



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments and
Members of the Scientific Committee
IWC.ALL.354

CITES Resolution

The purpose of this Circular is to (a) draw the attention of Contracting Governments and members of the Scientific Committee to a Resolution on 'Simplified Procedures for Permits and Certificates' ([working document 56](#)) which will be considered by the 18th CITES Conference of the Parties, 17-28 August in Geneva, Switzerland and (b) highlight the relevance of this Resolution to recommendations of the IWC Scientific Committee.

The IWC Scientific Committee has discussed on several occasions the issue of delays in the export and import of emergency diagnostic specimens from species of conservation concern under CITES regulations. This is especially important in the context of strandings and mass mortality events where prompt diagnostic analyses are essential to determining effective responses. At its meeting in 2016, the IWC Scientific Committee reviewed information from the Wildlife Health Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) regarding their request to the CITES Secretariat requesting development of a procedure for transboundary transport of diagnostic specimens for disease investigations in emergency situations. At this meeting, the Scientific Committee recommended that IWC member nations evaluate this request and enter into discussions regarding effective ways to assist transboundary sample transport in the face of emergencies (die-off, environmental disasters or disease outbreaks). At its 2018 meeting, the Scientific Committee requested the IWC Secretariat to engage directly with CITES on this issue in liaison with the IWC Strandings Expert Panel and Steering Group. This was taken forward by the IWC Strandings Coordinator in liaison with IUCN and contributed to the development of the 'Simplified Procedures for Permits and Certificates' as mentioned above.

Contracting Governments and members of the Scientific Committee are invited to discuss this proposed Resolution with their representatives in CITES.

Dr Rebecca Lent
Executive Secretary

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC