



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
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Department of Home Affairs DHA  
Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office FSVO



# CITES COP19 - Takeaways



**UNECE/UNESCAP Task Force on eCITES-EPIX Pilots**  
**Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2023**



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- The Conference of Parties (COP19) took place in Panama from 14-25 November 2022

Panama Convention Center, Panama City, 14 - 25 November 2022



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## • **Agenda item 41: Electronic systems and information technologies and authentication and control of permits**

The document on this topic can be viewed under : [Working document for CITES CoP19](#)

The Conference of the Parties is invited to:

- a) adopt the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev.CoP18) on Permits and certificates, as contained in Annex 1;
- b) adopt the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) on Compliance and enforcement, as contained in Annex 2;
- c) adopt the draft decisions on Risk assessment and analysis in Annex 3;
- d) adopt the draft decisions on Electronic systems and information technology in Annex 4;  
and
- e) delete Decisions 18.125 to 18.128 and 18.130 to 18.131



## The Outcomes

COP19 adopted all recommendations from the SC with some minor amendments.

Of particular importance to this TF are the following points:

- The guidances developed over the past years are now formally embedded into the Resolution 12.3 on permits and certificates
- The usefulness of electronic permitting systems for enforcement is also formally embedded into the Resolution 11.3 on Compliance and Enforcement



## Tasks in the decisions adopted - Parties

19.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) use the eCITES Implementation Framework, the latest edition of the CITES electronic permitting toolkit, Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) of CITES permits and certificates, and the Guidance on CITES electronic signatures in planning and implementing electronic CITES systems;
- b) share experience, challenges and know-how with other Parties on the development and implementation of electronic CITES permit management systems and use of the electronic equivalent of paper-based permits and certificates, and provide inputs to the Secretariat for continuous improvement of eCITES reference materials;



## Tasks in the decisions adopted – Standing Committee

19.BB The Standing Committee shall, in consultation with the Secretariat, undertake the following tasks:

- a) work with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and other relevant partners, **to continue the exchange of information and the development and implementation of joint projects that would facilitate Parties' access to electronic permitting systems that comply with CITES requirements and where appropriate are aligned with international trade standards and norms;**
- b) work with relevant partners on the **further development of standards and solutions for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX)** for the exchange of CITES permit and certificate data and the improvement of the validation of CITES permit data by CITES Management Authorities and customs officials;



## Tasks in the decisions adopted – CITES Secretariat

19.CC The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funding:

- a) collect information from Parties on any issues encountered with regard to the application of national data protection laws that affect implementation of Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permits and certificates;
- b) support the work of the Standing Committee under Decision 19.BB through the organization of workshops, consultations, preparation of studies and guidance materials on relevant topics as identified by the Standing Committee



# Chairs Takeaways

- Many parties are moving in the direction of developing e-permitting systems
- CITES provides good and important guidances to those parties for implementing such systems
- The legal basis for being able to do so is largely provided in the Resolutions and Decisions adopted by COP19
- The mandate given to the Parties, SC and CITES Secretariat provides for good and further collaboration on EPIX initiatives.