

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats



Standing Committee

Recommendation No. 56 (1997) concerning guidelines to be taken into account while making proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II of the Convention and while adopting amendments

(Adopted by the Standing Committee on 5 December 1997)

The Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the aims of the convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats;

Recalling that wild flora and fauna constitute a natural heritage of aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational, economic and intrinsic value that needs to be preserved and handed on to future generations, as stated in the preamble of the Convention;

Recalling that Article 2 of the Convention asks Contracting Parties to take requisite measures to maintain the population of wild flora and fauna at, or adapt it to, a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements and the needs of sub-species, varieties or forms at risk locally;

Recalling points 68 to 79 of the explanatory report concerning the convention, which record the agreements reached on the criteria to list species in Appendices I and II when the Convention was negotiated;

Conscious that Appendices I and II as adopted in 1979 were the result of a compromise among different states and that the species listed then were not all that would merit strict protection under the convention but only those that were then generally acceptable;

Recalling, however, that much progress has been made in this respect by the successive amendments adopted between 1986 and 1996;

Taking into account that the legal tools of the Bern Convention may add complementary protection to European species protected by other appropriate biodiversity-related conventions;

Desirous of facilitating further amendment of the appendices in a coherent manner, based on best available science;

Recommends Contracting Parties to take into account the following guidelines while making proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II of the convention and during their adoption:

1. *Threat.* Account will be taken of the category of threat, the vulnerability of the species to changes in its habitat, its particular link with a threatened habitat, the trends and variations in population level and its vulnerability to a possible non sustainable use. Account will be taken of whether the species is declining in the central area of its distribution, or it is only threatened in the border of its range.

2. *Ecological role.* Account will be taken of the ecological role of the species, such as their position or role in the food chain (i.e. raptors, insectivorous species such as bats), their structural role in ecosystems (i.e. corals, heathlands) or the fact that endangered species or endangered ecosystems may be highly dependent on them (i.e. marine phanerogams like *Posidonia oceanica*) or risk to become threatened by their exploitation (like the mollusc *Lithophaga lithophaga*).

Contracting Parties are further recommended to:

- confine, as a general rule, the flora and fauna proposed for listing in the appendices to the taxonomic level of the species, excluding mention of subspecies, varieties or other taxonomic subordinate levels, except in cases with very good conservation reasons that must be clearly stated;
- exclude species of dubious or uncertain taxonomy and higher plant groups demonstrating reproductive anomalies;
- exclude species non-native to Europe;
- present a sufficiently informative data sheet with each species they may propose for amendment of the appendices.