

UNCTAD/CITES MEETING
TRACEABILITY SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN
SOUTH EAST ASIAN PYTHON SKINS
17-18 October 2013

Talking Points

Ambassador Guillermo Valles

Director

Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

I wish to warmly welcome you all to Geneva and to UNCTAD.

- 1) I wish to start by thanking you Mr. Lörtscher for agreeing to chair our meeting over the next two days. I am fully confident that under your able leadership, and your in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, the meeting will be enriching for us all.
- 2) This meeting on **traceability systems** for managing international trade in South-East Asian python skins that is co-sponsored by UNCTAD and CITES secretariat. UNCTAD and CITES secretariat have an MOU that delineates our joint cooperation in support of UN goal of protecting and preserving the natural environment in areas specific to CITES, and ensuring sustainability along with economic development through trade, which is UNCTAD's strength. We are very pleased with the collaboration with CITES and will continue to deepen it in the period ahead.
- 3) Ladies and gentlemen, the **purpose of this meeting** is to:

Present the main findings of the UNCTAD/CITES Study on traceability systems for ensuring sustainable sourcing of snake skins from South East Asia, and also discuss on-going experiences in traceability systems for snakes. We are very grateful to our joint consultant, **Mr. Don Ashely**, who undertook the ground work to seek inputs from all stakeholders and putting together the report we have today. He has undertaken a tremendous amount of work in a limited time period. The discussions and presentations from this

meeting, we hope, will provide further insights on the traceability systems available that can enable Parties to CITES to have informed discussions and consider appropriate recommendations for such systems. As we are all aware, this study is one contribution among others that Parties to CITES can examine in their deliberations.

4) It is very encouraging to see that we have a good turn-out for the meeting. I am particularly pleased to see such a **wide range of representatives** from interested stakeholders, including:

- a) representatives from range States who have flown in, as well as representatives of Permanent Missions in Geneva
- b) representatives from the Private sector including Luxury goods industry, tanners, data management professionals; and
- c) NGOs and IGOs.

5) Ladies and Gentlemen, **we may ask Why** such keen interest in traceability issue?

a) The **range States** need to ensure:

- i) Sustainable sourcing of snakes skin and the need to guarantee it through the supply chain - a **major challenge for many developing countries**; and
- ii) specifically - to ensure that trade in CITES-listed species is sustainable, legal and traceable as failure to ensure this can have negative results:
 - Unsustainable and badly managed trade;
 - Negative impact on economic growth and local livelihoods;
 - Negative impact for effective conservation and managing of wild resources;
 - Growth of illegal trade.

b) The **private sector** needs to ensure:

- i. A sustainable supply of skins; and
- ii. A supply chain secure from the infiltration of illegal skins.

6) The **work done** by UNCTAD and CITES on traceability systems on South East Asian python skins **aims to**:

- a) Be a practical guide on how improved traceability systems could work fairly for all stakeholders, and how it could affect the livelihoods of local people and benefit conservation of the species through balanced economic incentives linked to wildlife habitats.
- b) Provide specific suggestions on direct ways to:
 - i) reduce illegal trade in python skins;
 - ii) implement a tagging and traceability system; and
 - iii) identify dedicated funding options;

7) **Collaboration between all the stakeholders** is the key to success;

- i) Identify common goals
- ii) Discussion + sharing information
- iii) Reviewing options
- iv) Identifying problems
- v) Finding solutions

This collaboration is essential in helping to identify solutions that will ensure the conservation of species while supporting the long-term sustainability of the trade.

UNCTAD & CITES are, and will continue to **provide a platform** that brings together key players from government, the private sector, NGO's and international, regional and national organisations to discuss the issues and determine the next steps.

This meeting is a concrete example of that collaboration. I wish you every success in your deliberations, and my colleagues are here, with our CITES Secretariat friends to assist you fully.

THANK YOU