeon and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes), a very ancient group of fish that occur in coastal and inland waters of 25 countries in Europe, Asia and North America. The Beluga *Huso huso*, is the largest freshwater fish, which can weigh more than two tonnes and can reach an age of 100 years. It produces the most valuable caviar, the sought-after beluga. Other traditional varieties of caviar include osietra, which comes from the Russian Sturgeon *Acipenser gueldenstaedtii* and the Persian Sturgeon *Acipenser persicus*, and sevruga, which comes from the Stellate Sturgeon *Acipenser stellatus*.

Caviar is one of the most expensive wildlife products, fetching retail prices of up to EUR600 per 100 g in “delicatessens” in Western Europe and the USA. Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea produce what is claimed to be the highest quality caviar and the countries bordering the Caspian Sea have been the source of over 90% of the caviar in global trade in recent years. Other important sources are the Amur and the Danube river basins, the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Great Lakes of North America.

Most of these species are considered threatened or endangered because of the combined effects of over fishing, pollution and habitat degradation. Twenty-five of the 27 Acipenseriformes species are currently included in the 2006 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, of which 17 are classified as Endangered or Critically Endangered.

In response to reported declines in sturgeon populations and with the aim of ensuring that trade in sturgeon products, such as caviar, is sustainable and not threatening the species' survival, all species of sturgeon and paddlefish have been listed in the Appendices of CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) since 1998. Two species - the Common or Baltic Sturgeon *Acipenser sturio* and the Shortnose Sturgeon *Acipenser brevirostrum* - are listed in Appendix I of the Convention, which prohibits any international commercial trade. All other species are listed in Appendix II, whereby international trade is regulated by governments through a system of permits.

Biology and geographical distribution of Acipenseriformes

The order Acipenseriformes contains 27 species and is divided into two families, Acipenseridae (sturgeon) and Polyodontidae (paddlefish). Acipenseriformes are only found in the temperate northern hemisphere, where they inhabit rivers, estuaries, near-shore oceanic environments and inland seas. Some of the largest rivers and inland water bodies in this area are important sturgeon and paddlefish habitats. Table 1 provides an overview of the species distribution and their listing in the CITES Appendices.

Most species migrate between marine and freshwater systems and some migrate within freshwater. Acipenseriformes are mainly long-lived fish with a slow growth and maturation rate, which reproduce in freshwater, and spawn in habitats with hard substrates (e.g. gravel, cobbles, boulders), with varying depths and water currents.

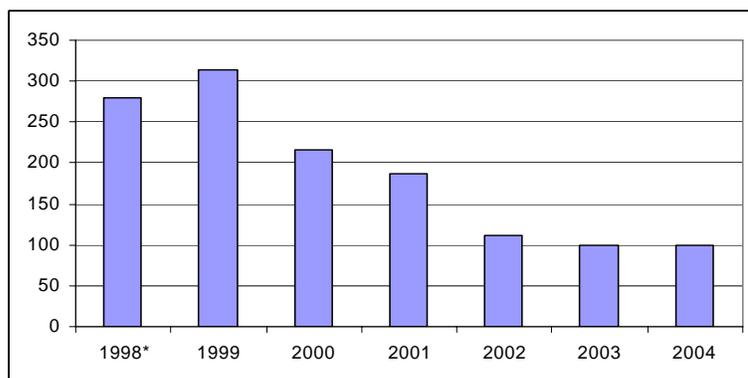
Reported legal trade in caviar

In the 19th century, the USA was the top caviar producer until populations and production collapsed. In recent years, the Caspian Sea nations of Iran and the Russian Federation, and to a lesser extent Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, have dominated the international trade in caviar while the European Union (EU), USA, Switzerland and Japan are the major importers.

According to trade reported by CITES Parties, more than 1300 t¹ of caviar were traded legally between 1998 and 2004 at the global level. Iran, the largest exporter, is reported to have exported over 480 t of caviar over this period, followed by the Russian Federation (210 t), Kazakhstan (85 t) and China (29 t). Of these 1300 t, 45% (591 t) were imported by the European Union, 24% (313 t) by the USA and 13% (175 t) by Switzerland.

Between 1998 and 2004, the annual volume of international trade in caviar around the world (from wild sources and aquaculture) dropped from a peak at 314 t in 1999 to 100 t in 2004 (Fig. 1). Besides the caviar reported in international trade, considerable volumes of caviar are also consumed domestically in the countries of origin, for example in the Russian Federation and the USA.

Figure 1.
Annual volumes of caviar reported in international trade (t).



Source: Adapted from CITES trade data compiled by UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, UK. * As the listing onto Appendix II of all species of Acipenseriformes not yet listed in the CITES Appendices entered into effect in April 1998, trade data does not cover the whole year and the total for 1998 is likely to be an underestimate of actual trade in that year.

During the same time period, the amount of caviar produced from aquaculture, reported by CITES Parties in international trade, increased from under a tonne in 1998, to over 10 t in 2004. However, these figures only represent a fraction of the actual global production of caviar in aquaculture as the largest volume of the trade occurs between countries of the EU and within the USA. Given that the EU internal market and the USA domestic market are not considered “international trade”, such trade does not appear in CITES trade records. The world caviar production in 2005 was estimated to be around 45 t.

Over the past decade, prices for both wild origin and aquaculture caviar have risen as wild origin caviar has become scarcer and the taste and quality of aquaculture caviar has been improved, prompting greater acceptance in the market place.

¹ Based on importers’ reported trade

Sturgeons and CITES

The migrating nature of some species of sturgeon means that they often inhabit water ecosystems managed by more than one State, which presents a series of challenges to ensure adequate participation in joint management regimes, to combat illegal fishing and access reliable and comprehensive information on levels of harvest and trade. Due to these challenges, CITES parties have adopted a series of activities outlining conservation measures required for continued trade, including enhanced fishery management and legislation, regional coordination, labelling and control of illegal trade. Although these resolutions have not been fully implemented by all Parties yet, greater trade regulation and increased scrutiny of fisheries management have resulted. Some examples include:

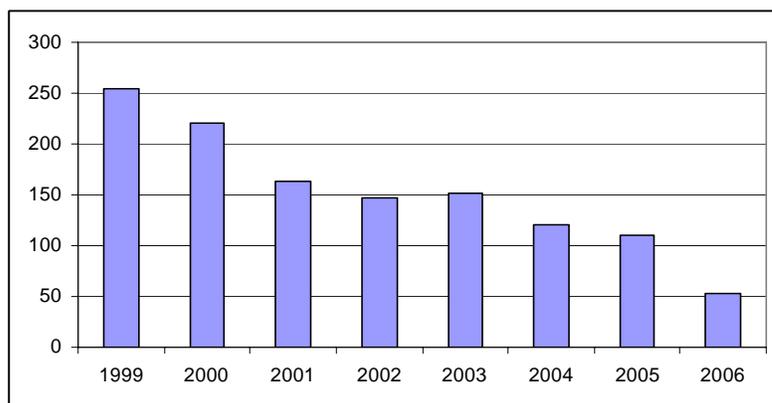
Significant Trade Review

In 2000, aside from annual caviar export quotas, CITES Parties agreed to the need to undertake a Significant Trade Review of Appendix II sturgeon and paddlefish species in order to verify if the level of their trade complied with CITES provisions. The study concluded that for all sturgeons fished in the Amur, Danube and Siberian rivers, as well as in the Azov, Black and Caspian seas trade could be detrimental to the species. Based on this conclusion, specific recommendations and precise deadlines were established for the species and range States of concern in all river basins and seas mentioned above. For the Caspian Sea region, an agreement was signed in June 2001 by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan, joined by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

CITES Export Quotas

Based on the CITES Significant Trade Review in 2000 and on recommendations formulated in this context, most range States have been required to gradually decrease their annual export quotas for caviar in order to prevent further fisheries pressure on wild populations of sturgeon, particularly in Eurasia (Amur, Danube and Siberian River basins, as well as Black and Caspian seas). Overall the total annual export quotas for Acipenseriformes have declined from over 250 t in 1999 to 110 t in 2005 (Fig. 2). In April 2006, the CITES Secretariat authorised only export quotas for Iran (44.4 t of caviar), Bulgaria (4.6 t), China (2.3 t) and Romania (1.8 t), totalling 53 t of caviar.

Figure 2.
CITES export quotas for caviar (t) from all species of sturgeon and paddlefish (from wild sources and aquaculture) and for all countries, between 1999 and 2006.



Source: Adapted from CITES website www.cites.org.

Universal labelling system for the identification of caviar

With the aim of facilitating the legal caviar trade around the world and allowing easy identification of legal caviar in trade, the Parties to CITES agreed at the CITES meeting in 2000 to introduce a standardised labelling system for all caviar exports. Two years later, they extended the labelling requirements and agreed that all caviar containers in trade, whether imported, exported, re-exported or in domestic markets, should bear a label that would contain a specific set of information, including the country of origin and the year of harvest, to allow identification of the source of the caviar. The Parties agreed that, as of January 2004, they would only accept imported caviar shipments marked according to the labelling guidelines. In addition to this they agreed that all caviar sold on domestic markets would also require labels, including caviar that is re-packaged. A detailed description of information that needs to be included on the labels can be found in *CITES Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13)*.

As a result of these developments, the EU has adopted a new Commission Regulation, replacing *Regulation (EC) No. 1808/2001* in May 2006 that makes these requirements legally binding in all 25 EU Member States. Once this Regulation enters into force, all caviar containers in the EU market, regardless of their size, will be required to bear a CITES label.

Illegal Trade in Caviar

The early-mid 1990s are considered to be a turning point in sturgeon fisheries management, after which increased illegal harvest and trade ensued, flooding the international market with illegal, low quality and inexpensive caviar. During this period, European imports of sturgeon products increased 1.5–2 times and US imports increased by 100%.

Caviar is compact, easy to conceal, and extremely valuable. A large portion of the global caviar trade is thought to be illegal and although it is impossible to accurately estimate the volume of illegal trade, some believe the illegal trade in caviar outweighs the legal trade by several times. What is known is often anecdotal and based on reported seizures and convictions. However, large seizures of illegal caviar around the world indicate that there is a thriving black market in the luxury roe, which is threatening the survival of sturgeon species. They also demonstrate that caviar smugglers are well-organised and use sophisticated methods and that the illegal caviar trade is considered to have strong links with organised crime groups.

Co-operation and information exchange between Parties is of particular importance. A recent investigation by German Customs officials illustrated not only the size of the illicit trade but also the importance of international co-operation. The investigation revealed that two businessmen smuggled at least 1.4 t of caviar into the EU and sold it illegally in various EU Member States using falsified documents. German Customs discovered the case after they were tipped off by French Customs officials.

Conclusion and expected outcomes

The above demonstrates that CITES has made a substantial contribution to efforts to elaborate conservation measures in countries producing and importing sturgeon products as well as to improve enforcement measures to combat illegal trade in caviar. However, despite these efforts the estimated level of illegal trade is still growing and accordingly the issue of enforcement and illegal trade is of a

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Background paper

high concern. Given that the EU is one of the principal markets for illegally traded caviar, the EU agreed to take the lead in addressing this issue and as a result to organise this international workshop with the main objective to combat illegal trade in caviar. One of the expected outcomes of the workshop will be for participants to identify a number of measures to assist countries in combating the illegal trade in caviar.

These could, for example, include measures that would:

- improve the international co-operation, co-ordination and information exchange among the relevant enforcement authorities;
- improve the enforcement of national laws and the identification and prosecution of offenders;
- strengthen the collaboration with international organisations such as the CITES Secretariat, Interpol, WCO and others;
- allow for the identification of the source and origin of caviar throughout the chain of custody, through labelling, improved use of DNA testing and sharing of information on authorised imports and exports on a real time basis;
- facilitate increased support to range States in controlling illegal trade and control poaching.

Subject to the views of the workshop delegates, these set of measures will also reinstate the commitment to the implementation and enforcement of CITES Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish and propose possible means for supporting these activities.

The outcomes of the workshop will be put forward for consideration to the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting in October 2006.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Background paper

Table 1: Overview of *Acipenseriformes* species, their distribution and CITES listing

Common name	Scientific name	Range State ¹	CITES listing
Siberian Sturgeon	<i>A. baerii</i>	China, Kazakhstan?, Russian Federation	App. II
Shortnosed Sturgeon	<i>A. brevirostrum</i>	Canada, USA	App. I
Yangtze Sturgeon	<i>A. dabryanus</i>	China	App. II
Lake Sturgeon	<i>A. fulvescens</i>	Canada, USA	App. II
Russian Sturgeon	<i>A. gueldenstaedtii</i>	Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine	App. II
Green Sturgeon	<i>A. medirostris</i>	Canada, Mexico, USA	App. II
Sakhalin Sturgeon	<i>A. mikadoi</i>	China [RE], Japan [RE], Korea, Democratic People's Republic of [RE], Korea, Republic of [RE] Russian Federation	App. II
Adriatic Sturgeon	<i>A. naccarii</i>	Albania, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Serbia and Montenegro [RE], Slovenia	App. II
Ship Sturgeon	<i>A. nudiventris</i>	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia?, Hungary [RE], Iran, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia [RE], Tajikistan [RE], Turkey, Turkmenistan?, Ukraine, Uzbekistan [RE]	App. II
Atlantic Sturgeon	<i>A. oxyrinchus</i>	Canada, USA	App. II
Persian Sturgeon	<i>A. persicus</i>	Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan	App. II
Sterlet	<i>A. ruthenus</i>	Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan [RE?], Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine	App. II
Amur Sturgeon	<i>A. schreckii</i>	China, Japan?, Mongolia, Russian Federation	App. II
Chinese Sturgeon	<i>A. sinensis</i>	China	App. II
Stellate Sturgeon	<i>A. stellatus</i>	Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece?, Hungary, Iran, Italy?, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Republic of Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine	App. II
Common Sturgeon	<i>A. sturio</i>	Albania, Algeria [RE?], Belgium [RE?], Bulgaria [RE?], Croatia [RE?], Czech Republic [RE], Denmark [RE], Estonia [RE?], Finland [RE?], France, Georgia, Germany [RE?], Greece [RE?], Hungary [RE?], Iceland [RE?], Ireland [RE?], Italy, [RE?], Latvia [RE?], Lithuania [RE?], Morocco [RE?], Netherlands [RE?], Norway [RE?], Poland [RE?], Portugal [RE?], Romania [RE?], Russian Federation [RE?], Serbia and Montenegro [RE?], Spain [RE?], Sweden [RE?], Switzerland? [RE?], Turkey, Ukraine [RE?], United Kingdom	App. I
White Sturgeon	<i>A. transmontanus</i>	Canada, USA	App. II
Kaluga Sturgeon	<i>Huso dauricus</i>	China, Japan?, Russian Federation	App. II
Giant Sturgeon (Beluga)	<i>H. huso</i>	Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic? [RE], Georgia, Hungary, Iran, Italy [RE], Kazakhstan, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia [RE?],	App. II

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		Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine	
Sry-Dar Shovelnose	<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus fedtschenkoi</i>	Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan	App. II
Small Amu-Dar Shovelnose	<i>P. hermanni</i>	Tajikistan [RE], Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan	App. II
Large Amu-Dar Shovelnose	<i>P. kaufmanni</i>	Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan	App. II
Pallid Sturgeon	<i>Scaphirhynchus albus</i>	USA	App. II
Shovelnose Sturgeon	<i>S. platorynchus</i>	USA	App. II
Alabama Sturgeon	<i>S. suttkusi</i>	USA	App. II
American Paddlefish	<i>P. spathula</i>	Canada, USA	App. II
Chinese Paddlefish	<i>Psephurus gladius</i>	China	App. II

¹ Source: 2006 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. <www.iucnredlist.org>. [RE] The taxon is 'Regionally Extinct' in the country or sub-country unit. [RE?] The taxon is possibly 'Regionally Extinct' in the country or sub-country unit. ? Doubtful country or sub-country occurrence.

Section 2 - Presentations

OPENING REMARKS

Soledad Blanco, Director for International Affairs & LIFE – Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission

The issue of trade in caviar has evolved into a highly visible and sometimes controversial issue especially in the face of growing estimated levels of illegal trade.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has put a lot of efforts to elaborate conservation measures in countries producing and importing sturgeon products as well as to improve enforcement measures to combat illegal trade in caviar.

The illegal trade in caviar was raised at the 53rd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee in June last year, and on this occasion the European Union offered to take the lead in tackling this issue. As the EU is one of the principal markets for illegally traded caviar, the European Commission felt that it was appropriate to make a contribution to the discussion around caviar trade and the efforts to combat illegal trade. We therefore offered to organise this international sturgeon enforcement workshop to identify ways and means to address this complex and difficult situation and to make a substantive input into the international discussion.

I am therefore very please to be able to welcome all participants of this workshop.

The Commission is very happy with the large number of participants from sturgeon range states (Russian Federation, Islamic Republic of Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Rumania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, China, Ukraine), trading countries (The United Arab Emirates, Turkey), consumer states (EU Member States, USA, Switzerland, Canada), from the CITES Secretariat, Interpol and World Customs Organisation, UNEP-WCMC, WWF, TRAFFIC. Tomorrow morning we will also be welcoming stakeholder representatives (NGOs and Traders), who will be here to present their views on this issue. This wide participation will certainly ensure that we will have a lot of fruitful discussions and a good outcome.

This workshop should help us to improve information exchange, international collaboration, communication and coordination as well as in reinforcing the implementation of existing provisions under CITES. We also hope that the workshop will be able to identify a set of concrete measures to combat illegal trade in caviar, which will help us reinforce existing efforts to tackle this problem. We would like to present a paper on the outcome of this workshop to the next CITES Standing Committee in October 2006.

Finally, I would like to thank you all again for coming and I would also like to thank the CITES Secretariat, WWF, TRAFFIC, SCIC, the Commission Interpretation DG and the CITES team of the Commission DG ENV for their help and assistance with regard to this workshop.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP

Hugo Schally, Head of Unit for Environmental Agreements and Trade - Directorate-General for Environment, European Commission

As mentioned in opening remarks, combating illegal trade in CITES-listed species is a key priority for the European Commission. Given the apparent scale of poaching and cross-border smuggling of caviar, which has led to a plummeting of sturgeon stocks, we are committed to strengthening enforcement in this field in order to ensure sustainable trade in sturgeon products in the future.

We have already taken a number of steps in order to improve enforcement for CITES species and for caviar in particular. EU legislation provides one set of rules in relation to wildlife trade across all 25 Member States and requires them to take adequate measures to deal with all possible infringements of the legislation. A special EU Enforcement Group, bringing together all relevant enforcement agencies, meets twice a year in order to exchange information and co-ordinate activities. As a follow up to the discussions on caviar at 53rd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, the Group had an in-depth exchange of information and views about how to tackle smuggling of caviar across EU borders and the sale of illegally sourced caviar on the EU market. As a result, Member States agreed to intensify their efforts to address this problem.

In this regard, I am happy to announce that the Commission has recently adopted a new Regulation, which fully implements the universal labelling system for caviar agreed under CITES and will greatly contribute to enforcement efforts within the European Union. This new law will enter into force in just over 10 days time, after which all caviar containers that are imported, exported or placed on the market in the EU will need to bear a label certifying that it is legally sourced, in line with CITES Resolution Conf 12.7. We believe that this will greatly assist law enforcement officers in their tasks. Among other important enforcement related issues this workshop will also provide an opportunity to discuss and share experience on the implementation of the labelling system further.

As regards this workshop we all know that sturgeons and paddlefish of the Order Acipenseriformes represent a valuable biological and economic resource that in recent years has been seriously affected by illegal fishing and trade to high levels of demand at national and international level.

The illegal trade in caviar and other sturgeon products poses a serious threat to the survival of wild sturgeon populations, reduces the effectiveness of management programmes in sturgeon range States, undermines legal trade and threatens sustainable development in caviar producing countries. The control of the international trade in caviar requires international co-operation and that this can not be achieved without proactive communication and co-ordinated action between enforcement bodies at national and international level to ensure efficient interventions, to avoid duplication of effort, and to alert relevant agencies of illegal trade operating in other countries.

Accordingly, we are all here today to work together in order to address the problems related to enforcement in order to ensure sustainable trade in caviar.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Introduction

Firstly, we start with the description of the current situation and the identification of the main problems. During this part we will enjoy presentations from you as outlined in the agenda in order to initiate fruitful discussions.

Tomorrow in the morning we will have an open session where NGOs and traders can contribute to our debate.

In the afternoon of Day 2, we will search for solutions together first in 4 working groups and then in the plenary for the identified problems. Finally, we will summarise learning points and identify actions to combat illegal trade.

Although issues related to sturgeon management are very important we however, should only focus on enforcement related discussions during these 2,5 days in order to complete our mission and to find adequate solutions to combat illegal trade in caviar. I hope that all of you presenting caviar producing and trading countries as well as important international conventions and organizations will find this exchange of information and views useful and constructive.

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP

John M. Sellar, Anti-smuggling, Fraud and Organized Crime, CITES Secretariat

Distinguished Delegates,

There will be many people in this room who have never tasted caviar. There will be some for whom it has been a food that they have been used to tasting on a relatively regular basis for most of their lives. Others will have experienced this delicacy as a special treat, associated with particular and notable occasions, such as New Year or perhaps a wedding celebration.

Whether you can tell Beluga from Oscetra, or distinguish the taste of Kaluga from the paddlefish caviar of North America, really doesn't matter. After all, few of us here in Brussels today will ever see one in the wild but we all know that we must work together to save snow leopards from becoming extinct; and so it is for sturgeons.

I don't suppose there were many people in the international community who fully appreciated the consequences in Harare at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties when it was agreed that all 27 species of sturgeon and paddlefish should be listed in the CITES Appendices. I think it took some time before the CITES community fully appreciated just what an awesome task was before us. There can be very few, if any, species that have come under the control of the Convention that have had such a history of involvement of criminal activities and ruthless exploitation.

The listing of sturgeon and paddlefish presented the CITES and wildlife law enforcement authorities of the world with a massive challenge, one that we have still to fully come to grips with. CITES has been struggling for its three decades of existence to cope with problematic trades such as that in ivory so is it really any wonder that, after just eight years we are still battling to find an effective way to ensure that trade in caviar is sustainable?

Since CoP10 there have been many meetings, workshops and seminars (formal and informal, national, regional and international) devoted to sturgeons. This, however, is the first time that we have had the opportunity for law enforcement officials to gather together and discuss the illegal trade in caviar. Such an event is long overdue. On behalf of the CITES Secretariat, I sincerely thank the European Commission for volunteering to take on the task of convening this workshop.

Over the course of the next three days, we will hear from those who know the caviar trade in all its forms. There are people here who know about harvesting a fish that has inhabited the waters of the earth since prehistoric times. There are people who know how to extract its eggs and convert sturgeon roe into a luxury product. There are others who have battled the poachers that seek out this fish, whether it is in the Caspian Sea, Amur River, Danube or Great Lakes. There are investigators and prosecutors, based many thousands of miles from where caviar first started its illegal journey, who have spent countless hours bringing to justice those who have arranged the importation of illegal products to consumers. We also are joined by representatives of countries, such as those in the Middle East, whose citizens have no real interest in or desire for caviar but whose ports have been used by criminal groups to launder illegally-obtained caviar into the international marketplace.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Introduction

The European Commission has provided us all with an excellent opportunity. It is one that we must not waste. We must learn from each other. We must work with each other. Above all, we must be honest with each other. To facilitate frank discussions, there will be no minutes kept of this meeting. You should feel free to speak openly and frankly. Indeed, you must do so. You can be assured that I certainly will.

One of the first things we must acknowledge is that we all face problems. None of us is free of the scourge of illegal trade in caviar. There will be delegates in this room from what might be described as developing countries. Countries where the resources for law enforcement are extremely limited. Countries where the socio-economic pressures are so bad that local people understandably turn to the crime of sturgeon poaching and where it can be no surprise that corruption is a major obstacle to effective trade controls. But don't think for one moment that the nations in North America or Europe are necessarily doing any better a job than those elsewhere. There are enforcement agencies in countries in those parts of the world that are only just reacting to the wake up call and realizing the extent of crime associated with trade in caviar that has been taking place in their ports, shops and restaurants.

So, yes, let's be honest with each other. Let's recognize that we all can, and need, to do more. But let's also avoid any finger-pointing because the finger can be pointed at each and every one of us. Some of us have the capacity to do a great deal to combat illicit trade in caviar. But whatever our capacity, it essential that we do as much as we can. This event is intended to identify what we can do, and very importantly, how we can all help each other. For one thing is sure, if we do not work together, then the caviar criminals will continue to succeed. And let's be under no illusions, they are mainly winning at the moment and have been winning for several years.

There are international organizations with us, such as Interpol and the World Customs Organization, which I know are committed to helping us in our battle against the caviar criminals. The working groups that we will form can consider how best to use such resources.

In October of this year, the CITES Standing Committee will meet in Geneva. This is a timely opportunity for representatives of the Parties to consider the outcomes of this event. CoP14 is now less than a year away. That also provides an important opportunity for us to improve upon the current CITES controls on the trade in sturgeons and paddlefish if, for example, we decide that the Resolution on this subject requires further amendment.

But I urge you, in your discussions over the next days, to keep any suggestions or recommendations as practical as possible. We are unlikely, wherever in the world we are situated, to see significant increases in our law enforcement resources in the near future. So let's use what we have to best effect. The CITES law enforcement community, in my experience, is staffed with excellent and dedicated individuals. If we come together, we can create a team that no criminal can defeat. We can emerge victorious in the anti caviar smuggling world cup.

Three years ago, I went on patrol with fishery protection officers on a river flowing to the Caspian Sea who described to me how, one night, they pulled alongside a poacher's vessel but before they could board it, a hand grenade was thrown into their patrol boat. They had to dive overboard to escape the explosion and the poachers escaped. Thankfully, there was no repeat of that episode whilst I was with

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Introduction

them. Most of the people in this room today will never face such dangers. But each of us owes it to those who do face such risks day after day to do our utmost to support them.

I sincerely believe that these three days in Brussels can have a major impact upon the future of the trade in caviar. I'm ready, and the CITES Secretariat is ready, to help you all become a winning team. To quote a song used by English football fans (although it is obviously against my instincts as a Scotsman to do so), we should send a clear message to everyone who combats the illegal trade in caviar, "You'll never walk alone".

Thank you, again, to the European Commission for hosting this event. The Secretary-General of CITES has asked me to send his very best wishes for the success of this workshop.

**Sturgeons – an introduction to the species, its reproductive cycles,
and a history of its management and exploitation around the world**
Mohammad Pourkazemi, IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group

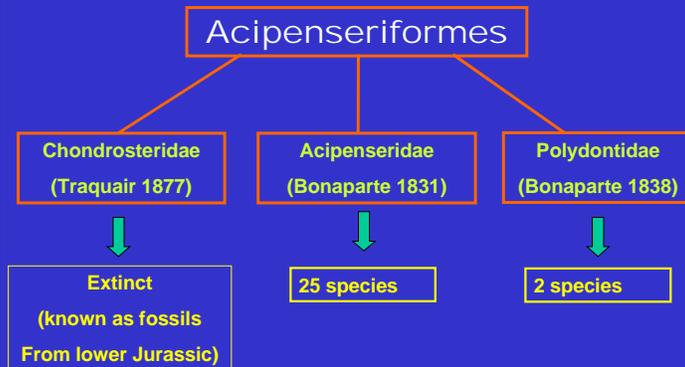
**Introduction to sturgeon species
(Biology, Management and Trade)**

M. Pourkazemi

Chairman, IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group
International Sturgeon Research Institute

- Acipenseriformes: 200 Million years ago
- Origin: Early Jurassic Known: Cretaceous(>100mya)

➤ Sturgeon are Chondrosten fishes and belong to :

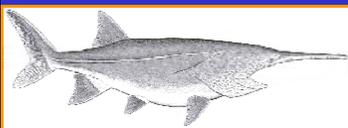


Polydontidae = Paddle fishes

Morphological characters (unique identification keys)

Distinguishable from *Acipenseridae* by

- Not having five rows of bony scutes on the body surface
- Not having barbels (anterior to the mouth)



Polydontidae

- ❖ Two monotypic freshwater genera
- ❖ Very long snout
- ❖ Dorso-ventrally flattened to a paddle shape

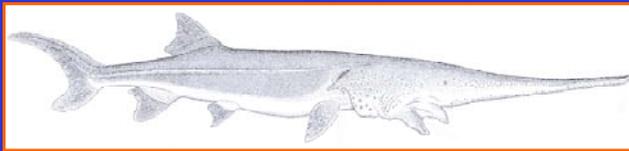
Genus: *Polyodon* (Lacepede 1797) ⇒ only one living species

Inhibit: Freshwater of eastern North America associated with the Mississippi River & its tributaries



Genus *Psephurus* (Gunther 1873)

One species



Psephurus gladius (Martens 1862)

Found in: Yangtze River (China)

Family: ***Acipenseridae***

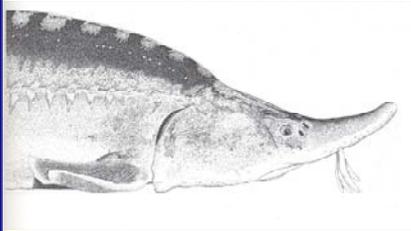
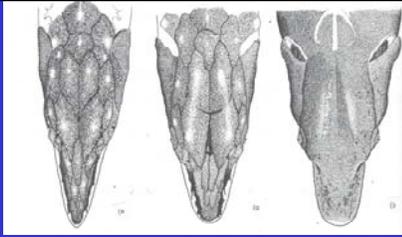
(Largest family in terms of number of species)

Morphometric characters:

- Five longitudinal rows of large bony plates
(Two lateral, two ventral, one dorsal)



•Head ⇒ Covered by large bony plates



•Four barbels anterior to the mouth arranged in one row
 • Having moderately elongated snout

Family : **Acipenseridae**

Sub Family

Acipenserinae

Scaphirhynchinae

Acipenser
(18)

Huso
(2)

Scaphirhynchus
(2)

Pseudoscaphirhynchus
(3)

Each species may have several populations in different ecosystems:

Genus : Scaphirhynchus

Scaphirhynchus albus



Missouri drainage coast

Scaphirhynchus platorhynchus &
Scaphirhynchus suttkusi



Missouri drainage coast

Genus : *Pseudoscaphirhynchus*

<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus kaufmanni</i>		Aral Sea, Rivers
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus hermanni</i>		Aral Sea, Rivers
<i>Pseudoscaphirhynchus fedtschenkoi</i>		Aral Sea, Rivers

Genus : *Huso*

<i>Huso huso</i>		Caspian, Black, Azov Seas
<i>Huso dauricus</i>		Amur river estuary

Genus : <i>Acipenser</i>	Species	Geographic Distribution
		Siberia, Rivers and Lakes
		N. America Atl. coast, rivers
		Great lake basin
		Caspian, Black, Azov Seas
		Asia and N. America, Pac.coast
		Adriatic Sea
		Caspian and Aral Seas
		Yangtze River drainage

Species	Geographic Distribution
 <i>A. oxyrinchus</i>	N. America Atlantic coast
 <i>A. persicus</i>	Caspian, Black, Azov Seas
 <i>A. ruthenus</i>	Europe, West. Siberia, rivers
 <i>A. schrenckii</i>	Amur River drainage
 <i>A. sinensis</i>	Yangtze River drainage
 <i>A. stellatus</i>	Caspian, Black, Azov Seas
 <i>A. sturio</i>	Atlantic coast of Europe
 <i>A. transmontanus</i>	N. America Pacific Mississippi,

Life history:

Most sturgeon species characterized by having:

- Long life (e.g Beluga >100 years)
- Slow sexual maturity (e.g Beluga = 10-16 year = 13-22 year)

Group 1 All life cycle in freshwater (adults, juveniles)

Group 2 Adults ⇒ After spawning migrate from freshwater into estuarine brackish water and juvenile follow more slowly (e.g. Caspian, Black, Azov Sea sturgeons)

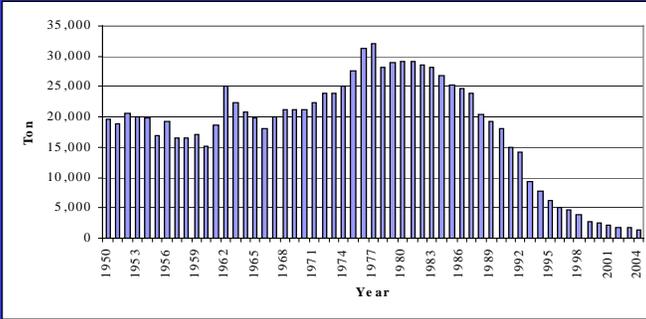
Group 3 Adults ⇒ After spawning migrate rapidly into the sea

Main Sturgeon Species in Fishery and Aquaculture

		Paddlefish
Russian sturgeon		Siberian sturgeon
		White sturgeon
Stellate sturgeons		Huso dauricus
		<i>A. schrenckii</i>
Beluga		<i>A. oxyrinchus</i>
		<i>A. fulvescens</i>
Persian sturgeon		
		
Ship sturgeon		
		
Sterelt		

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group

World Sturgeon Catch (1950-2004)

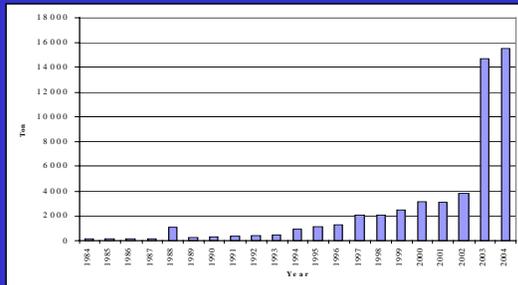


Countries: Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Fmr YugRp of Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia Spain, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, U.S.S.R., United States of America

Species: Persian, Russian, Stellate sturgeons, Beluga, Green sturgeon, Mississippi paddlefish, Sterlet sturgeon, White, Lake and Shovelnose sturgeon

Sturgeon Aquaculture production (farm) 1984-2004

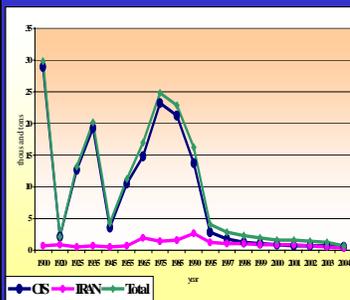
Year	Ton
1984	150
1985	150
1986	180
1987	160
1988	1,098
1989	260
1990	328
1991	385
1992	412
1993	495
1994	892
1995	1,135
1996	1,297
1997	2,025
1998	2,034
1999	2,465
2000	3,158
2001	3,091
2002	3,816
2003	14,747
2004	15,551



Countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine, U.S.S.R., United States of America, Uruguay

Species: White sturgeon, Siberian sturgeon, Sterlet Beluga, Bester, Danube sturgeon (=Osetra), Russian and Ship Sturgeon.....

Sturgeon official catch in the Caspian Sea between (1900-2004) (th. tones)



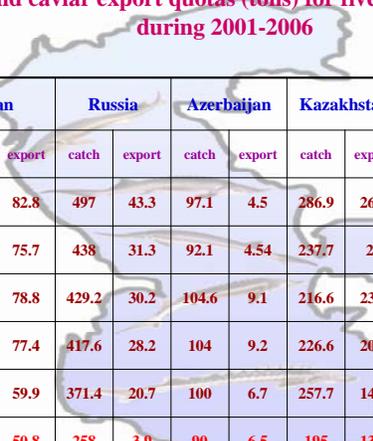
Year	CIS	Iran	Total
1900	29	0.8	29.8
1920	2.1	0.85	2.1
1925	12.6	0.6	13.2
1935	19.3	0.8	20.1
1945	3.6	0.6	4.2
1955	10.5	0.7	11.2
1965	14.9	2	16.9
1975	23.3	1.5	24.8
1985	21.2	1.6	22.8
1990	13.7	2.6	16.3
1995	2.92	1.21	4.13
1997	1.85	1.04	2.89
1998	1.18	1.12	2.31
1999	1.01	0.92	1.93
2000	0.81	0.82	1.64
2001	0.76	0.88	1.64
2002	0.7	0.64	1.34
2003	0.8	0.51	1.3
2004	0.47	0.28	0.76

Estimation of Sturgeon Abundance in the Caspian Sea (1976-2004)

Year	Beluga	Sturgeon	Stellate	Total
1976	9.4	59.1	75.9	144.4
1978	12.1	60.5	69.7	142.6
1983	15	46.4	53.2	114.6
1988	21.3	42.7	41.8	105.8
1991	15.1	46.8	35.3	97.2
1994	8.9	21.2	13.6	43.7
1998	7.6	23	11.6	42.2
2001	9.35	53.4	17.96	80.71
2004	5.8	48.3	8.2	62.35

- Data up to 1994 and also in 1998 belong to F.USSR
- Data in 2001 was only in summer survey
- Sturgeon (Russian , Persian & Ship)
- Total of Trawl & gillnet catch (Azerbaijan)

Catch and caviar export quotas (tons) for five Caspian States during 2001-2006



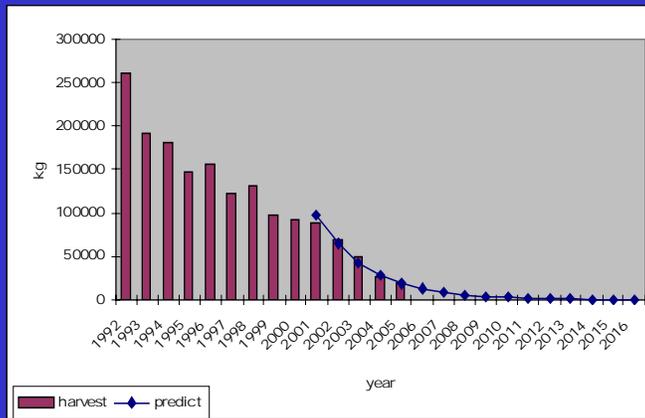
Year	Iran		Russia		Azerbaijan		Kazakhstan		Turkmenistan	
	catch	export	catch	export	catch	export	catch	export	catch	export
2001	760.8	82.8	497	43.3	97.1	4.5	286.9	26.9	66.3	6.6
2002	685.5	75.7	438	31.3	92.1	4.54	237.7	25	62.8	3.6
2003	676.4	78.8	429.2	30.2	104.6	9.1	216.6	23.1	56.3	2.4
2004	671.5	77.4	417.6	28.2	104	9.2	226.6	20.1	63.2	2.63
2005	595.2	59.9	371.4	20.7	100	6.7	257.7	14.2	62.8	3.7
2006*	<u>500</u>	<u>50.8</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>3.9</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>6.5</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>13.3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>

**The Caspian Sea
Sturgeon Export Quota- 2006**

Only
44.5 tons-Caviar and 170 tons meat of Persian Sturgeon
by Iran

Zero export quota for:
Beluga, Russian, Stellate and Ship sturgeon

**Caviar harvested from five sturgeon species during
1992-2016 and predicted trends in the future**



***Factors affecting the decline
of sturgeon stocks***



A

**Lack of sustainable Management:
Over fishing - Illegal catch & Poaching**





**Lack of sustainable Management:
Over fishing - Illegal catch & Poaching**



**Sturgeon meat for domestic consumption
harvested from unmeasured fish**



Synthetic (Hand made Caviar)

• Additive Compounds (Protein, fats, artificial color, odor...)



• Different in Shape (Hexagonal) and color



• No DNA in Syntactic CAVIAR
compare to natural



B On Biology and natural Reproduction

- Construction of Dams and bridges across Main Rivers
 - Volga River
 - Kura River
 - Sefidroud River

(Migration, Anadromous species)

- Loss of natural spawning grounds



Acipenserids Natural Spawning (1998)

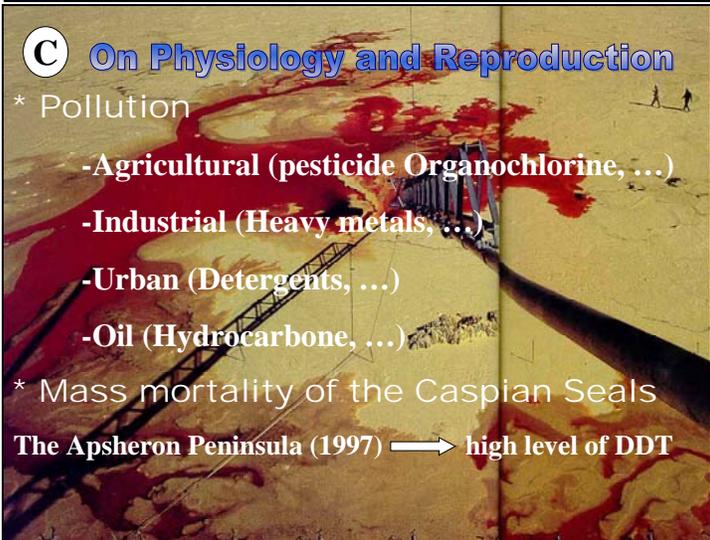
Russia:	35%
Kazakhstan:	26%
Azerbaijan:	3 %
Iran:	10%



C On Physiology and Reproduction

- * Pollution
 - Agricultural (pesticide Organochlorine, ...)
 - Industrial (Heavy metals, ...)
 - Urban (Detergents, ...)
 - Oil (Hydrocarbone, ...)
- * Mass mortality of the Caspian Seals

The Apsheron Peninsula (1997) → high level of DDT



No Sturgeon International Trade Control before 1 April 1998

Status of Sturgeons in CITES:

Before CoP-10

APP:1

- Short nose Sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*)
- Baltic sturgeon (*Acipenser sturio*)

APP: 2

- Atlantic Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*)
- American Paddlefish (*Polyodon spathula*)

Sturgeon Stocks and Caviar Trade Workshop

In 1995 in Germany (Bonn) with the participation of researchers from the U.S.A., Germany, Russia.....

Conclusion → Over exploitation of sturgeon and caviar poaching were the main factors resulting in decline of stocks. Species in the Caspian Sea were threatened to extinction. This issue was proposed to the CITES Animals Committee.



Conservation of sturgeons was proposed at the 13th Meeting of the Animals Committee and it was decided that proposal be adopted at the CoP-10 in 1997.

At CoP-10 (Zimbabwe, 1997)

Five commercially valuable sturgeon species were included in Appendix II

Beluga , Russian, Stellate, Siberian, Ship sturgeon

All other sturgeon species that were not previously listed in CITES appendices were included in Appendix II

At present all sturgeon species (27 species) are included in CITES Appendices

Adopting Resolution 10.12 regarding sturgeons

- ❖ Coordination between parties with shared sturgeon stocks
- ❖ Combat illegal fishing and caviar poaching
- ❖ Request assistance from international organizations to strengthen conservation measures towards sturgeons

Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13)* Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish

RECOMMENDS further, with regard to catch and export quotas, that:

a) Parties not accept the import of any specimen of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States unless:

- i) export quotas for all specimens of Acipenseriformes species for that year have been established by the range States concerned and have been communicated by the Secretariat to the Parties by **31 December of the preceding year**;
- ii) the export quotas referred to in subparagraph i) have been derived from catch quotas agreed amongst States that provide habitat for the same stock of an Acipenseriformes species;

iii) catch quotas are based on an appropriate regional conservation strategy and monitoring regime for the species concerned; and

iv) the Secretariat has confirmed that catch and export quotas have been agreed by all relevant range States, on the basis of information provided to the Secretariat by **30 November** of the preceding year on the status of stocks of the species concerned;

Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13)* Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish

Annex 2 Codes for identification of Acipenseriformes species, hybrids and mixed species

Species	Code
<i>Acipenser baeri</i>	BAE
<i>Acipenser baeri baicalensis</i>	BAI
<i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i>	BVI
<i>Acipenser dabryanus</i>	DAB
<i>Acipenser fulvescens</i>	FUL
<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i>	GUJ
<i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	MED
<i>Acipenser mikadoi</i>	MIK
<i>Acipenser naccarii</i>	NAC
<i>Acipenser nudipectus</i>	NUD
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus</i>	OXY
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotai</i>	DES
<i>Acipenser persicus</i>	PER
<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	RUT
<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i>	SCH

A non-reusable label should be affixed by the repackaging plant to any primary container in which caviar is repackaged. This label must include, as a minimum: a standard species code as provided in Annex 2; the source code of the specimen; the ISO two-letter code of the country of origin; the year of repackaging; the official registration code of the repackaging plant, which incorporates the ISO two-letter code of the country of repackaging if different from the country of origin (e.g. IT-wwww); and the lot identification number, or CITES export permit or re-export certificate number (e.g. zzzz), for instance:

PER/W/IR/2001/IT-wwww/zzzz

Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13)^{*} Conservation of and trade
in sturgeons and paddlefish

URGES further that range States cooperate with the Secretariat to implement, on a three-year cycle beginning in 2006, an evaluation by appropriate experts of the implementation of the regional conservation strategy and monitoring regime for stocks of Acipenseriformes species.

Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13)^{*} Conservation of and trade
in sturgeons and paddlefish

CALLS UPON range States, importing countries and other appropriate experts and organizations such as the IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Animals Committee, to explore the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species to assist in the subsequent identification of the origin of specimens in trade;

Caviar Mislabeling:

- Caspian Sea Caviar mixed with North America endemic sturgeon sold and labeled as Beluga
- Three genetic form of Russian Sturgeon
 - 1- Pure (*A. gueldenstaedtii*)
 - 2- *Acipenser baerii*- like mtDNA haplotype
 - 3- Rare ⇨ genetically similar to (*A. naccarii*)

Workshop:

Identification of Acipenseriformes Species in Trade

Sept. 29th and Oct 1st - 2006

Berlin – Germany

- Assessment of Current DNA technology on Caviar Identification
- Development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species



Farmed Caviar from Stellate sturgeon, Iran-2006

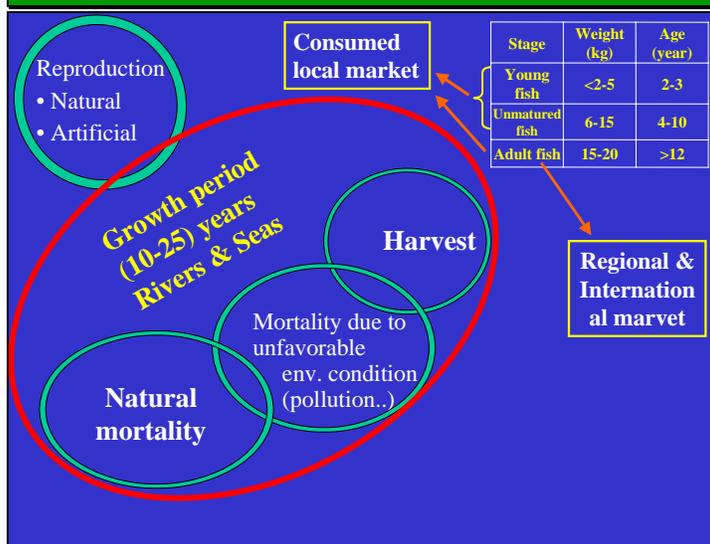


What is necessary to conserve sturgeon habitat?

How to improve the sturgeon management in different ecosystem?

How to control domestic and national level sturgeon consumption?

How to control international sturgeon Trade?



IUCN
The World Conservation Union

Sturgeon Specialist Group and other Experts

9-11 February 2001, Moscow - Russia

Development of Recommendations for further actions

1. *Combating Illegal Harvest and Illegal Trade*
2. *Improving Restocking and Aquaculture*
3. *Improving International Co-operation, Agreement and Management*
4. *Improving Stock Assessment*
5. *Enhancing Natural Reproduction*
6. *Increase Communications/ Awareness*

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

Sturgeon Specialist Group and other Experts
9-11 February 2001, Moscow - Russia

Combating Illegal Harvest and Illegal Trade

- 1- Review the current national harvest and trade management schemes:
Through development and implementation of regional trade and law enforcement agreements
- 2- Improve the social and economic condition:
Improve the social and economic condition of local people in the range states possibly through developing methods for them to access markets for sturgeon products.
- 3- Further elaborate enforcement system:
Through improved enforcement of existing laws



RAMSAR DECLARATION
on
Global Sturgeon Conservation

- A. Sturgeon Stock assessment and Fisheries management
- B. Sturgeon Habitat Evaluation, Protection and Restoration
- C. Sturgeon Stock Rehabilitation and Enhancement (genetic and management considerations)
- D) Environmental pollution and abatement measures
- E) Aquaculture development for market production
- F. Socio-Economic and public awareness measures
- G. Development of adequate national and international regulatory instruments (including enforcement)

Trade Control:

Systematic reporting of statistics on Parties' seizures (caviar, sturgeon meat, ...) and their availability to selected people (e.g. relevant agencies) in a timely fashion (more often than annually);

Captive-breed sturgeon (farmed) production and its exports should be reported to CITES

Necessity to clarify the definition of "non-reusable label" in Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) in order to make sure that the label will be torn when the container (tin, jar, ...) is opened.

*** Sturgeons need support for all their life cycles Not only for the final stage or Trade control.**

➤ **Development and implementation of Action Plans**

➤ **Regional and International Co-operation:**

CITES, UNDP, UNEP, CEP, World Bank, GEF, Caspian Sea Convention,....

European Commission

FAO

IUCN, WSCS,.....



Thanks

Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States: Azerbaijan

English summary:

The presentation of the representative of Azerbaijan, Mr. T. Mamadli

There is only one cross-border point in Azerbaijan, Baku airport, where export of caviar is allowed. Azerbaijan needs international assistance, including financial support, in order to implement CITES in all caviar issues. Azerbaijan calls on European Union Member States to enforce controls on caviar import to the European Union. Azerbaijan believes that the problems of control of illegal fisheries activity is linked to the unresolved problem of the Caspian Sea status.

Full Russian text:

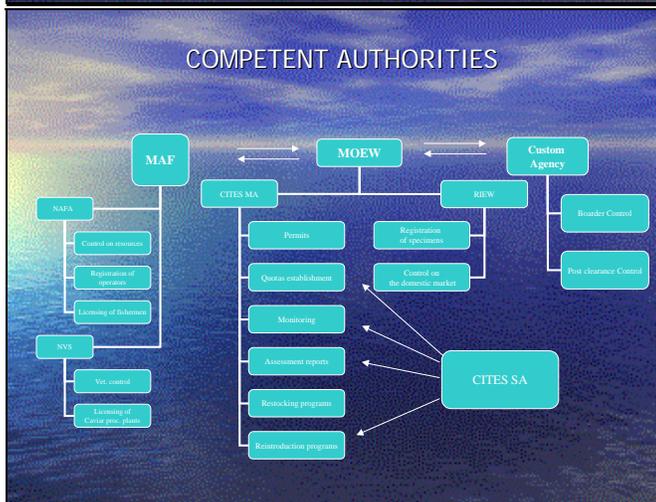
Выступление представителя АО СИТЕС Азербайджана господина Т.Мамедли.

В Азербайджане инициатива ЕС в организации встречи заинтересованных сторон и международных организаций и экспертов на семинаре посвященном законодательной базе по борьбе с нелегальной торговлей икрой воспринята с большим удовлетворением. Очень своевременный семинар, может помочь выработке общего мнения по актуальному вопросу, который беспокоит не только страны, имеющие осетровые рыбы, но и международную общественность. Само название семинара говорит о том, что приоритетной задачей в борьбе с нелегальной торговлей является усиление законодательных мер в этой области. Азербайджан за последние годы принял ряд документов законодательного характера и закон, позволяющие регулировать и контролировать источники нелегальной торговли, к которым, в первую очередь, относится нелегальный лов осетровых. Мы располагаем «Законом Азербайджанской Республики о рыболовстве», «Правилами рыболовства», «Правилами по регулированию оборота и использования осетровых», которые являются базовыми документами в указанной сфере. На современном этапе, Административный орган СИТЕС Азербайджана подготовил проект Постановления Правительства Азербайджана в соответствии с рекомендациями Конвенции по изданию соответствующего закона о СИТЕС в республике. Административный орган СИТЕС страны в этой сфере работает и координирует свои усилия с МВД и Таможенным комитетом страны. В соответствии с рекомендациями конвенции вывоз и торговля икрой на экспорт могут вестись в стране только через один таможенный пропускной пункт, которым является Бакинский аэропорт. Важными направлениями борьбы с нелегальной торговлей икрой остаются борьба с нелегальным ловом осетровых и инициатива, по сосредоточению добычи и торговли осетровыми и их производными только в государственных структурах. От этого семинара мы ждем помощи и информации, а первую очередь финансовой помощи. Так, Министерство Экологии и природных ресурсов Азербайджана, в составе которого находятся рыбоохранные органы страны, а также, являющееся Административным органом СИТЕС, нуждается в финансовой помощи международных организаций, ЕС, экологических программ ООН и других заинтересованных организаций для улучшения материально-технической базы соответствующих рыбоохранных структур, оснащения их современным оборудованием, техникой, приборами и транспортными средствами, как на суше, так и на море. Мы предложили бы странам, входящим в ЕС усилить контроль на экономических границах

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Azerbaijan

Союза, для предотвращения попадания нелегальной, некачественной, опасной для здоровья людей икры в страны ЕС. Безусловно такая мера окажет положительное влияние на положение с нелегальным экспортом и торговлей икрой, а также, автоматически, на объемы нелегального лова. Видимо пришло время координировать работу международных организаций и стран, имеющих запасы осетровых, для чего необходимо издавать ежеквартальный бюллетень, который информировал бы все заинтересованные стороны о фактах торговли нелегальной икрой в странах ЕС, сообщал бы о происхождении нелегального товара и о путях его транспортировки в Европу. После чего, соответствующие разбирательства на местах, позволили бы усилить работу по борьбе с указанными фактами. Азербайджан считает, что пока не будет решен вопрос о статусе Каспийского моря, трудно ждать больших результатов в борьбе с нелегальным выловом биоресурсов, которые являются главным источником нелегальной торговли икрой. Ведь все страны прикаспийского бассейна контролируют лишь десятимильную зону моря, а остальная его часть остается, практически бесконтрольной. Ни одна рыбоохранная структура прикаспийских стран не имеет права останавливать или проверять суда в части моря, не находящейся под юрисдикцией государства, представляемого ею. Такое положение становится главным препятствием в деле координации усилий прикаспийских государств в борьбе с нелегальным выловом и нелегальной торговлей.

Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States: Bulgaria



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Bulgaria

Sustainable Management

Bulgaria has complied with the recommendations of the Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) directed to the range States

- Registration system of legal exporters of sturgeon specimens and for the processing plants is in place
- The universal labeling system for the trade and identification of caviar has been implemented
- The Biodiversity Act has been amended in sense to provide a legislative base on extending CITES labeling and control system of sturgeon products (including caviar) on the domestic market
- Bulgaria has signed a Regional Strategy for Management and Sustainable Utilization of *Acipenseriformes* and some items of the strategy have been implemented such as:
 - ✓ Protection of essential habitats;
 - ✓ Reintroduction efforts directed towards ship sturgeon (*Acipenser nadviventis*);
 - ✓ National Plan for Conservation and Management of *Acipenseriformes* is in place;
 - ✓ Monitoring on the survival of aquaculture produced YOY released in Danube;

Aquaculture produced sturgeon fingerlings released in Danube for 1998-2005

Year	Total number	? guld.	Average weight (G)	H.huso	Average weight (G)	A.rutenus	Average weight (G)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1998	1 500	1000	250	200	300	300	180
1999	30100	27 400	230	2 700	320	-	-
2000	21150	20 400	200	750	350	-	-
2001	28 100	28 100	200	-	-	-	-
2002	23 530	22 530	280	-	-	1 000	-
2003	166 617	161 317	82	5 300	5	-	-
2004	211 126	211 126	18,87	-	-	-	-
2005	67 000	35 000	15	32 000	15	-	-
Total	549 123	506 873		40 950		1 300	

ENFORCEMENT

- Production and export of caviar is allowed under strong conditions:
 - ✓ Exporters should meet several conditions to apply for export quota and for CITES permit
 - ✓ Strengthened boarder and post clearance control (one violation discovered for 2006)
 - ✓ Training of custom officers
 - ✓ Constant cooperation between CITES MA, Fishery Surveillance inspectors and Custom officers at national level
- Main problems and needs
 - ✓ Strengthening of the control on the domestic market
 - ✓ Constant cooperation between the range States from the shared basin and the importing States and their enforcement authorities
 - ✓ Unique identification system based on molecular genetic profiling

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Bulgaria



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Bulgaria



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Bulgaria



BELUGA Inc., Vidin, BG
e-mail: belugacaviarbg@abv.bg



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Bulgaria



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Bulgaria



Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States: China

Sturgeons Management in China



Lu Xiaoping
Division of Fauna Affairs
Cites Management Authority of China
lxpc@sina.com

1

Sturgeons in Chinese waters

N.	Name-CN	Name-EN	Name-Latin	Distribution
1	???	Chinese sturgeon ?	<i>Acipenser sinensis</i>	Yangtze River, Pearl River & China Sea
2	???	Yangtze sturgeon ?	<i>Acipenser dabryanus</i>	Yangtze River
3	? ?	Chinese swordfish ?	<i>Psephurus gladius</i>	Yangtze River
4	???	Amur sturgeon ?	<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i>	Heilongjiang River (Amur River)
5	???	Beluga ?	<i>Huso dauricus</i>	Heilongjiang River (Amur River)
6	?????	Siberian sturgeon #	<i>Acipenser baerii</i>	Eerqisi River, Xinjiang Auto-region
7	???	Siberian sterlet #	<i>Acipenser ruthenus</i>	Eerqisi River, Xinjiang Auto-region
8	???	Fringe-barbel sturgeon #	<i>Acipenser nudiiventris</i>	Yili River, Xinjiang Auto-region

2

Let's focus on the two species in boundary waters

- Distribution
- Management - laws & regulations
- Public education
- Management - Harvest & processing
- Releasing program & Artificial proliferation
- Nature reserve

- Law enforcement
 - Fishing
 - Transportation
 - Market inspection



Amur Sturgeon

Beluga

3

Management – laws & regulations - III

- Protocol on the conservation, adjustment and proliferation of fishery resources in boundary part of Heilongjiang (Amur) River and Wusuli River by the cooperation manner (Sino-Russia Government, May 27th, 1994, later referred as Two River Protocol)
- Since 2000, more than 10 government document had been issued by provincial authority directly and/or under the authorization of central government, these documents covers the areas of :
 - Sturgeon resources protection & management
 - Special catching permit
 - Catching and utilizing quotas
 - Sturgeons business operation management
 - Fertilized eggs management

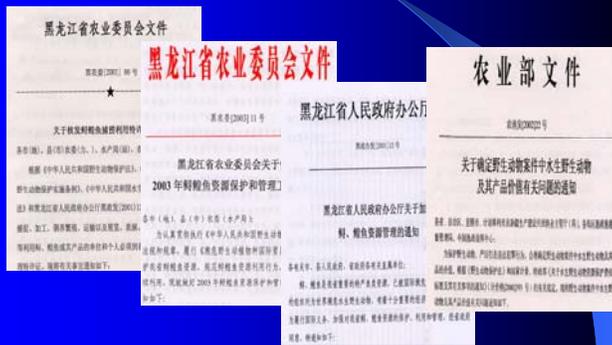
7

Management – laws & regulations - IV

- Based on the above mentioned laws, regulations & governmental documents, the following control system have been established for years:
- Four Permits & One Form – management system
 - Four permits for Aquatic wild animals
 - Catching permit
 - Breeding permit
 - Transportation permit
 - Business operation permit
 - One Application Form for Aquatic wild animals must be filled up

8

Some governmental notifications



9

Public education

- WAPL (1989) & relations w/ Cites
- News & Media
- The month for wildlife conservation promotion
- Training course
- Ambulatory educational vehicles & vessels
- Case interpretation

10

Management – harvest & processing

- With reference to the legal framework currently in China, All activities related with sturgeons listed in below need to be specially authorized;
 - harvest
 - processing
 - transportation
 - trade (domestic & international)

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Harvest Statistics (1999-2005)

Year	Capture (T)	Caviar (T)	Remark
1999	141	9.00	
2000	144	8.50	
2001	131	8.00	
2002	107	6.30	
2003	107	6.24	
2004	117	6.00	
2005	105	5.93	30 T from Aquaculture operation

For two species

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Statistics on Sturgeons Catching Quotas

year	Catching quota	Amur Sturgeons	Beluga	remarks
2001	148			Mixed species, China
2002	140	42	98	Sino-Russia Agreement, CITES published
2003	120	42	78	Sino-Russia Agreement, CITES published
2004	72	32	40	Sino-Russia Agreement, CITES <i>not</i> published
2005	72	32	40	Sino-Russia Agreement, CITES <i>not</i> published

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Caviar Processing Plants in HLJ Province

Name of Processing Plant	Address
The Aquatic Product Can Operated Joint Firm of Fuyuan County	No. 5, Zhengyang Road, Fuyuan County, Heilongjiang Province, P.R.China
No. 144 of Aquatic Products processing Vessels of Heilongjiang Tongjiang Aquatic Product Supply and Marketing Company	Middle part of Tongjiang Street, Tong Jiang City, Heilongjiang Province, P.R. China
Caviar processing Plant of Heilongjiang No. 290 Farm	290 Farm, Suibin County, Heilongjiang province, P.R. China
Caviar processing Plant of Aquatic Product Company of Heilongjiang Qindeli Farm	Qindeli Farm, Tong Jiang City, Heilongjiang province, P.R. China

HLJ : Heilongjiang Province

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NO-FISHING zone & period in HLJ

- Two Permanent No-fishing zone established:
- SanJiangKou in Tongjiang city, 20 km DaGangWang in Luobei county, 20 km



- Two No-fishing period set up:
 - June 11 to July 15
 - October 1 to October 20

15

Registered Processing Plant



Fishing vessels & special catch permits

Year	Fuyuan County	Tong Jiang City	Qindeli Farm	290 Farm	Suibin County	Luobei County	Jiayin County	Total
2001	300	35	30	25	30	20	30	470
2002	300	35	32	12	30	8	12	429
2003	260	35	32	12	25	8	12	384
2004	234	31	29	11	22	7	11	345
2005	234	31	29	11	22	7	11	345

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Fishing vessels



18

Releasing program & artificial proliferation

- Considerations for releasing program
 - Techniques
 - Cost
 - Fishing period
 - Public education
 - Artificial proliferation
 - aquaculture

19

Techniques – egg collection



20

Incubation & raising



21

Releasing stations - I

- Total 5 releasing stations established:

- Xunke
- Luobei
- Qindeli
- Tongjiang
- Fuyuan



22

Releasing stations – II – Xunke & Luobei



23

Releasing stations – III – Qindeli & Tongjiang



24

Releasing stations – IV – Fuyuan



25

Statistics of Sturgeons released into Heilongjiang (Amur) River

Year	Number (k)	Description
1989-2000	7400	
2001	150	
2002	50	Bigger than 5 cm
2003	200	Bigger than 5 cm
2004	150	Bigger than 5 cm
2005	500	Bigger than 5 cm
Total	8450	

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Releasing program plan in 2006

- Total 200 thousands of fries
 - Size: bigger than 5 cm
 - Provincial fishing authority: 70 k
 - Luobei county: 30 k
 - Provincial fish speciality institute: 20 k
 - Fuyuan county: 50 k
- All releasing activities must be completed before July 15.

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Releasing ...



Fuyuan County

Releasing ...

Qindeli Station



Aquaculture operations



Two Nature Reserve established

- Heilongjiang Humahe Nat'l NR



- Heilongjiang Xunbielaha NR



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Practical steps for sturgeons protection

- From 2001, the working meeting for strengthening the conservation and management of sturgeons resources had been convened in the beginning of each year.
- A full practical guidance document including catching, processing, transportation, breeding, business operation etc. had been issued in each year.
- The major river parts and its catching quota had been identified in each year.
- All fishing vessels for sturgeons need to be named, coded and marked under the unified system.

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Law enforcement – provincial authority

- Jointly team inspection in May of each recent years:
 - Headed by provincial fishing authority
 - Participated by city & county fishing authority
 - Cooperated by Public security organs, frontier forces & administration authority for industry and commerce
 - Cover 5 counties & last about 5000 km
 - 24 hours patrolling and inspection to the following sites:
 - Harvest locale
 - Major transportation way
 - Trade market
 - Processing plants

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Law enforcement – inspection guidelines

- Pay attention to the following 5 points:
 - Water transportation & Land transportation
 - Harvest & trade market
 - Public security, frontier force & fishing administration
 - Professional staff & common people
 - Punishment & education

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Law enforcement – inspection tips

- Pay attention to the following 4 points:
 - Water area patrol: need to find where the vessels actually harvest
 - Market inspection: need to inspect those trading desk for relevant specimen
 - Special inspection: major problem must be checked
 - No-fishing period: the focus part of river must be inspected

35

Law enforcement – vessels control



36

Law enforcement – clearing fishing camps



37

Law enforcement - others

- Fishery authority send staff to Harbin airport to inspect the transportation of sturgeon specimen based on the *Heilongjiang wildlife protection regulation*.
- Seriously dealing with the message from Informant:
 - Case 1: transport fertilized eggs without permit
 - Case 2: illegal trade on Beluga

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Law enforcement – Fuyuan county

- Fuyuan county is the biggest harvest area of sturgeons
- Fuyuan county located eastern tip of China
- Fuyuan county is the key to most sturgeon specimen
- The support from Fuyuan county is the key for a successful controlling system start from this point
- To solve the poverty of local residents in Fuyuan through transform of their lifestyle from fishman to farmer or aquaculture practitioner is of international importance

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Challenges facing ...

- Operation cost is the necessary consideration of any conservation program:
- Two years of zero quota of international trade make the registered processing plant and relevant trade company have to sell their products only within the domestic market, which can not make enough profit to continue their constructive contribution to the sturgeons conservation
- The situation dragged out the time plan of CNMA to regulate the domestic market by using the unified labeling system request by the CITES resolution 12.7
- Without the necessary remedy plan for the caviar and merely publish zero quota by the CITES secretariat caused confusions among the public and will seriously hamper the partners interest in the conservation regards.

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Plan & recommendations

- Strongly strengthen the aquaculture operations to benefit the artificial proliferation releasing program and also transform the lifestyle of local residents.
- Taking use of Longbei code based unified labeling system to regulate international trade and domestic trade according to the situation
- Urge CITES Secretariat pay more attention to facilitate the communication among parties regarding the sharing boundary waters
- Urge CITES Secretariat pay more attention by providing substantial assistance to the parties for a better implementation of CITES resolution
- Call for the support for resources investigation and discussion on the necessity and feasibility of annual based investigation

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- **Thank you**
- **for your**
- **patience ...**

42

Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States: Romania



The role of Romanian customs officers
in foreign trade in endangered and protected
species of wild fauna and flora

To protect CITES species from
illegal foreign trade

- Raw ivory
- Asia orchid
- Seals cub leader



To protect Romanian species
from illegal export



Sturgeons
Caviar
Tortoise



THE STRUCTURE (IPR and CITES VIEW)

■ NATIONAL CUSTOMS AUTHORITY

Service for Countering the Counterfeit Goods
(5 people)

■ REGIONAL CUSTOMS DIRECTORATES (10)

Compartment for Countering the Counterfeit Goods
(2 appointed people)

■ CUSTOMS OFFICES

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Romania

ARTICLES SEIZED BY TYPE OF			
Product type	2003	2004	2005
Clothing	7843	28959	902888
Footwear		56924	207424
Cosmetics and perfumes	337	1865	112519
Mobile phone accessories		30849	47573
Medicines	2350	25	200
Sunglasses and accessories			1473
Leather goods		583	56202
Hygienic pads			2132032
Vehicles spare parts			9322
Steam irons			19846
Pencils			80640
Calculators			3894
Other goods	142	56900	22889
CITES		*	*
Total	10 672	176 105	3 596 904



Regulations needed for customs control



INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS

- Washington Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), which was ratified by introducing **Law No.69/1994 on adhering Romania to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**

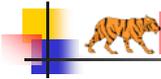
NATIONAL REGULATIONS

- Order of the Minister of Water and Environmental Protection No.647/2001 on authorizing Procedure for harvesting, capture and/or acquisition and trading on the internal market or the export of plants and animals of wild fauna and flora
- Law on bases of environmental protection
- Law No.103/1996, on hunting territory and protection of the game
- Law No.192/2001 on ichthyologic patrimony, fishing and aquaculture
- Customs code




- Order No. 647/2001 lays down in *Article 11* the authorizing procedure for harvesting, capture and/or acquisition and trading on the internal market or the export of plants and animals of wild fauna and flora, as well as their import, that are listed in Appendix 1-III of the Convention.
- The natural or legal persons involved in the export, reexport or import of these specimens must request a CITES permit from the Ministry of Environment and Water Management.
- These permits are issued for export, transit or import.
- So far: we have been trying to apply this normative in order to:
 - set the customs points by controlling the export, import and transit operations;
 - passing the responsibilities for dead or alive species to the Ministry of Environment and Water Management Agencies when breakings of the CITES legislation are found;
 - building shelters for alive animals by the customs offices.
- In the new Order No. 262/330/2006 regarding the sturgeons preserving, it is forbidden the trade of wild sturgeons captured on Romanian territory.
- Thereof Ministry of Environment and Water Management by CITES Management Authority will not release CITES export permits for caviar for sturgeons meat captured on Romanian natural environment

What exactly does the customs officer do?



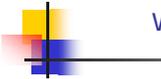
- Controls the whole animal or plant, dead or alive, or any part or derivative thereof
- Checks an attached documents and shipment
- Recognises CITES specimen
- Checks permit exemption for CITES specimen
- In case of inability to recognise specimen, contacts and cooperates with representatives of Romanian CITES Management Authority



CITES SEIZURES

Date of offence	Species	Weight (kg)	Purpose of trade as declared	Departure	Destination	Place of offence	Result
19.04.2005	Sturgeon	204.5 kg	The goods were declared but within CITES permits	F.lli PASQUATO II, Via S. Teresa 53, 45010 Rosolina (Rovigo), Italia	SC NISJA NOROM SRL, Satu-Mare Romania	Curtici Free Zone (Arad Customs Regional Direction)	Confiscation and destroy
02.08.2005	Sturgeon	210 kg	The goods were declared but within CITES permits	GORBI Janusz Gorbaczow, Poland	Metro CASH & CARRY ROMANIA SRL, Comuna Otopeni, jud. Ilfov	Customs Office Baneasa Bucuresti	Confiscation, destroy and fine (2500 RON)

Good experience and only cooperation with colleagues from:



- Belgian Customs Investigation Brussels Airport
- TRAFFIC Europe
- Romanian CITES Management Authority
- CITES Secretariat





Training

- One seminar in 2004 organized by customs.
- Training at the Regional Customs Directions from the west of the country were TRAFFIC has found that the customs officers ignore the CITES Convention for alive animals.
- Periodical training done by the Regional Customs Directions inspectors at the submitted customs officers.

TRAFFIC Europe has decided to submit a proposal to the EU Commission to AGIS that has several components. One of this components is organizing a training seminar targeting law enforcement officers (customs officers) from Romania with 40 participants. Trainers from EU Member States will be special guests.

TRAFFIC

- The seminars will give information on CITES, EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and species identification. The agenda and the target audience will be developed in close co-operation with the CITES Management Authority and customs authority of Romania



Capacity building activities

- 6 alerts in 2006 of which: 4 initiated by CITES Secretariat, one by the Environmental Ministry and alert no 17 for sturgeons initiated by National Customs Authority
- NCA working on translating the identification of CITES species Canadian guide.
- Implementation of the working standards in order to apply CITES Convention by the customs officers.
- Set the customs points by controlling the export, import and transit operations



The Romanian customs officers must focus on applying the regulations regarding CITES Convention



Improving activity

- The customs officers must focus on applying the regulations regarding CITES Convention (training and good examples of their foreign colleagues may help about this process).
- Reinforcement of controls at the borders Otopeni Travel Airport, Constanta Harbor and on the east border with Ukraine and Moldavian Republic.
- More efforts in order to stop the illegal traffic with sturgeons and testudo hermanni from Portile de Fier.
- A better collaboration between customs and environmental in order to edit a CITES guide upon Romanian protected species dedicated to customs authority and building of shelters

A need for:
EXCHANGING INFORMATION



- Exchange of information and best practices between Customs Administrations on regional and international level
- Co-operation with all national law enforcement agencies involved in CITES
 - A National Strategy and an action plan on CITES



Inspector Irinel Doina Surugiu



**ROMANIAN NATIONAL
CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION**
Customs Surveillance and Control
Directorate

- Tel: +4021 310 85 50
- Fax☎ +4021 310 85 50
- E-mail: irinel@customs.ro
- GSM: +40721 216 793

**Thank you for your
attention**

The pictures has been taken from the following sites :www.cites.org, www.traffic.org,
www.rosturgeonanddanubedelta.org



They have been used only for this

Main problems and challenges in combating illegal trade in caviar – Expectations and needs of range States: Russian Federation

Report of the Russian Federation presented by S. Vorobjiov

Dear Sirs

First of all let me express our sincere gratitude for being invited to take part in this Seminar devoted to issues of current concern not only for the range States, but also for world public.

This is primarily explained by the fact that sturgeon stocks, due to various factors, are in doldrums. The main of those are illegal harvest of and trade in sturgeons, their habitat pollution, and loss of breeding area.

This problem fully concerns sturgeon stocks of the Caspian Sea and the Amur River. Taking into account all these facts the Russian Federation takes measures necessary to recover sturgeon population and stop poaching and illegal trade in sturgeon products.

In 2004 a framework law On Fisheries and Bioresources Conservation was passed. A model project of the Law On Acipenseriformes Conservation was developed. Also, there were developed motions for enacting measures aimed at reinforcement of financial liability and penal responsibility for people practicing illegal harvesting.

In order to provide control over sturgeon circulation, in collaboration with Astrakhan Region authorities, there was developed and is being implemented a mechanism of Acipenseriformes filing from the moment they are caught till their delivery point.

By order of President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin there was developed a draft regulation according to which illegal sturgeon products are to be destroyed. When enacted this regulation will help prevent poached products from getting into trade network.

In 2005 and 2006 in Caspian and Amur catchment-basins, jointly with law enforcement bodies, active sturgeon preservation measures have been undertaken. They are primarily aimed at monitoring Acipenseriformes circulation over the whole territory of the Russian Federation, especially in big cities.

Measures taken by control authorities have led to substantial decrease of illegal trade level, especially that in black caviar.

In order to develop artificial reproduction of fish stocks activities on improving sturgeons breeding bio-engineering are carried out: forming spawning schools, applying intravital reproductive products culture techniques, autumn harvest of spawners. Material and technical base of fish-rearing facilities is being improved – factories are reconstructed and equipped with new machinery, vehicles and vessels.

I would like to draw your attention to a problem which can have a negative effect upon Acipenseriformes conservation.

In 2006 the Secretariat did not determine export quotas for black caviar for any Caspian littoral State but the Islamic Republic of Iran. This decision causes concern of the Russian Federation because it has already led to illegal export of black caviar. We have evidence of unlawful deliveries to Canada, Sweden, Italy. Therefore, the issue of establishing export quotas not only for Russia but also for other Caspian States should be considered with deep understanding.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Russian Federation

We suggest setting up a working group on developing propositions to combat poaching, which will include representatives of Caspian States and the Secretariat.

I would like to advise that subject to President of the Russian Federation's Decree control over aquatic bioresources, including sturgeons, is assigned to the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance. This made it possible to join efforts of veterinary and fishery surveillance in terminating cases of poaching and providing control over Acipenseriformes circulation, including caviar, on the territory of the Russian Federation and, which is most important, when solving problems of poach combating at state boundary posts.

Due to the administrative reform carried out in Russia the Government of the Russian Federation, in order to ensure compliance with CITES regulations, established that the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance exercises functions of CITES Sturgeon Management Authority of the Russian Federation.

At the moment CITES Sturgeon Management Authority of the Russian Federation is formed and has proceeded to enforcing CITES Resolutions of 13 March 1973.

Thank you for attention. I hope for fruitful cooperation in the future.

The illegal trade in caviar – the CITES Secretariat's perspective
John Sellar, CITES Secretariat

In his presentation to the workshop, John M. Sellar, Senior Officer, Anti-smuggling, Fraud and Organized Crime of the CITES Secretariat, provided an overview of the involvement of CITES in the trade in sturgeons. He emphasized the considerable levels of criminal activity linked to the illicit trade in caviar, which were already existing prior to the CITES listing in 1998, and which created a significant challenge to law enforcement agencies. Mr Sellar described the work undertaken by the CITES Secretariat to assist countries to meet this challenge, for example through enforcement needs-assessment missions to several Caspian Sea States.

He went on to described the wide variety of *modus operandi* that have been used, and continue to be used, in fraudulently moving caviar obtained from poached fish into the international market. He also spoke of the many indicators that show links between illegal trade in caviar and organized crime and the need to scrutinize traders who may, at first sight, appear *bona fide*.

Mr Sellar highlighted the good work that has been done for law enforcement agencies in Europe and North America but stressed the need for greater communication, cooperation and coordination between such agencies around the world. He expressed his concern that aquaculture operations offer an opportunity to launder illegally-obtained caviar and his opinion that such operations, as well as domestic markets, require to be closely monitored. On behalf of the CITES Secretariat, he welcomed the new labelling regulations adopted in the European Union, expressed appreciation to the Commission for hosting the workshop, and pledged the support of the Secretariat in combating illegal trade in caviar.

Regulating domestic caviar markets and traders – the non-range State perspective: United Arab Emirates

United Arab Emirates' Perspective on Combating Illegal Trade in Caviar, presented by the UAE CITES Management Authority

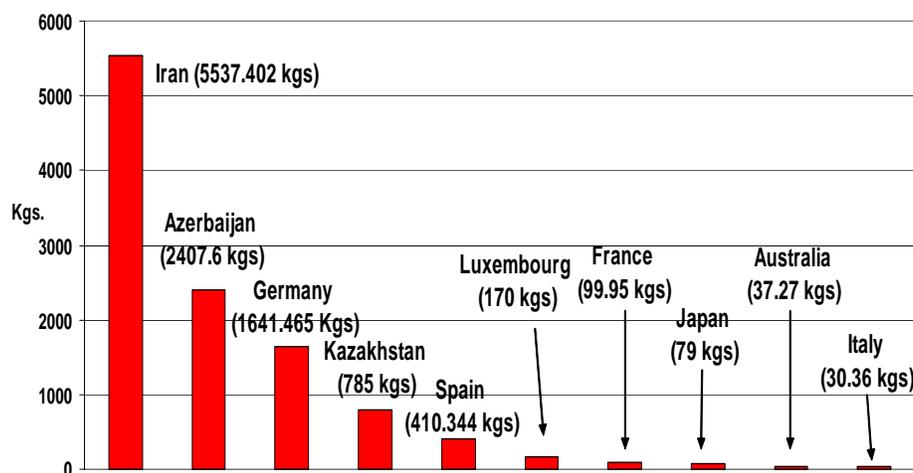
1) Caviar trade in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

- The UAE mainly RE-EXPORTS caviar which is imported into the country in bulk, re-packed and re-exported.
- There is a domestic use of caviar in small quantities within the UAE which is mainly used by a large expatriate population as in our culture caviar is not a prominent food item.

In the Domestic Market caviar is mainly used as follows:

- **Airlines**
 - UAE is a major airline hub for many national and international airlines and caviar is used in preparing airline meals.
- **Hotels**
 - UAE is a major tourist destination and with many 5 and 7 star hotels this is also a major consumer of caviar at the domestic level.
- **Retail outlets**
 - There are many retail outlets like supermarkets which sell caviar to a large resident expatriate population and large numbers of tourists visiting the UAE.

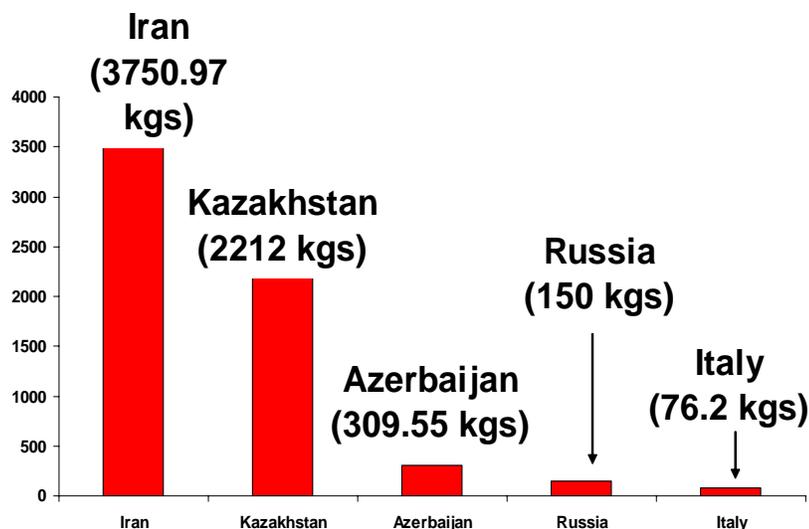
Caviar Imports into UAE: 2004-2005 (based on issued permits)



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – United Arab Emirates

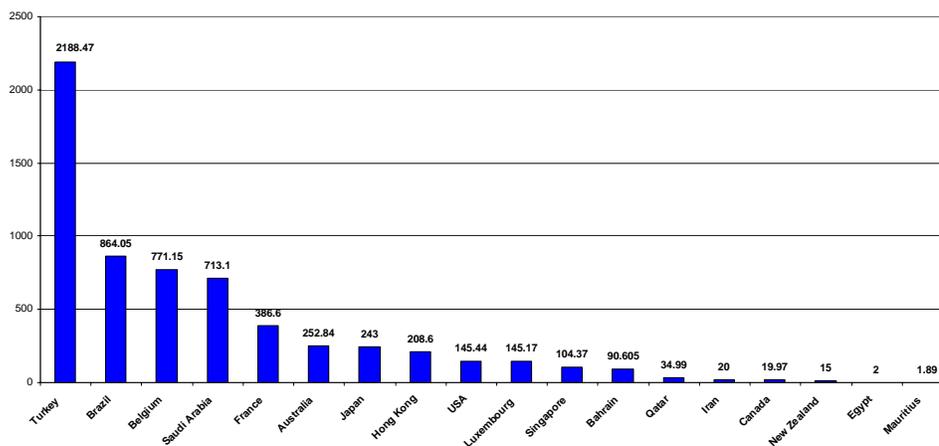
The species of sturgeon from which caviar is harvested and imported into the UAE: 1) *Acipenser gueldenstadtii*, 2) *Acipenser persicus*, 3) *Acipenser schrenckii*, 4) *Acipenser stellatus*, 5) *Acipenser transmontanus*, 6) *Acipenser beari*, 7) *Acipenser naccarii* & 8) *Huso huso*.

Caviar Re-exports from UAE - Country of Origin
(Based on issued permits)



The species of sturgeon from which caviar is harvested and re-exported from the UAE: 1) *Acipenser gueldenstadtii*, 2) *Acipenser persicus*, 3) *Acipenser schrenckii*, 4) *Acipenser stellatus*, 5) *Acipenser transmontanus* & 6) *Huso huso*.

Caviar Re-exports from UAE - Country of Destination
(Based on issued permits)



2) Legislation

The UAE Federal Law No. 11 of 2002 for Regulating and Controlling the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora” has been issued and which addresses species listed under the CITES Convention. The law mentions the following regarding caviar:

- Any person selling or offering for sale or display to the public,
- any specimen of species listed in the Appendices without carrying out the necessary registration provided by assigned authorities,
- shall be liable to imprisonment and/or a fine

3) Caviar Traders Requirements

- The caviar company must be registered with the CITES Management Authority.
- All tins holding caviar should have a labeling system as per CITES Res. No. 12.7

4) Enforcement

- CITES enforcement officers confiscated large quantities of unlicensed caviar (45 kg) of Beluga and Sevruga .
- The smuggling operations were conducted through passengers carrying the caviar in plastic bags as personal luggage in illegal way. Upon arrival, the small quantities were delivered to the trader who, in turn, packaged them in can for selling in the local market illegally.

Confiscations have been mainly due to:

- Not being a registered dealer with the Management Authority.
- The lack of proper CITES import and export permits.
- Improper labeling of caviar tins.

5) International cooperation

The UAE CITES Authority has participated in the following activities involving international cooperation related to caviar issues:

- The UAE CITES Management Authority was approached by Environment Canada regarding illegal shipments of caviar from Turkey by an individual from the UAE.
- Upon further investigation by UAE police, the person was found in Dubai and the investigation information was then passed to the Canadian counterparts.

6) Public Awareness

- A manual was produced and distributed widely in 2005 locally within the UAE and to regional CITES Management Authorities.
 - This manual was produced to raise awareness on commonly traded CITES listed species in the region and also had a section on caviar species which are covered by the CITES Convention and those which are not covered.
-

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – United Arab Emirates

7) Conclusion

- The UAE is taking strict measures to ensure that caviar trade is well regulated and controlled (at an international and domestic level.
- We welcome to collaborate with other Parties in to combat any illegal trade in caviar.

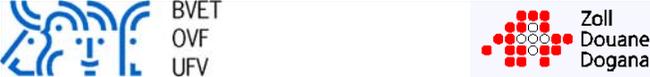
**Regulating domestic caviar markets and traders – the non-range
State perspective: Switzerland**



**Regulating domestic caviar markets
and traders – the Swiss perspective**

Dr. Mathias Lörtscher, Head CITES MA Switzerland
Alfred Wegmüller, Swiss Customs, Department Penal Affairs

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels

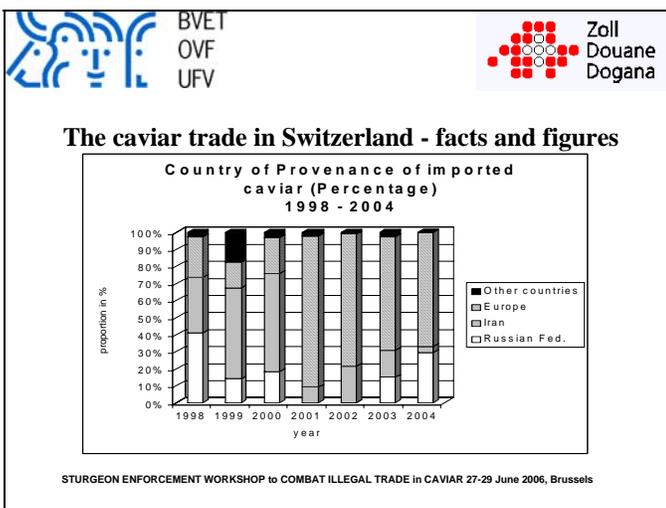
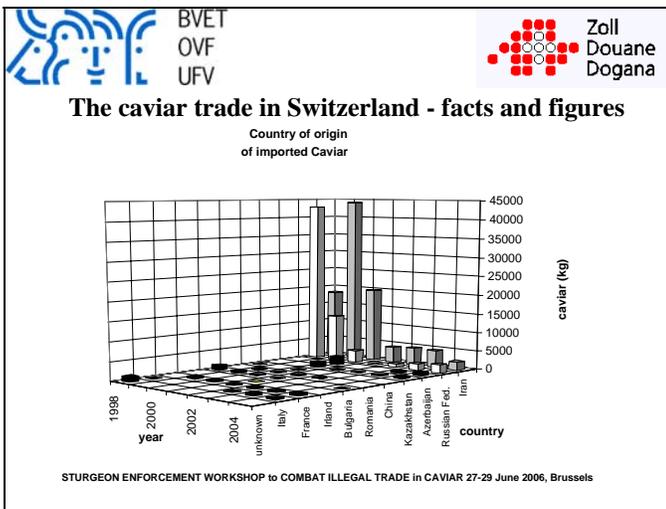
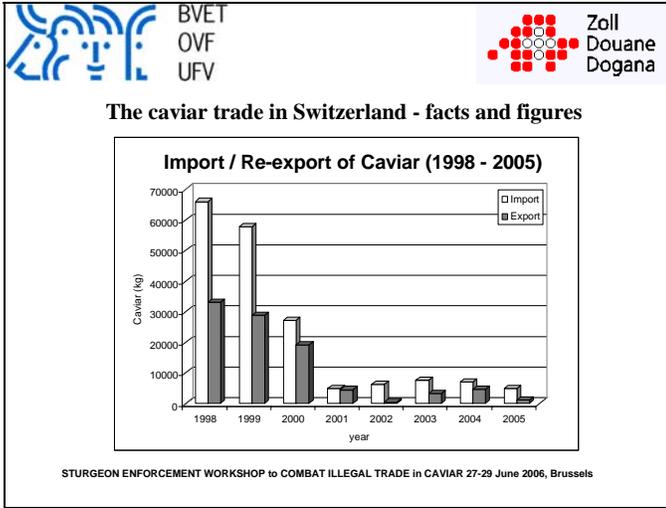


Contents of the Presentation

- The caviar trade in Switzerland - facts and figures
- Control of imports
- Control of re-exports
- Seizures of illegal caviar
- Work to do
- Expectations from the Workshop

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Switzerland



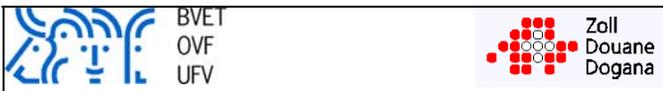
International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Switzerland



Control of imports

- Since the year 2000 import permits for every consignment
- Issuance of import permit only after presentation of CITES permit of export or certificate of re-export
- Physical control of every consignment by the border veterinary service

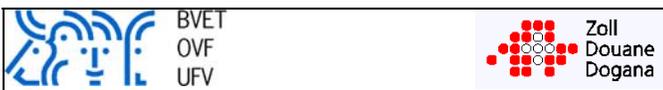
STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels



Control of re-exports

- Issuance of re-export certificates only based on the presentation of proof of legal import:
 - At time of import creation of import account at SVO
 - For re-export charging off this account only up to amount imported possible
 - For charging off, presentation of import proof necessary

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels



Illegal trade in caviar

- In the year 1999 one massive seizure of ~ 2'000 kg
- Since then less than 10 kg of caviar seized per year

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels

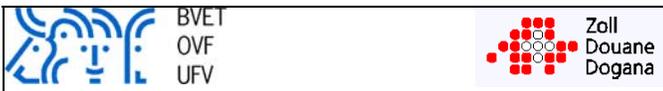
International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Switzerland



Work to do

- Implementation of Res. Conf. 12.7
- Based on available resources, establishment of a control procedure of caviar dealers within the country
- Improved control of small airports within the country

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels



Expectations (wishes) from the workshop

- Creation of a communication platform between stakeholders
- Finding ways to improve information exchange between enforcement authorities
- Finding ways to improve cooperation and communication between producing and consuming countries

STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR 27-29 June 2006, Brussels

Lessons learned from caviar investigations – modus operandi, useful investigation techniques, difficulties faced and legislative inadequacies: Canada

The image displays three stacked presentation slides from a workshop titled "Caviar and Canada". Each slide features a header with the Canadian Enforcement Branch logo and the text "ENFORCEMENT BRANCH" and "DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI". The footer of each slide includes the Canadian flag, the text "Environnement Canada", and the "Canada" logo.

Slide 1: Title Slide

ENFORCEMENT BRANCH | DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI

Caviar and Canada

June 2006

Environnement Canada | Canada

Slide 2: Modus Operandi

ENFORCEMENT BRANCH | DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI

CAVIAR AND CANADA

modus operandi

- Use of Flight Attendants/Airline Crew
- Over filling of tins
- Fraudulent CITES Documents
- Mixing of Caviar / False Declarations
- Re-exportation through another country

Environnement Canada | Canada

Slide 3: Useful Investigative Techniques

ENFORCEMENT BRANCH | DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI

Useful Investigative Techniques

- Establish a Sturgeon/Caviar Working Group
- Work Closely with Customs and Food Inspection Agencies
- Share information with other agencies working on Sturgeon and Caviar
- Develop Training Packages for CITES Permits etc

Environnement Canada | Canada

 ENFORCEMENT BRANCH | DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI

Difficulties Faced and Legislative Inadequacies

- Information from some countries difficult to obtain
- Amendments may be required to our own legislation that honors the CITES requirements.
- HS codes inconsistent (Salmon roe usually noted in caviar HS category up until late 2003)

 Environment Canada | Environnement Canada 

 ENFORCEMENT BRANCH | DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE L'APPLICATION DE LA LOI

CITES Identification Guide - Sturgeon and Paddlefish

Polyodon spatula



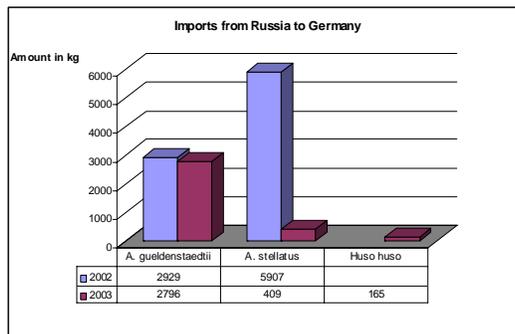
 Environment Canada

http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/enforce/pdf/Sturgeon/CITES_Sturgeons_Guide.pdf

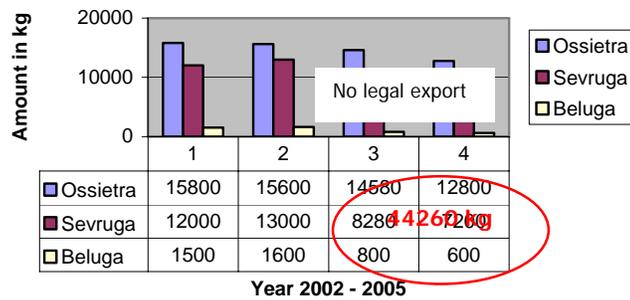
 Environment Canada | Environnement Canada 

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Germany

legal Trade in Caviar



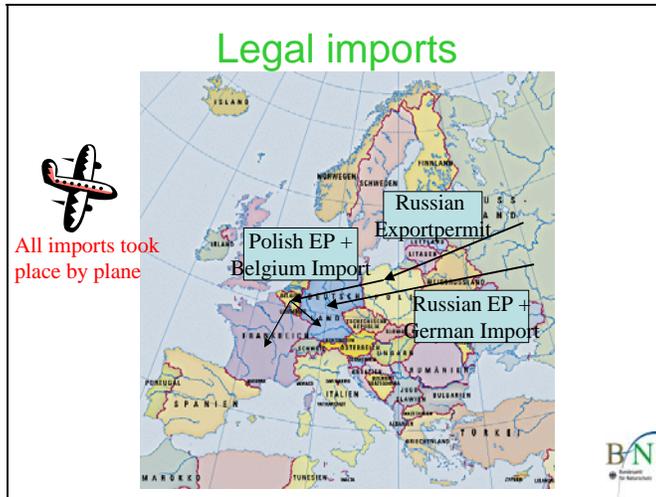
Exportquota Russia



Cause of the investigation

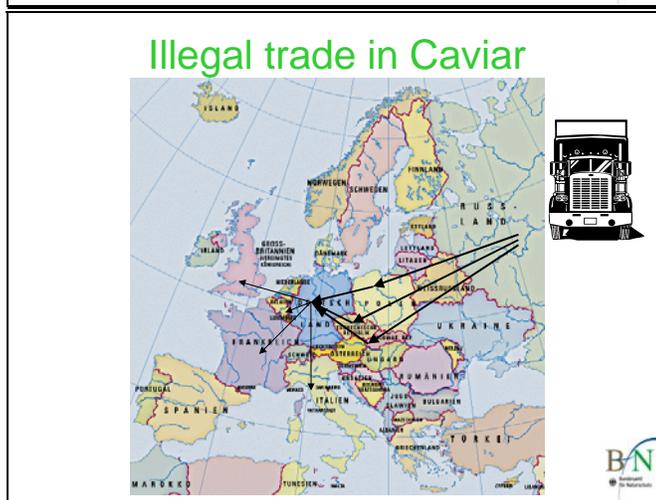
- July 2004
 - French customs stopped a shipment of 37 kg of caviar, final destination UK
 - The transporter showed the copy of a German import permit proving the legal import
 - Indeed most of the caviar imported with this permit has been reexported meanwhile.





Activities of the offenders

- **Step 1**
Legal imports which were covered by all required documents and which were handled very accurate
- **Step 2**
Smuggling of Caviar into the European Union
- **Step 3**
Preparation of falsified labels and marks
- **Step 4**
Selling of smuggled caviar inside of the European Union by using copies of the import permits which were issued for the legal imports



Smuggling Methods

- Using the small fridges in trucks
- Using special boxes in trucks
- Using special compartments in cars such as specially prepared compartments under the floor of the cars



Special compartments



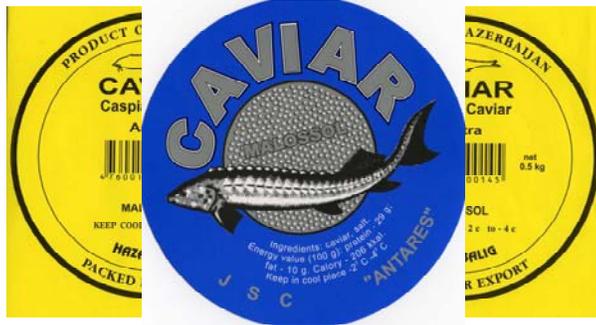
96 tins with 48 kg
Caviar



Falsified Labels



Falsified Labels



Preliminary Results

- The person which has been stopped in France was sentenced (fine of 15.000 €)
- Around 1400 kg of Caviar were smuggled into the EU
- Falsified marks and labels for more than 3000 kg caviar were seized
- The smuggled caviar has been sold to different traders, also reliable traders, all over Europe



Recent Situation

- 2006
 - Russia: no Export Quotas for Caviar from the Caspian Sea
 - Other countries of the Caspian Region:
 - Iran: Export Quota of 44370 kg Caviar
 - Other countries: No Quota published
 - Romania: stop of the commercial fishing of sturgeons for 10 years



Lessons learned from caviar investigations – modus operandi, useful investigation techniques, difficulties faced and legislative inadequacies: USA

Presented by Sheila Einsweiler, Senior Wildlife Inspector, with the Office of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The United States has been actively involved in investigations of the illegal caviar trade since the listing of all sturgeons effective April 1998. Lessons have been learned from both international trade investigations involving foreign and domestic sturgeon species and domestic investigations involving U.S. sturgeon species. Illegal caviar traders have used various methods to smuggle caviar and the presentation focused on the use of couriers and false declarations as well as methods using labels, packing, and transport. The United States uses various investigative techniques that were presented to uncover illegal trade both internationally and domestically. Finally, the presentation provided information on domestic sturgeon problems such as illegal take and sale of domestic species labeled as foreign species.

The implications of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) – registration and labelling.

Stephanie Theile, TRAFFIC Europe

**The implications of
Resolution Conf. 12.7 –
registration and labelling**



Stephanie Theile, TRAFFIC Europe
Brussels, 27-29 June 2006

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network





- Non-governmental organisation
- Established in 1976 with aim to support CITES implementation and enforcement
- World-wide network of offices on broad range of wildlife trade related issues
- Long history of working on conservation of sturgeon and caviar trade











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International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – TRAFFIC

Overview

- Caviar labelling and registration
 - Rational
 - Format
 - Types of labels
- New EU regulations
- Other requirements of Res. Conf 12.7
- Points for discussions



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Caviar labeling and registration... WHY?

Allows to identify the source and origin of caviar, including species, source, country of origin, and monitor trade, etc.

Facilitates controls and enforcement of caviar trade

Label visible to consumers and traders



Label should be on all caviar containers regardless of their size and the source of the caviar (wild and farmed)

Caviar labelling and registration does not solve all issues but is an important component to allow for the identification of legal caviar in trade

TRAFFIC

Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006



History of caviar labeling system under CITES

Since 2000 (agreed at CITES CoP 11) - *Export countries*

Labelling of all caviar containers (>250 gr) for export agreed



Since 2002 (agreed at CITES CoP12) - *Export and Re-export countries*

Labelling of all caviar container (including <250 gr)

Labelling of all re-export / repackaged caviar (incl. caviar on domestic markets e.g. internal EU markets)

⇒ As of January 2004 only imports of labelled caviar allowed and caviar on domestic market must be labeled too

Since 2004 (agreed at CITES CoP 13) - *All caviar trading countries*

All processing and repackaging plants and exporters must be registered with unique codes set up by national CITES MA and provide to CITES

Traders must maintaining of records on imports, exports, re-exports, produced and in storage

TRAFFIC

Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – TRAFFIC

Caviar labeling - what does it look like? (CITES Resolution 12.7)

Two different type of labels depending on type of trade

Label of exporting country

PER / W / IR / (2004/xxx/yyy)

Species /Source (W or C)/ Country of origin/ Year of harvest/
No. of processing plant/ Lot Identification No.

Label of re-packaged caviar for domestic market / re-exporting

PER / W / IR / (2004/DE-xxx/yyy)

Species /Source (W or C)/ Country of origin/ Year of re-packaging /
No. of re-packaging plant/ Lot Identification No. or CITES export or re-export
document number

TRAFFIC



Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

Caviar labeling - Application to date?

Applied by (most) range States for export (agreed at CoP11 in 2000)

Applied by some (?) re-exporting countries (when no re-packaging takes place)

Only applied by few for caviar on the domestic markets (agreed at CoP12 in 2002)



TRAFFIC



Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

Universal labeling system for Caviar in the EU



New Regulation published on 19 June 2006

Fully implements the labelling requirements of Res. Conf. 12.7

All caviar containers must have label

Label needed for import, export and re-export and for re-packaged
caviar for the EU domestic market

Label also required for re-packaged caviar

Applies to wild and farmed caviar and all sizes of caviar tins

Will enter into force on 9 July 2006

TRAFFIC



Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – TRAFFIC

Universal labeling system for Caviar in the EU

New Commission Regulation from 19 June 2006

Need to register authorised processors, re-packaging plants and exporters and be provided with unique codes

Only registered plants are allowed to process and (re-)package caviar for export, re-export and internal EU trade

Licensed (re-)packaging plants must maintain a records of imports, exports, re-exports, produced in situ (farmed) or in storage

Register of processors and re-packaging plants at CITES website www.cites.org



Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

TRAFFIC



Universal labeling system for Caviar in the EU

New Commission Regulation from 19 June 2006

Some important issues

Need to be implemented by all 25 EU Member States

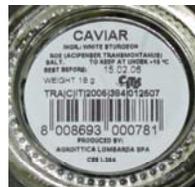
Delays and different stages of implementation in EU Member States

Location of the label and interpretation of the term « non-reuseable »

Format and size of the label - labeling of small caviar tins and marketing issues of re-packagers

Distribution of the label

Awareness of traders and consumers



Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

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Additional requirements recommended by Resolution Conf. 12.7

Information to be provided to CITES Secretariat

Copies of all export permits and re-export permits to CITES
Copy of national register of legal exporters, processors and repackaging plants to CITES

Other new CITES rules regarding caviar trade

No carry-forward of caviar or meat from previous-year quota allowed
⇒ Harvest in 2006 must be exported in 2006

No re-export of caviar allowed 18 months after the date of issuance of the export permit

Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006

TRAFFIC



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – TRAFFIC

Suggestions and points for discussions

Review status of implementation in the EU Member States and other CITES Parties

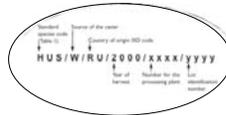
Sharing experience among countries (including caviar producing countries) with regard to labelling and registration

Placement of label on tins and format

Use of security features and combating fraud

Awareness raising among enforcers, traders and consumers

Additional means to assist in identification of caviar

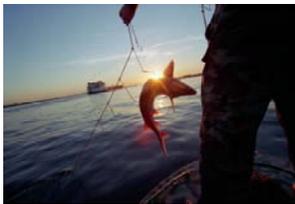


TRAFFIC

Sturgeon enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in Caviar, 27-29 June 2006



THANK YOU



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TRAFFIC

The CITES caviar trade database
Gerardo Fragoso, UNEP-WCMC

Tracking Legal Trade in Caviar

Gerardo Fragoso
Head - Species Programme

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre

 Tracking legal trade in caviar

CITES Databases managed by UNEP-WCMC

↓

CITES Trade Db CITES Species Db
(EU Wildlife Trade Regulation Database)

↓ ↓

About 7 million records of trade in c.30,000 names of taxa listed by CITES Attributes of the taxa listed by CITES, e.g.:

- distribution
- quotas
- EU decisions/opinions
- threat status
- literature references

↓ ↓

Available through: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org>; or <http://www.cites.org>

 Tracking legal trade in caviar

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – UNEP-WCMC

Article VIII

Measures to Be Taken by the Parties

6. Each Party shall maintain records of trade in specimens of species included in

Appendices I, II and III which shall cover:

- (b) * the number and type of permits and certificates granted;
- * the States with which such trade occurred;
- * the numbers or quantities and
- * types of specimens,
- * names of species as included in Appendices I, II and II and,
- * where applicable, the size and sex of the specimens in question.

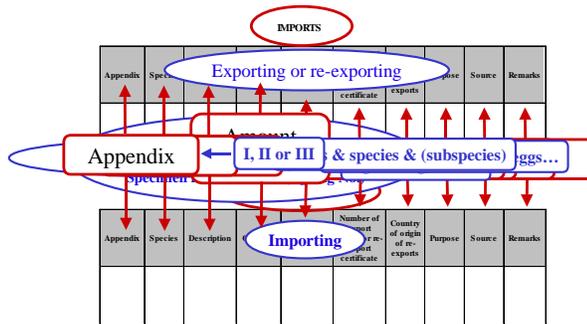
7. Each Party shall prepare [...]:

- (a) an annual report containing a summary of the information specified in sub-paragraph (b) of paragraph 6 of this Article



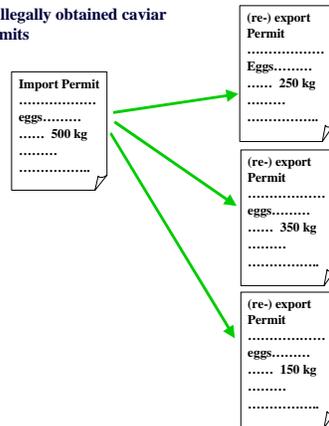
Tracking legal trade in caviar

Concepts reported



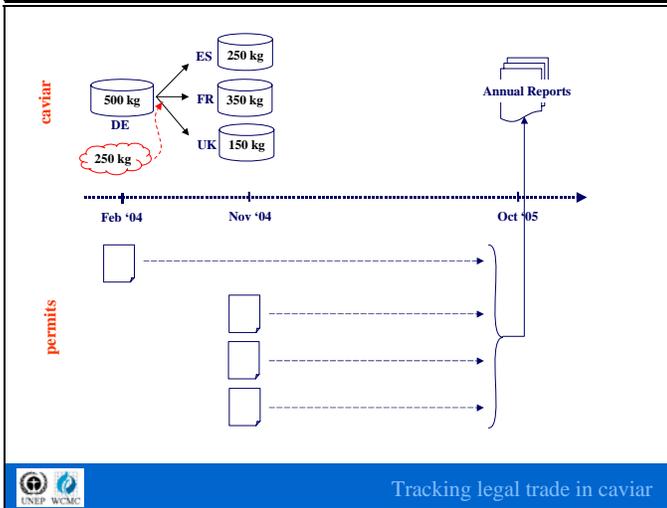
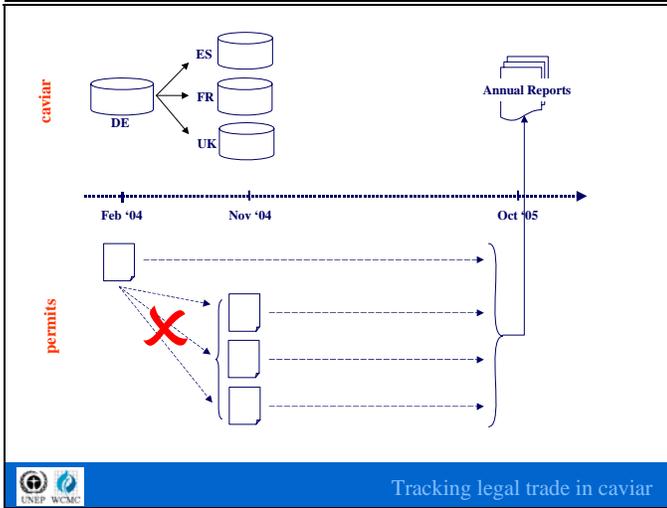
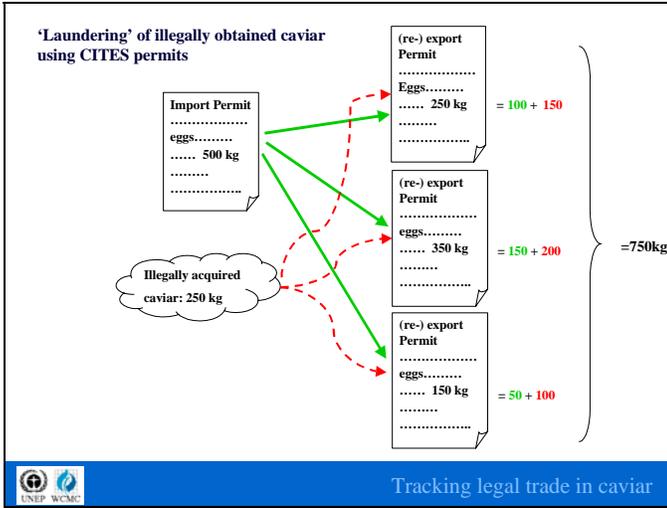
Tracking legal trade in caviar

'Laundering' of illegally obtained caviar using CITES permits



Tracking legal trade in caviar

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – UNEP-WCMC



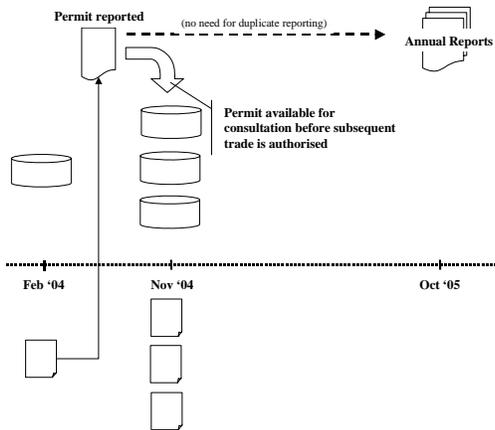
International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – UNEP-WCMC

The new system

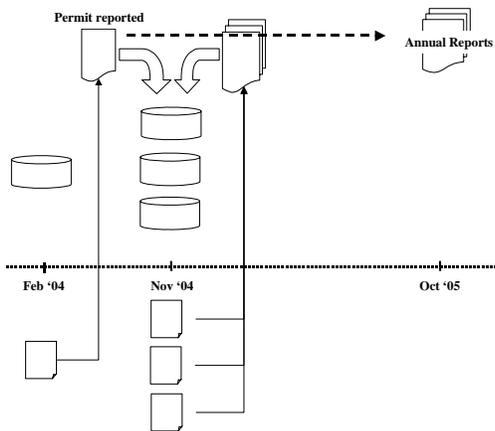
- ▶ Will work on the existing CITES Trade Database but with new functions
-- so no duplication or overlap in the reporting effort should occur
- ▶ Will enable Authorities to track trade:
 - ✓ On a near-real-time basis
 - ✓ On a permit-by-permit basis
 - ✓ On a trader-by-trader basis



Tracking legal trade in caviar



Tracking legal trade in caviar



Tracking legal trade in caviar

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – UNEP-WCMC

For the system to operate it is necessary:

- ▶ That all Parties to CITES report their trade
- ▶ That they do so immediately (rather than until Oct. of the following year)
- ▶ That trade is reported in meaningful terms and units



Tracking legal trade in caviar

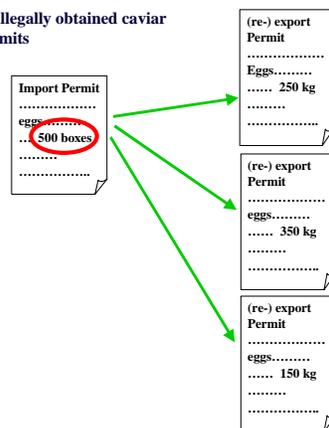
Examples of units of trade used for eggs Of Acipenseridae since year 2000

- Boxes -- no weight or volume indicated
- Cans -- no weight or volume indicated
- Flasks -- no weight or volume indicated
- (no Term) -- no weight or volume indicated



Tracking legal trade in caviar

'Laundering' of illegally obtained caviar
using CITES permits



Tracking legal trade in caviar

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – UNEP-WCMC

It should then be possible:

- ▶ **To keep a tally of how permits are used and how much material from each permit is (re-)exported**
- ▶ **To verify the use of permits before subsequent trade is authorised**
- ▶ **To keep a tally of how much material each authorised trader imports or (re-)exports**

Further developments (?):

- ▶ **Tracking of individual labels/items**
- ▶ **Online reporting**



The CITES caviar trade database

Armen Petrossian, International Caviar Importers Association



Situation of the legal market

- **Consequences of CITES secretariat 2006 position's on quotas.**
- Only Iran and Danube basin countries have **legal wild** merchandise to offer
- The prices are already very high, and they will **continue to raise, reducing the demand.**
- The **farms** merchandises are **also raising**, partially because of shortage.
- Very noticeable presence of **new caviars on the market** as paddle fish, hackleback, and others. (ref : seafood show in Brussels).
- A lot of **unexpected new farms** are now offering caviar on the market.
- **Hybrids are also present** on market, raising the confusion on the consumer side.
- A lot of new projects are today in place, **latest in Dubai 36 tons of caviar.**
- And farming will continue to grow, as announced by us in 2001.
- Legal importers are suffering a lot of this situation.

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

2

2. What is the situation of the demand

- The public is **very disturbed by the press campaigns based on press release of the secretariat** ; why? A simple reading of the press titles was understood by customers as : no more legal caviar in 2006, not a word on the responsibility of illegal trade.
- The public is also **very disturbed by the press campaigns of Caviar Emptor or Sea web, for example, witch addressed a very confusing message** : to save sturgeons do not eat caviar unless it's farmed. Why discourage customers to eat legal wild, when the message do not discourage them eating the illegal caviar.
- The confusion is great in mind of public and all **these contradictory news were amplified by journalist comments** ; like no more caviar in Caspian sea, the water is polluted, the caviar from wild is not fresh!!!, all supported by fantasy numbers about caviar production before and after CITES, dramatic numbers are throne to press adding up 5 years to create more dramatic effects.
- The damages are great in the public mind not only for the product and the trade but about the credibility of CITES, and environmentalists who applaud about their victory do not realize that is in fact a defeat, **because the legal trade, in global, has no more credibility.**
- A lot of people did not understand that any **adverse information about caviar is harming the global trade**, and the people that feels happy, particularly farms, with this situation will be very disappointed in the future when they will see the disinterest of customers about the product.
- In conclusion because of all of that, **we face a very drastic decline of the legal demand**, and a loss of interest of customers about the caviar.

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – International Caviar Importers Association

Some recent press extracts

- **Associated Press**
Update 1: U.N. Panel Refuses to Lift Caviar Ban
By PAUL BURKHARDT , 04.12.2006, 11:03 PM
- **Associated Press**
Update 2: U.N. Keeps Caspian Caviar Exports Ban
By ALEXANDER G. HIGGINS , 04.13.2006, 03:59 PM
- **Luxist Guide To Beluga Caviar Alternatives**
.....
Rio Frio Caviar: Rio Frio (cold river) caviar is an import option cultivated **from organically fed**, farm-raised sturgeon in the Grenada region of Spain. **The sturgeon are cataloged as beluga by CITES**, the Convention of International Trade of Endangered Species so it's not so much a beluga alternative as it is a chance to buy beluga guilt-free. Such luxury does not come without cost, it sells for around \$250 per ounce in gourmet grocery

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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- **Ban Is Extended on Caspian Sea Caviar Exports**
By C. J. CHIVERS Published: April 13, 2006

MOSCOW, April 12 — The global suspension of the export of caviar and sturgeon products has been extended indefinitely from almost all of the Caspian Sea, the world's main caviar-producing region, meaning the supply of the delicacy will probably further tighten in the West
- **L'Onu maintient l'embargo sur les exportations de caviar**
AP | 13.04.06 | 18:55

GENEVE (AP) -- La Convention sur le commerce international des espèces de faune et de flore sauvages menacées d'extinction (CITES) a refusé de lever l'interdiction sur les exportations de caviar,
- **January 3, 2006**
U.N. Moves to Block Caviar From Caspian
By REUTERSF Filed at 11:25 a.m. ET

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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3. What are the legal traders doing in this situation?

- They are trying to survive in selling farm merchandises.
- They select the best farms to work with.
- They buy legal wild when possible.
- They are introducing some new species like paddle fish.
- They are pushing their suppliers to go for more farming even in the Caspian sea.
- They are researching new substitute, new business, and trying to get another source of revenues.

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Situation of the illegal market

Until now did any actions stopped the illegal trade? The answer is no. Why ?

- We are facing a new attitude of the customer due to the confused situation of the legal market**
 - A lot of consumers are proud to consume illegal, cheaper, non taxed products.
 - The black market people are playing on this snobbish effect and offering the merchandise using the same channels as drugs.
 - We have the same effect that we had on Cuban cigars when there was the embargo, or illegal "Ortolans" birds: **illegal but so trendy to be illegal**
- The new EEC rules about the labeling: even if necessary, they will not solve the problem. Why?**
 - Because the rules are coming too late, the illegal traders have already constructed their sales channels and included these rules already in their offer
 - There is no rules in the EEC regulation about the commercial names currently used or traditionally known, often abusing customer.
 - The consumer is lost in all these new names, and this will be even worst in the future, see attached table showing the 128 different choices of caviar we will have in a very near future.
 - If there is no proper and drastic actions taken, that will continue to go to the advantage of it the illegal traders, (they like foggy situations.)
 - These rules are easy to counterfeit, and copies of real label will soon appear.
 - Do EEC has enough enforcement forces to act against illegal trade, do they have the desire to do so, can they politically justify to spend public money to protect caviar markets.
 - The size of the caviar market is not, yet, as great as for the "counterfeiting" from the luxury leather or perfumes brands, and no losses of income for the government to justify the actions and the spending

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian 8

- How present is illegal trade in 2006 ?**
 - Illegal merchandise is present on market by tons, since January we have been offered a lot of merchandises without any papers, directly sold in the EEC, delivered to the door.
 - Some TV journalist has made a survey about how to find the black channels and they could find and buy without any difficulties the illegal merchandises.
 - A very well organized sales channel, on the net, on open (fly) markets, auction websites, restaurants, frequently under the cover of farmed fish, caviar imitations, and many others (caviar is sent as a medical supply, as flowers, as an imitation but inside real sturgeon etc....)
 - In case of control they do not use real caviar but...a non CITES one, and they are safe.
 - The warehouses are under cover names and no one knows where they are, to whom they belong, and how to find them, the fact is that they exists.
 - The caviar imitations are very confusing to customers, made from sturgeon paste, herring paste, soy beans, seaweed.
 - The caviar substitutes like salmon roe, pike roe, trout roe and other natural roes don't harm unless they are incorrectly labeled, using the word caviar for example.
 - A lot of speculations are taking place to get any legitimate documents in order to recycle the black market merchandises, that is happening to farm products also.
 - How to control the production of the farms, and especially for species that exists in wild? There is no CITES quotas on sturgeon farms, does CITES has any control on production to stop some of them to "wash" black market merchandise?

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian 9

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E bay

Saturday 24th 2006 research on E bay : see the results,
we have already said that for four years and no actions were taken.

EBay.COM

736 items found for caviar

Location: North America [Show all](#)

List View [Picture Gallery](#) Sort by: [Customize](#)

2849 items found for caviar

Location: United States only [Show all](#)

Show only: All items including Store Inventory Items [Show all](#)

Ebay.fr

38 objets trouvés pour caviar
dans Vins et Gastronomie

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E BAY Saturday 24 June 2006 REAL



Caviar Nutrition Facts - Per 100 grams
KCalories: 2800
Protein: 25.3 grams Fat: 17 grams
Cholesterol: 440 mg
Sugar: 4 g Sodium: 1,700 mg
Potassium: 164 mg Phosphorus: 330 mg
Calcium: 51 mg
Vitamins: D, A, C, B2, B6, B12 and PP

Recommended Portion: 30 to 50 g of caviar per person.
This caviar is packed into glass jar 113g=4oz. You're bidding on two glass jars of russian black sturgeon beluga caviar. Shelf life is 6 months. Packed on february 2006(date had been printed on the cover). Product is

Beluga Caviar 8oz=226g
Being one of rare foods most expensive of the world, the caviar also is quarrel reason. First because the indiscriminate fishing of the sturgeon - fish that produces spawns - threat to extinguish it in short term of time. To have an idea, about 90% of the caviar commercialized in the world it comes of the wild sturgeons that live in the Sea Caspian, where fishes it illegal makes to decimate, year the year, around 20% of the species. The anxiety for the profit provoked a crisis in the caviar production. In January of this year, an international convention of the ONU interrupted the world-wide commerce of this and other sturgeon products. The affected countries more are Casaqiustan, Azerbaijan, Turcomenistan and Russia, main exporters of the product. For who it imports the caviar, the price increased around 25% in relation to the last year. The sturgeon can lead up to twenty years to develop and to produce spawns. Cool in the hour to even serve, uniformity of spawns in relation to the size, color, fragrance, flavor, brightness, texture and delicacy they are basic conditions so that a caviar is considered good. The rule to eat it is delicate. The caviar must be served with cool cream, blinis (russian pancake) or with cool sliced bread and always folloted of good champagne. The ice keeps the temperature. Basic tip: always uses places setting of madre pearl, bone or gold, because the silver places setting modify the flavor of the product. The cool caviar necessary always to be cooled until being served, en ters -2 the 4 degrees. Caviar must never be placed in freezer because this cause the premature breaking of the skin of spawns generating a product of bad quality. Curiosity and features: The caviar most expensive of the world is called "souls" (that it means diamond in Russian). This type of Beluga has white color; the more clearly it will be the caviar Beluga, older is the fish, generating a more elegant and flavorful product. The Souls are a product rare and very expensive and they are of Iranian

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- faux" caviar sold as imitation but on the web a lot is sold as real one, the same salers offers real caviar isn't that clear. I have a full file at your disposal
- E BAY Saturday 24 June 2006

You are bidding for:
1 JAR TZAR CAVIAR
113gr (4oz)



Product:

Shelf life is 5 months.

Product is not pasteurized.

Storage temperature: min 0°C max +3°C.

- During the reigns of all Russian monarchs, sturgeon caviar was always considered the ultimate sea delicacy. A highly expensive treat, Russian caviar has been acclaimed for its nonpareil taste and superior nutritional value since ancient times. Indeed, the taste of caviar is gentle, smooth, and refined. For many centuries caviar was the favorite hors d'oeuvre of the Russian Tsars, and a status symbol. The more caviar on the host's table, the more valued and welcome the guests felt. A lot has changed since, but people still love good food, and enjoy getting together at a festive table with family and friends.

Prepared from natural fish, Tzar Caviar tastes exactly like sturgeon caviar, but its affordable price makes sure you can enjoy it anytime, not only at holidays. Tzar Caviar, the Gourmet Dream!
Ingredients: natural fish, olive oil, pectin, spices, sodium benzoate, color added.
Tzar caviar is packed into glass jars 113gr (4oz)

Energy value / 100 gr : 125 Kkal, carbon hydrates: 3 gr, Proteins: 4 gr, Fats: 10 gr

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – International Caviar Importers Association

2. suggested actions

• Union of the forces against illegal trade

- prepare a common press release signed by CITES, Caviar Emptor or Seaweb, WWF, IWMC, ICIA describing clearly their intentions about the illegal caviar, and actions that are in preparation, warning the main illegal channels to cease their illegal activities before they get into serious trouble.
- We have to convince journalists and the public that we have all necessary power, intentions and forces to investigate any market in the whole Union, even using new investigations methods such as false customers or suppliers.
- That any seizures of merchandise involving restaurants or others will see their names published in newspapers by this group.
- We should have a real discussion about the content of the information given to the press such as data, dates, suggestions, information, and get into a consensual content that will be the base for the speakers of these groups

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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• Additional suggested actions

- Use the new data of crossed European cites documents made by CITES to show how the illegal traders acted in the past.
- Trace the European sales for the same shipment.
- What is the status of this new CITES database ?
- Open a window for legal trade of wild caviar under specific conditions to be specified.
- Use the new tools to trace the merchandises from origin.
- Do not accept merchandises that cross more than two or three countries (example of some imports involving 5 countries given to Mr Sellar)
- Stop any end consumer sales on the net for any CITES products, out of registered (and controlled) companies.
- Without proper registration number no sales possible, block all sales through individuals, or E bay boutiques.
- The EEC actions should be extended to the rest of the world.
- **To be efficient we need to control production, repacking, and all sales channels ; shops, net, restaurants, caterers, and others...**
- **Free competition should not mean as it is now : no controls on ultra small business and big controls on big companies.**

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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Legal Traders wishes

- We do not want to be mixed with the illegal traders. We are not in the same basket
- We do our job correctly and we want that to be recognized.
- We are not an enemy of the conservation of sturgeons ; on the contrary we are their support, and consequently conservationists have to stop all this unfair communication that do not make the difference between the legal and illegal traders.
- The good players have to be awarded the bad ones punished.
- We have been at the base of this idea of task force, and we regret that some countries rejected our presence in some sessions of this workshop, mostly because they didn't understand our role, and aim.
- If no serious actions are taken to fight illegal trade, this is the end of the sturgeon. We are warning every one from 1998. See E bay examples : only **one** seller sold more than 200kgs since January 2006.
- We think that the worse solution was taken when CITES stopped the legal, controlled merchandise to enter, the pressure would have been better, more efficient if CITES asked for a change in the selling methods and quantities.
- Its not too late to correct this position, We gave some ideas to CITES secretariat about how to act in this situation.
- Any time as soon as possible we should discuss and find, with all the concerned Parties including us , on a consensus base, an acceptable solution for all legal players.

I.C.I.A - Armen Petrossian

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International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – International Caviar Importers Association

Tank you for your invitation to participate in
this meeting.

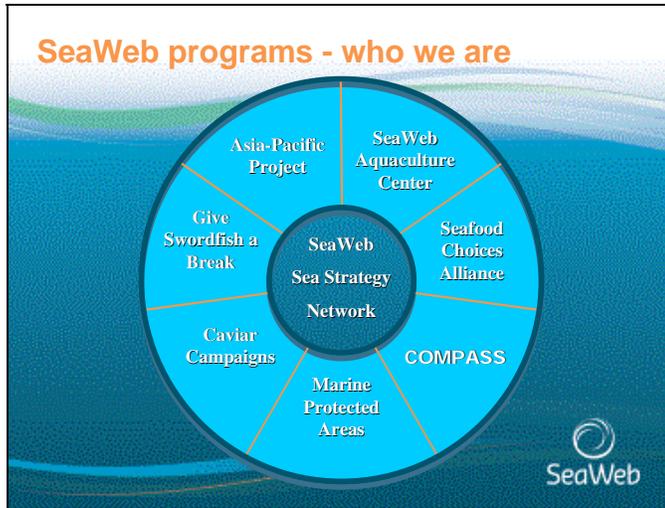


**Caviar and consumer awareness: the role of NGOs in discouraging
the consumption of illegal caviar**

Dawn Martin, SeaWeb



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – SeaWeb



- ## SeaWeb's caviar campaigns
- Established after concern voiced from producing countries
 - Grounded in science
 - Focused on promoting sustainable caviar choices as alternative
- SeaWeb

Concern in Caspian and Black Sea regions

"There is poaching. Out of ten sturgeon caught, if the fishermen are honest, only two will be stolen. But in some cases, they only turn in one, and nine will be taken [for the illegal trade]."
Game warden, taped interview in Russia

"For the entire time [fishing today], we did not get a single beluga. Last year, we also did not have them. There has to be a five-year moratorium on fishing here, and then everything will be reestablished."
Fishing captain, taped interview in Russia

In May 2006, Romania's Ministry of Environment ordered a 10-year ban on sturgeon fishing because of a "worrying decline" in sturgeon since 2000 and the extinction of other sturgeon species in Europe during the last century.

SeaWeb

Grounded in science

- Scientific partners of SeaWeb published the first-ever global review of sturgeon fisheries in *Fish and Fisheries Journal*, showing sturgeon to be one of the world's most endangered fishes.
- SeaWeb maintains staff in the Caspian region on a seasonal basis, working with local scientists to implement practical measures for restoring the fish.



Promoting sustainable caviars



Producer of farmed caviar being interviewed by French journalists



2005 Press Coverage:

Over 100 million readers in English, 30 million in French

L'Onu suspend les quotas de caviar par crainte pour les stocks



Global trade in caviar is banned by UN

SAVING STURGEON

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune

SCIENCE
NEWS
THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE OF SCIENCE

Banning trade in caviar

The Economist

LE FIGARO

Le commerce mondial du caviar est suspendu



Chef and connoisseurs' perspectives on caviar traceability



"I stopped buying Caspian caviar in 1999 because of a decline in the quality and consistency of the caviar. I never knew what I was going to get because of the lack of traceability. The US should also implement labeling requirements, so chefs can immediately tell if the caviar they are purchasing is illegal."

*Rick Moonen, Chef, rm Seafood,
Mandalay Bay Hotel, Las Vegas*

"Certification ensuring traceability of caviar is obviously an essential guarantee for professionals and consumers."

Jean Marie Pincon, President, Caviar Tasters' Club, Paris



Media Focus: Great attention to illegal caviar issue

- Since January 2005, nearly **100 English language articles** have discussed the illegal caviar trade.

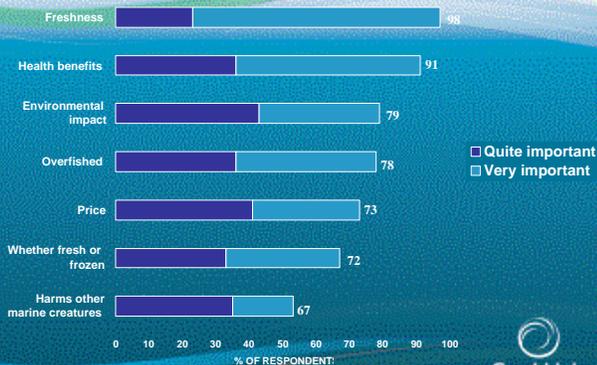
- Since January 2005, nearly **60 French language articles** have done the same.

"The crime that surrounds the wild caviar trade has resulted in a frenzied programme of extermination against an ancient species."

- Misha Glenny
Author of upcoming book on global organised crime



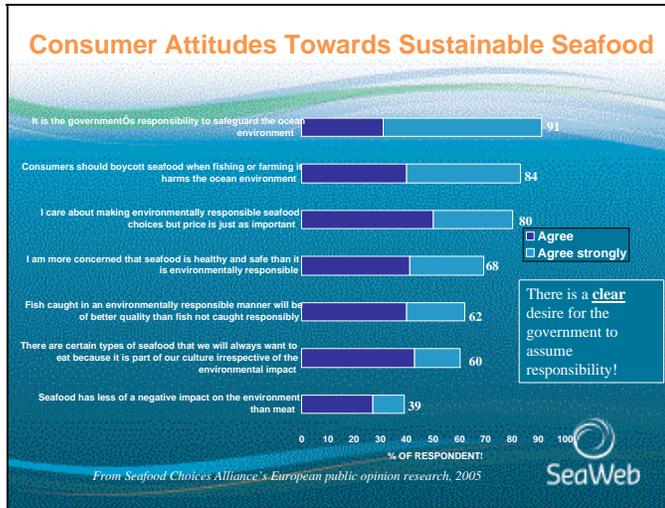
Factors for European consumers' seafood purchasing decisions



From Seafood Choices Alliance's European public opinion research, 2005



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – SeaWeb



Opportunity Exists: Value of Labeled Caviar

“A label is very good added value for a product: it brings reassurance to the market and guarantees quality. Nowadays consumers need and request it. A caviar labeling law reinforces traceability and meets consumer demands.”



- Jean François Rouquette, Chef
Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme Hotel

Now the label is law: next steps

NEWS:

EU adopts new labelling rules to fight caviar smuggling

SeaWeb's message:

Look for the Label

- Highlight new labeling laws in media work
- Create awareness among purveyors, chefs and restaurants by distributing educational materials
- Encourage European caviar farmers to highlight label in their marketing materials and when doing public relations.



Mobilising the NGO community



Seafood guides produced by NGOs encourage consumers to make wise seafood choices.

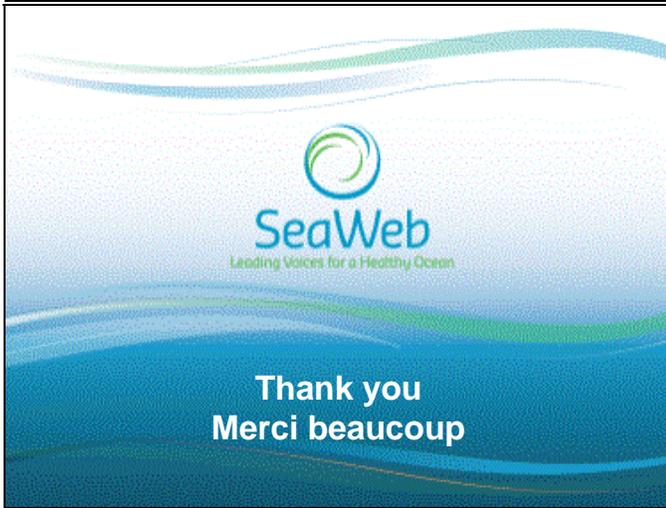
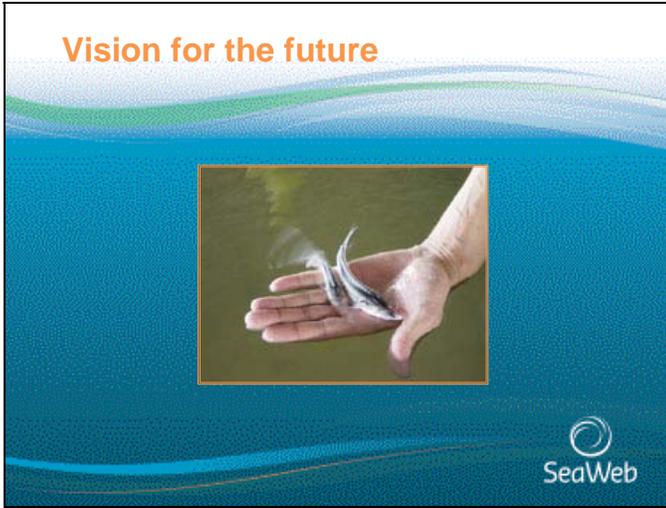


Critical measures for success of caviar label

- Widespread industry use
- Government enforcement
- Preventive measures against counterfeit labels
- EU takes the first step, but global implementation is needed



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – SeaWeb



International law enforcement – sources of assistance

Peter Younger, Interpol

 INTERPOL	<h3>INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT –SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• INTERPOL IS THE LARGEST INTERNATIONAL POLICE ORGANISATION IN THE WORLD.• ESTABLISHED 1923.• 184 MEMBER COUNTRIES• LINKED VIA I/24/7 SECURE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.
 INTERPOL	<h3>INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT –SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WHAT CAN INTERPOL PROVIDE?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FIRST FULL TIME DEDICATED WILDLIFE OFFICER (2006)• ACCESS TO POLICE SERVICES WORLDWIDE.• ACCESS TO EXISTING AND EMERGING WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT NETWORKS. Eg: ASEAN-WEN• ACCESS TO CITES MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES, W.CO. NETWORK AND INTER-COUNTRY TASK FORCES OUTSIDE OF E.U.• ACCESS TO FORENSIC CAPABILITIES AND LABORATORIES.• POINT OF CONTACT FOR ESTABLISHING PERSONAL CONTACTS IN OPERATIONAL MATTERS.• CO-ORDINATION POINT FOR INTERPOL WILDLIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP.• FACILITY TO PROVIDE OPERATIONAL SUPPORT, M.O.DATA AND ANALYSIS FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.
 INTERPOL	<h3>ENFORCEMENT –SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• INTERPOL WILDLIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP (IWWG)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESTABLISHED 1994.• OBJECTIVES TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION IDEAS AND STRATEGIES ON HOW IPSP COULD ASSIST AND MAINTAIN A NETWORK OF ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS WITH RELEVANT EXPERTISE.• 1998 FACILITATED SIGNING OF MOU BETWEEN IPSP AND CITES SECRETARIAT.• SINCE 2004 DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN CAPACITY BUILDING WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES VIA THE ECO-MESSAGE AWARD.



INTERPOL

ENFORCEMENT –SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE

INTERPOL WILDLIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP (IWWG).

5. ACTIVE IN FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT LAW ENFORCEMENT PROJECTS.
6. 2006 MOVING TOWARDS MORE OPERATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT INITIATIVES.



INTERPOL

INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT –SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.

- INTERPOL POINT OF CONTACT.

PETER YOUNGER.

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200 quai CHARLES DE GAULLE
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International law enforcement – sources of assistance

Hui Fu, World Customs Organization



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION AND ITS ROLE IN CITES

27-29 June 2006 Brussels

Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar

HUI FU
Customs Attaché

World Customs Organization

WCO MISSION

- **World Customs Organization:**
Independent intergovernmental body with 169 Member Customs Administrations
- **WCO Mission: Enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Member Customs Administrations, assisting them to contribute to national development goals:**
 - trade facilitation
 - revenue collection
 - community protection
 - national security

WCO WORK PRIORITY

WCO priorities in 2005/2006:

- Development and effective implementation of the Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade
- Contribute to the WTO negotiations on trade facilitation
- Continue WCO's programmes in revenue fraud, drug trafficking, terrorism, IPR, etc.
- WCO's contribution to Customs capacity building
- Promote integrity in Customs
- Successful application of the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement.

WCO Enforcement Programme

- Reinforce Customs enforcement efforts
- Promote bilateral & multi-lateral cooperation
- Provide technical and training assistance, guidance and support to Members
- Maintain and exchange enforcement data

WCO Environmental Initiatives

WCO has long been interested and actively involved in the prevention, combating and suppression of Environmental Crimes:

- Awareness: the important role of Customs to prevent, combat and suppression of transnational Environmental Crime
- Training:
 - Awareness videos provided to Members
 - Customs and CITES training CD distributed to Members
 - WCO-CITES Brochure

WCO Environmental Initiatives

- Seminars (National and Regional)
- Training courses
- Green Customs Initiatives
- E-learning on WCO website: Customs & Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) available next year
- Exchange of information
 - Global RILO network: analysis
 - Contact point network: report seizures
 - WCO Website
 - CEN Database on seizures
 - Monthly provision of EU CITES seizures to TRAFFIC to be uploaded to EU TWIX

WCO Environmental Initiatives

- MOU and cooperation with other organizations, UNEP, CITES, Interpol, EU, etc.
- WCO/CITES Working Group meetings
- Investigation support: Standardized Risk Assessment Model Indicators distributed to Members in 2005, including ODS, Hazardous waste and CITES.
- Progress reports to members

CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

Global Enforcement System to Support and Enhance
Customs' Fight against
Transnational Organized Crime

**One system – Many
applications**

CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

- The only global Customs seizures database
- Created and maintained by WCO
- Operational July 2000
- Two parts: CEN website and CEN Communication
- Internet-Based using:
- Encryption Technology
- Effective Database Protection
- Security Certificate Authority. Authorized users ONLY!
- Access to 150+ Countries and 1600 users

CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

CEN Website

- E-mail system
- Forum
- Alerts
- Customs press release
- RILO analytical reports
- Intelligence reports of WCO and Members
- Information exchange with UNEP, CITES, ICPO, INCB, Europol, etc.



CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

CEN Database

- Global Seizure Database
- 13 Commodities, e.g. CITES
- 135000+ non-nominal seizures. 8500+ on CITES
- Concealment pictures Database. 1200+ pictures



CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

- On-line predefined queries and graphics of data by:
 - Commodity
 - Location
 - Country
 - Region
 - Weight
 - Transport
 - Courier, Nationality act.



International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – World Customs Organization

Cases of Global Caviar Seizures (2002-2006/1)

Country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006/1	Total
Germany	106	85	57	40	9	297
France	8	29	27	25	8	97
Italy	16	13	35	7	1	72
Netherlands	14	15	4			33
Austria	15	12	3			30
Poland		12	2	2	1	17
United Kingdom	9	4	1			14
Belgium			2			2
Denmark	1	1				2
Czech Rep.	1					1
Spain			1			1
Japan	1					1
Total	171	171	132	74	19	567

Global Quantity Seized

Country	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006/1	Total
Germany	401.5	289.9	242.8	846.7	306.5	2,087.3
Belgium			819.0			819.0
France	6.6	492.5	49.3	124.4	12.9	685.7
Poland		308.0	6.6	58.6	10.5	383.6
Austria	56.6	108.8	4.0			169.4
United Kingdom	93.1	19.2	1.0			113.2
Italy	17.0	9.6	31.4	5.5	0.6	64.0
Netherlands	14.5	17.5	4.6			36.7
Japan	25.8					25.8
Czech Rep.	17.0					17.0
Spain			6.0			6.0
Denmark	0.5	0.1				0.6
Total	632.5	1,245.6	1,164.6	1,035.1	330.5	4,408.3

CEN Communication

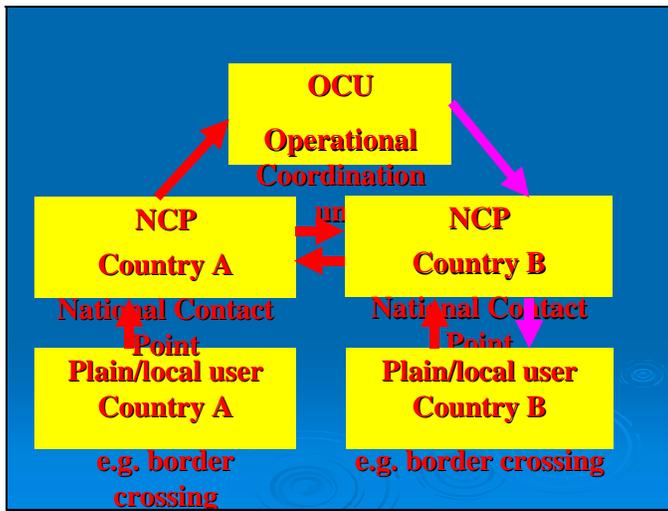


- CEN Comm: Encrypted communication system for multi-agencies enforcement operations
- Closed User Group (CUG)
- Limited period of time
- Encrypted transmission
- User friendly
- The only cost: Computers and internet connections
- Many operations can run at the same time independently

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – World Customs Organization

The screenshot shows the WCO DMD - CEN Application interface. The 'Members' section is highlighted with a red circle and a red arrow pointing to it. The 'Formatted messages' section is also highlighted with a red circle. The 'Mailing lists' section shows a list of recipients, including 'All OCU', 'All NCPs', and 'Everybody'.

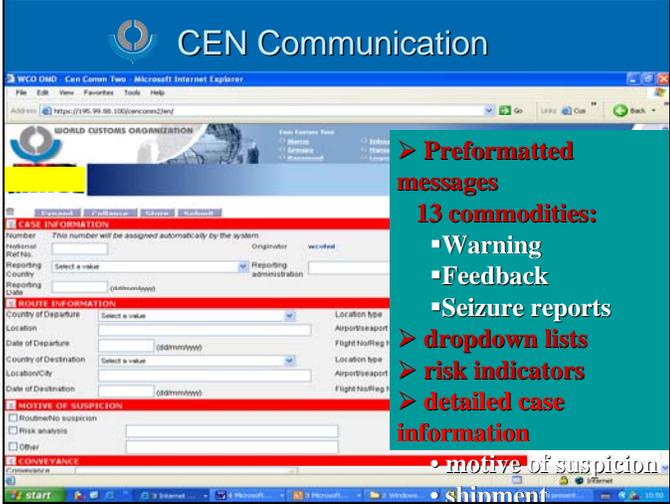
Closed User Group (CUG)
Formatted messages 1ok
Access levels: 3
OCU, NCP, Plain users



The screenshot shows the 'WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION' mailing list in the WCO DMD - CEN Application. The list includes various users from different countries, such as Philippe Berthoin (SL), Richard Beerna (BR), and Beverly Buck (WC). The 'Message' field is empty, and the 'Attachment' field is also empty.

E-mail function for plain messages.
Messages sent as HTML files
Users can see other

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – World Customs Organization



The screenshot shows the CEN Communication web application interface. The page title is "CEN Communication". The browser address bar shows "http://195.99.88.133/wcoomc2/enf". The page content includes sections for "CASE INFORMATION", "ROUTE INFORMATION", "MOTIVE OF SUSPICION", and "CONVEYANCE". A green callout box on the right side of the screenshot lists features: "Preformatted messages", "13 commodities: Warning, Feedback, Seizure reports", "dropdown lists", "risk indicators", "detailed case information", "motive of suspicion", and "shipment".

CEN Communication

- Operational since Sept. 2004
- 12 successful Operations Sept. 2004—June 2006, 3 currently ongoing
- Continuous improvements to make an excellent tool for enforcement operations

**We look forward to applying CEN Comm.
to Operations in respect of CITES**

THANK YOUR FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Contact

www.wcoomd.org

Hui FU
WCO Technical Attaché

hui.fu@wcoomd.org

Tel : + 32 2 209 92 45

Additional presentations - Key issues in sturgeon conservation
Harald Rosenthal, World Sturgeon Conservation Society



Methods to achieve objectives

- Link sturgeon scientists & research globally
- Organize local, regional, global Conferences and promote coop in research & management
- inform the public at large, Governments, NGOs on **science-based** knowledge of the status of sturgeon stocks & on effective protection and management practices
- provide the scientific basis for developing tight control & monitoring methods on catch & trade of sturgeon products (including caviar)

5th International Symposium on Sturgeons (May 2005 - Ramsar, Iran ; 600 participants, 26 Nations)

Ramsar Declaration on Global Sturgeon Conservation

- Redesign stock assessment & Fisheries Management
- Sturgeon habitat protection and restoration
- improve stock rehabilitation & enhancement measures in particular conserving genetic integrity of stocks
- accept the differences between culture for aquaculture & culture for stock rehabilitation (inbreeding depression !!)

Aquaculture - (caviar laundering) - aquaristics !

5th International Symposium on Sturgeons (May 2005 - Ramsar, Iran ; 600 participants, 26 Nations)

Ramsar Declaration on Global Sturgeon Conservation

- Empower enforcement agencies to monitor and enforce controls from the point of harvest to the point of sales
- encourage training & capacity building for enforcement officials from range states to consumer countries to facilitate the exchange of intelligence & the establishment of networks to combat illegal harvesting and trade
- provide adequate penalties for illegal activities, ensuring that illegal harvesting, processing and trade can be dealt with as criminal offences

W.S.C.S. believes that

- (a) - trade enforcement should target established mafia structures !! hitch-hiker principle !!
- (b) Improve identification methods for effective enforcement (genetic fingerprint !!)
- (c) EU should provide ad-hoc support the IUCN- SSG Workshop (Sept 06, Berlin) on genetic identification methods (expand to evolutionary genetics !!)

W.S.C.S.

W.S.C.S. urges to intensify research in genetic tools

- conserving genetic Integrity of stocks
- to identify species conservation units to be managed separately (e.g. in- & outbreeding depression)
- Discourage restocking activities which have been planned without prior analysis of the genetic diversity of both the donor & recipient populations
- Control of illegal caviar trade is only **ONE** step in many of sound conservation measures for a sustainable sturgeon use in future generations
- invest in alternative livelihoods for local fishermen to reduce dependance on organised crime circles

W.S.C.S. recommends cooperation among states of ENCLOSED SEAS !!

	Similar in size	
Baltic Sea	413 000 qkm	sturgeons are highly endangered in 3 seas; rehabilitation ongoing
Black Sea	450 000 qkm	
Caspian Sea	439 000 qkm	

- Many similarities in habitat structure
- Similar salinity gradient
- Similar problems with anoxic deep basins
- Similar threats from pollution
- Similar problems with shared fishery stocks
- Similar problems with exotic species
- Sturgeon aquaculture starts around the coasts

Conservation

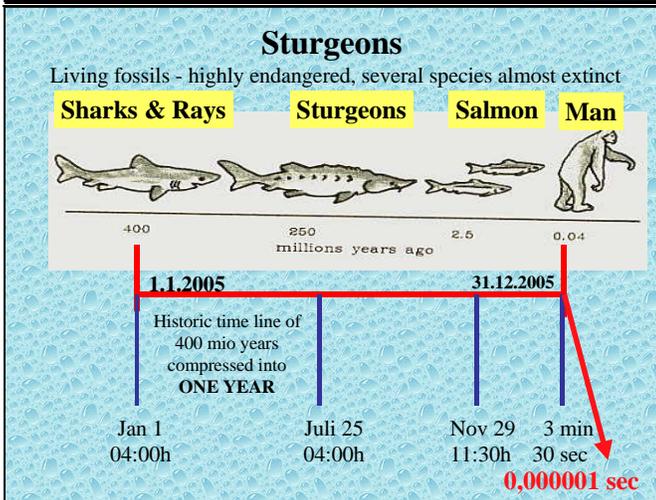
WSCS fully supports the intended combat of illegal caviar trade

WSCS urges to expand into comprehensive ACTION PLANS on sturgeon conservation

WSCS is prepared to join in science-based work on all aspects of sturgeon conservation and on the sustainable use of these valuable resources

THANK YOU

W.S.C.S.



Additional presentations – CITES and Danubian sturgeons: The Romanian experience in combating illegal trade in caviar
Radu Suci, Romanian CITES Scientific Authority for sturgeons

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



CITES and Danubian sturgeons:

The Romanian Experience in Combating Illegal Trade in Caviar



by **Radu Suci**
CITES S.A. for sturgeons
of Romania



International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Background

Romania joined the Convention on International Trade with Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on 8. December 1994

At the 10th CoP (Harare / Zimbabwe) 25 sturgeon species were included in Annex II of CITES June 1997

The listing of sturgeons in Annex II entered into force in April 1998

CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Romanian CITES Scientific Authority for Sturgeons

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Background

In 1998, after 9 years of fishing without any limits, Romania was still capturing about 180 tons of wild sturgeon (Narodaru, 1999)

In April 2000 CoP 11 (Gigiri / Kenya) adopted **Resolution Conf. 11.13**
Universal labelling of caviar

In June 2001 45 CITES Standing Committee (Paris / France) recommended *inter alia* to:

- adopt a collaborative basin-level management system for sturgeon fisheries in the Black Sea Region
- significantly increase efforts to combat illegal harvesting and illegal trade, and to regulate domestic trade



CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Background



October 2001 - CITES Sturgeon Management Black Sea regional meeting in Sofia / Bulgaria established the Black Sea Sturgeon Management Action Group (BSSMAG)

CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Background

In November 2002, CoP 12 (Santiago de Chile) adopted Res. Conf. 12.7 on Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish and

Decision 12.51: Importing countries should not accept shipments of caviar unless they are marked in accordance with the **universal labeling system** outlined in Annexes 1 and 2 of Resolution Conf. 12.7

CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Presentations – Romanian CITES Scientific Authority for Sturgeons

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Action

To control **illegal fishing and trade** in sturgeon the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture issued the Ministerial Ordinance No. 350 / Oct. 2001 introducing the **compulsory tagging and reporting** **within 48 hours of every legally** captured and landed specimen of sturgeon.



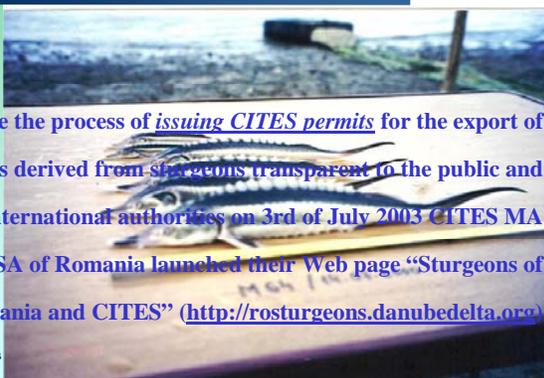
CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Action

To make the process of *issuing CITES permits* for the export of products derived from sturgeons transparent to the public and national / international authorities on 3rd of July 2003 CITES MA and SA of Romania launched their Web page "Sturgeons of Romania and CITES" (<http://rosturgeons.danubedelta.org>)



CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Results

Since September 2003 all CITES export permits were issued by CITES MA only for caviar from specimens reported and posted on the Web page in the Data Base of Captures

Number of sturgeons reported and posted on the internet data base of captures:

Year	Number of specimens
2003	717 specimens
2004	841 specimens
2005	543 specimens

CITES SA for sturgeons of Romania

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



Results

The data base of captures was regularly used by the Romanian Customs Service to check the validity of CITES permits and labelling of caviar exported.

By June 2006, after 34 month of functioning, the data base of captures posted on the internet Web page "Sturgeons of Romania and CITES" (<http://rosturgeons.danubedelta.org>) was visited **1 630 times** by - 462 foreign visitors of : Canada (92), USA (64), Germany (48), France (23), UK (19) Italy (14); - 1170 visitors of Romania.

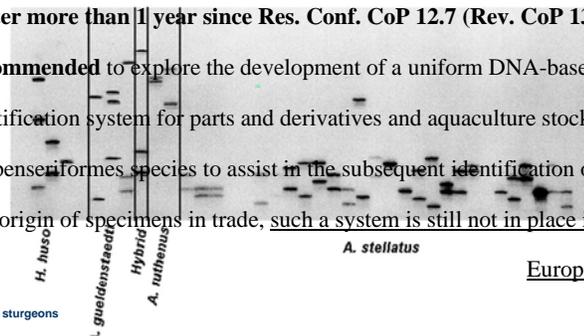
CITES SA for sturgeons of Romnia

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



What is missing:

After more than 1 year since Res. Conf. CoP 12.7 (Rev. CoP 13) recommended to explore the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species to assist in the subsequent identification of the origin of specimens in trade, such a system is still not in place in Europe.



CITES SA for sturgeons of Romnia

International Sturgeon Enforcement workshop to combat illegal trade in caviar - Brussels, 27-29 June 2006



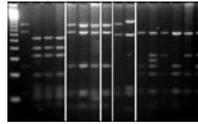
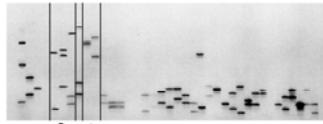
What is missing:

After almost three years since Res. Conf. CoP 12.7 recommended to extend CITES labeling and control system of sturgeon products (including caviar) to the domestic / internal market, such a labeling system is still absent in Romania.

CITES SA for sturgeons of Romnia

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Presentations – Romanian CITES Scientific Authority for Sturgeons

*THANK YOU VERY MUCH
FOR YOUR ATTENTION !*



A. nuro
A. gmelini
A. stellatus
A. nishanensis

A. stellatus

Section 3 - Outputs

GUIDANCE FOR WORKING GROUPS

Four main themes:

1. Control of domestic markets, aquaculture operations, re-exports, airlines and cruise ships
2. Registration, marking, identification of caviar and distinguishing legal from illegal
3. Legislative gaps and weaknesses, national and international
4. Combating the caviar criminals; information exchange and international co-operation

Aims and Objective:

Participants of each working group should bear in mind the overall aims and objectives:

- To identify problems in CITES enforcement for caviar and sturgeon products
- To identify practical solutions to reduce illegal trade in caviar and other sturgeon products

Approach and guiding principles for the working groups:

Each working group should focus on 3- 4 issues, which the participants consider to be the key issues.

- Each group should focus on shared problems and
 - TAKE A STRATEGIC APPROACH
 - aim to reach a consensus in the analysis, then
 - move on to possible solutions and
 - identify examples of best practice
- Each working group should aim towards concrete outputs and recommendations agreed upon by the participants.
- Where appropriate, the working groups should identify who will take responsibility for implementation of recommendations (to avoid bland recommendations that can not be fulfilled)
- To guide this process a few key questions are provided below, specific to each working group.

1. Control of domestic markets, aquaculture operations, re-exports, airlines and cruise ships

Facilitator: Mr Pourkazemi, IUCN

1. How important is the domestic market compared to international trade? How are domestic markets regulated, controlled and monitored? What are the main problems? Legislative, enforcement?
2. How are aquaculture operations controlled at national level? What works? Where are the gaps?
3. How can enforcement be improved for airlines and cruise ships?
4. What are the main issues with authorising, monitoring and controlling re-exports of caviar and caviar in transit? What measures have helped to improve the monitoring and control?
5. How can the outcomes of this workshop help you to improve the control of illegal caviar trade in your country?

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Guidance for Working Groups

2. Registration, marking, identification of caviar and distinguishing legal from illegal

Facilitator: Mr John Hounslow¹, DEFRA

1. Is there a system in place in your country for registration of caviar operations? Is it adequate? Can it be circumvented?
2. Is labelling in place? Is it being used and enforced?
3. What are the main problems with distinguishing legally- from illegally-sourced caviar? What can be done to facilitate this distinction?
4. How can the outcomes of this workshop help you to improve the control of illegal caviar trade in your country?

3. Legislative gaps and weaknesses, national and international

Facilitator: Ms Lucy Swan, European Commission

1. Are there deficiencies in your national legislation which hinder national enforcement and implementation of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations relating to sturgeon and caviar?
2. How effective is your national legislation for controlling a) the domestic market b) international trade? What works well? Where are the gaps?
3. Are there any gaps or *deficiencies* in the CITES Resolutions and Decisions that could be addressed?
4. How can the outcomes of this workshop help you to improve the control of illegal caviar trade in your country?

4. Combating the caviar criminals; information exchange and international co-operation

Facilitator: Mr John Sellar, CITES Secretariat

1. Is lack of international co-operation hindering enforcement of caviar-related regulations?
2. How can this co-operation be improved?
3. What role do you see the CITES Secretariat, the WCO and Interpol playing in this co-ordination?
4. How do you think information about illegal trade in caviar (e.g. smuggling techniques, routes) can be better shared?
5. Do you consider tools such as EU-TWIX or the caviar permit database to be useful for combating illegal trade?
6. How can the outcomes of this workshop help you to improve the control of illegal caviar trade in your country?

¹ Mr Hounslow replaced Mr Williams, DEFRA, who was initially scheduled to be the facilitator for Working Group 2.

SUMMARY OF WORKING GROUPS

Working group 1: Control of domestic markets, aquaculture operations, re-exports, airlines and cruise ships

Facilitator: Mr Pourkazemi, Chairman, IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group

Working group 1 discussed the importance of the domestic market for sturgeon meat and caviar. Its members agreed that sturgeon meat is far more important on the domestic market than in international trade, whereas the importance of caviar on domestic markets differs between countries (e.g. for cultural or religious reasons).

In some countries, the volume of caviar traded illegally is estimated to be about equal to the volume of caviar that is traded legally whilst in other countries it is thought that the level of illegal caviar trade is several times higher than the level of legal trade. Regulations to control and monitor domestic markets differ between producing countries, with some countries regulating the trade in sturgeon products through a state monopoly, others having a privatised production and trade, and some having a mix of State control and privatisation.

The group then discussed the regulation of aquaculture production of sturgeon products and came to the conclusion that this is a fast growing industry, including in the Caspian area. In some countries, aquaculture operations only need to be registered, whereas in other countries, particularly in the European Union (EU) and in North America, they are heavily regulated through specific licenses. However, depending on the type of operation, these regulations differ substantially. The group recognized that, in many countries, adequate control and monitoring of the production and trade of sturgeon products is still lacking and that there is a need to differentiate between farmed and wild caviar (using genetic or biochemical techniques).

To improve the controls of airlines and cruise ship operators, the use of sniffer dogs was recommended. It was also recommended to limit the amount of caviar entering an airplane based on the number of passengers and the CITES provisions on personal effects. Countries should apply their national rules to airlines and cruise ship operators.

Furthermore, the main issues with regard to authorising, monitoring and controlling re-exports of caviar and transit trade were determined and measures that have been proven to improve monitoring and control were discussed. The group members noted the following points as bearing the potential for improving trade controls: book keeping by traders; limiting the number of times a tin/container can be re-exported; good co-operation and collaboration between Management Authorities; implementing the labelling system of containers; developing the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database; harmonising penalties within the EU; increased political will; improving national legislation to enable controls and confiscation of shipments in transit. Increased controls, within the EU would have the double advantage of disturbing illegal markets and making traders more aware of the regulations and their obligations, as well as raising public awareness on this issue.

Finally, the discussion addressed the question of how the workshop results could help to improve the control of illegal caviar trade. It was agreed that the workshop's outcomes need to be brought to the

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Summary of Working Groups

public's attention. In particular, law enforcement officers and fisheries need to be made aware of the problems of illegal trade in caviar and the threats which sturgeon are facing. To achieve this, it was suggested that the workshop's conclusions could be published in various relevant languages to make them more widely available. Regular meetings for law enforcement officials were proposed in order to exchange valuable information and to establish contacts at a regional level. It was recommended that those regions currently lacking an action plan for sturgeon conservation, develop one and that the EU provide technical and financial support for the implementation of action plans.

Working Group 2: Registration, marking, identification of caviar and distinguishing legal from illegal caviar

Facilitator: Mr John Hounslow, UK CITES Management Authority

The members of Group 2 discussed the labelling of caviar containers. In particular, they discussed existing caviar labelling schemes in place in a variety of countries and identified best practices and areas that need to be improved. Experiences from various caviar producer (range States) and consumer countries were exchanged with regard to the process of registering producers and re-packaging facilities and the subsequent implementation of the labelling obligations.

The participants recognized differences with regard to labels used for domestic and international trade. For example, in producer states the lot identification number allows to trace the caviar to the harvested fish which was seen as an advantage. However, this is not always the case in consumer countries where the caviar is re-packaged and makes the tracing of the origin and source of the caviar more difficult.

Although the participants admitted that every labelling system may be subject to organized forgery, they generally agreed that the new labelling system is a tool that will help to track legal caviar all the way from its origin to the consumer and thereby will increase the chances to detect illegal caviar trade.

The participants agreed that that forgery is likely to take place at points of import and re-packaging. Therefore, to allow for the successful distinction between legal and caviar it is essential to ensure good book-keeping on the side of the traders or re-packagers along the entire chain of custody, from its source to the consumer. Furthermore, some participants raised concerns that the period of 18 months for legal re-export is too long and needs to be shortened in order to prevent illegal caviar trade.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Summary of Working Groups

Working group 3: Legislation gaps and weakness, national and international

Facilitator: Ms Lucy Swan, European Commission

Working group 3 discussed the deficiencies in national legislation which hinders national enforcement and implementation of the provisions of CITES and/or the EC Wildlife Trade Regulations relating to the control of the trade in caviar. The participants agreed that CITES cannot address all issues pertaining to the conservation of sturgeons, but concluded that the Convention does provide effective means of addressing international trade issues, particularly international trade in caviar.

Participants identified various gaps or deficiencies in existing CITES resolutions and decisions and proposed the following:

- Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) should be amended to:
 - Reduce the period of validity for re-exports to, for example, 12 months, in order to limit the number of re-exports that may take place;
 - Clarify the meaning of “non-reusable labels” so it is clear that this refers to labels which seal the caviar container.
- Resolution Conf. 13.7 should be amended to:
 - Clarify that the personal effects exemption for caviar only applies to caviar labelled in accordance with Resolution Conf 12.7 (Rev CoP13);
 - Reduce the quantity of caviar exempted for personal use from 250 gram to 100 gram.

Issues beyond the mandate of the group but which were noted as being of importance to sturgeon conservation included the attention to livelihood issues in range States and the development of fisheries management systems including a fisheries protocol in the Caspian Sea.

The group agreed that combating illegal trade in caviar may be facilitated by greater accessibility of consumers to legal trade. In this context, the prohibition or suspension of trade may exacerbate illegal trade: therefore the group concluded that legal trade in caviar should be facilitated as far as possible.

In addition, the working group encouraged the Parties to:

- Consult the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database prior to the issuance of permits / certificates;
- Raise awareness amongst the public and consumers so they can distinguish between legal and illegal caviar;
- Ensure that their national legislation does not provide loopholes for laundering caviar in customs free zones.

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar
Summary of Working Groups

Working group 4: Combating the caviar criminals; information exchange and international co-operation

Facilitator: Mr John Sellar, CITES Secretariat

Participants in working group 4 identified the lack of international co-operation as one of the obstacles to the enforcement of caviar-related regulations.

The group discussed how this co-operation could be improved. During the debate, group members agreed that European Union (EU) Member States, Europol and the World Customs Organization (WCO) should assist in compiling information regarding relevant national contact points. A list of contact points would then be made available. The group recommended that meetings for law enforcement officials to exchange information and establish contacts that are necessary to facilitate communication, co-operation and co-ordination of investigation should be held on a regularly basis. These meetings should include participants from both caviar producing and importing countries.

The group also discussed the role of the CITES Secretariat, WCO, Interpol and Europol in co-ordinating efforts against illegal caviar trade. Participants agreed that the Interpol General Secretariat would send a briefing note to relevant National Central Bureaus to alert them about the significance of the illegal trade in caviar and to encourage them to identify and liaise with relevant law enforcement agencies in their countries which are responsible for investigations and trade controls.

The group recommended that joint cross-border operations be conducted at sub-regional, regional and international level and are instigated by individual States or in conjunction with organisations such as Europol, Interpol, OLAF and WCO. The group also recommended that countries and agencies contribute to Europol's "Centre of knowledge", which records sources of expertise in relation to criminal investigations.

Furthermore, the group discussed how information about illegal trade in caviar could be shared more efficiently. A CITES internet forum on illegal trade in caviar, suggested by the CITES Secretariat, was found to be an interesting tool in this regard. It was recommended that law enforcement agencies and CITES management authorities use Ecomessage when reporting seizures of illegal caviar or supplying information on investigations, suspects or convicts.

Also, the usefulness of tools such as EU-TWIX or the UNEP-WCMC caviar trade database in combating illegal caviar trade was discussed by the working group. It was suggested that, whenever appropriate, agencies should submit data to EU-TWIX and the WCO's CEN (Customs Enforcement Network) database.

Section 4 - Conclusions

CONCLUSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE IN CAVIAR

The 'International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar' was organised and hosted by the European Commission from 27-29 June 2006 in Brussels on behalf of CITES and with assistance of the CITES Secretariat, TRAFFIC and WWF.

The aim of the workshop was to bring together law enforcement authorities from caviar producing States, consumer and transit countries and representatives from relevant international organisations, to identify the main problems relating to the illegal trade in caviar and to outline possible approaches to combat poaching and illegal trade in caviar. The workshop was attended by more than 120 participants from 34 key caviar trading countries and organisations such as the CITES Secretariat, Interpol, the World Customs Organisation, Europol and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

These conclusions are the result of discussions during the workshop and proposals formulated by working groups that were discussed during the final plenary session of the workshop. In discussing key measures to tackle illegal trade in caviar, participants acknowledged that the conservation of sturgeon species needs to be approached in a holistic way, addressing trade, habitat and management of the species whilst also taking into account livelihood issues. Furthermore, many participants highlighted the need to avoid, where possible, total prohibitions of legal trade in order not to encourage illegal trade in caviar and other sturgeon products. In addition, participants underlined the importance of measures agreed under CITES to improve the control and monitoring of the trade in caviar and to combat illegal trade.

Improve co-operation and strengthen enforcement of caviar trade controls:

1. The Interpol General Secretariat would send a briefing note to relevant National Central Bureaus to alert them to the significance of illegal trade in caviar and to encourage them to identify and liaise with the relevant law enforcement agencies in their countries that are responsible for investigations. A number of European Union (EU) countries, the World Customs Organization and Europol also volunteered to assist in gathering information regarding relevant national contact points. A list of contact points would then be made available.
2. The World Customs Organisation would send a message to its members to inform them about the outcomes of this workshop, to raise awareness on the illegal trade in caviar and to urge them to take practical measures.
3. The CITES Secretariat would establish, via its website, a restricted-access Internet forum for information sharing among law enforcement officials on illegal trade in caviar. The Secretariat would post on the forum copies of relevant Alerts and other information regarding illegal trade in caviar. Members of the forum would be encouraged to submit similar information, which could help in targeting caviar criminals.
4. Law enforcement agencies and CITES Management Authorities should make as much use as possible of the Ecomessage in reporting seizures of illegal caviar and in supplying information regarding investigations and persons suspected or convicted of illicit commercial trade in caviar. Where appropriate and relevant, agencies should also submit data to the World Customs Organization's CEN database and to EU-TWIX.
5. Joint cross-border operations with a multi-agency approach (including non-law enforcement agencies) should be established to tackle illegal trade in caviar. These could be sub-regional, regional or international and could be instigated by individual States or in conjunction with and

International Sturgeon Enforcement Workshop to Combat Illegal Trade in Caviar Workshop Conclusions

assisted by organizations such as Interpol, the World Customs Organization, Europol or the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and others.

6. Relevant countries and agencies should contribute to Europol's 'Centre of knowledge', which records sources of expertise in relation to criminal investigations.
7. Further opportunities should be provided for relevant law enforcement officials from both range and consumer States to meet together to exchange information and establish the contacts necessary to facilitate communication, co-operation and co-ordination of investigations and intelligence gathering. Therefore CITES Parties should consider the establishment of a permanent venue such as a working group to facilitate the exchange of information among operational enforcement personnel.

Fully implement the caviar labelling and registration system:

8. All caviar producing and trading countries that have not yet done so should implement the universal labelling system agreed at under CITES, register all caviar producing, processing, trading and re-packaging companies and ensure the labelling system is supported by accurate and detailed records and book-keeping checks to allow for the traceability of the caviar along the entire chain of custody in order to confirm legality.
9. CITES Parties should make use of food safety traceability systems applied in the food hygiene sector.
10. When establishing operating systems for the effective control of caviar trade and undertaking research on possible tracking techniques, CITES Parties should involve the industry/traders and should ensure that they cover a fair share of the costs involved in developing such systems in as much as they stand to benefit from legal trade.
11. CITES Parties should assess the need for and the feasibility of supplementing the newly developed CITES trade database for caviar trade with information on labels to ensure that information on the movement of labeled caviar tins is available to Management Authorities and Enforcement agencies involved in tracing or authorizing further movements of the goods.
12. CITES Parties should ensure that the labelling system is adequately enforced and that trade records held by authorized producers, processors, traders and re-packagers of caviar are regularly monitored and checked.

Propose amendments Resolutions Conf 12.7 and 13.7 at CoP14:

13. Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev CoP13) should be amended to
 - ⇒ reduce the period of validity for re-exports to, for example, 12 months, in order to limit the number of re-exports that may take place, and
 - ⇒ clarify the meaning of "non-reusable labels" so it is clear that this refers to labels which seal the caviar containers.
14. Resolution Conf. 13.7 should be amended to
 - ⇒ clarify that the personal effects exemption for caviar only applies to caviar labelled in accordance with Resolution Conf 12.7 (Rev CoP13);
 - ⇒ reduce the quantity of caviar exempted for personal use from 250 grams to 100 grams.

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Additional recommendations:

15. CITES Parties should consult the UNEP-WCMC caviar database prior to the issuance of permits / certificates.
16. CITES Parties should ensure that their national legislation does not provide loopholes for laundering caviar in customs free zones.
17. CITES Parties, especially caviar producing countries, should control domestic trade of caviar and combat illegal trade at national level.
18. CITES parties should monitor and regularly check aquaculture operations that produce caviar and other sturgeon products to avoid that illegally sourced caviar is laundered through these operations.
19. Meetings should be organized at regional level to deal with the problems linked to illegal caviar trade specific to each region.
20. CITES Parties should share best practice examples regarding enforcement and management of the caviar trade in order to assist other Parties involved in regulating and controlling the production of and trade in caviar.
21. The result of this workshop should be made widely available electronically and translation into relevant languages should be considered.
22. Efforts to distribute the outcomes of this workshop more widely should be aimed at enforcement officers and local communities.

Annex

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**INTERNATIONAL STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR
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**INTERNATIONAL STURGEON ENFORCEMENT WORKSHOP to COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE in CAVIAR
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