

TRAFFIC Recommendations on the Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices at CoP15

Species	Comment	Recommendation
8 <i>Crocodylus moreletii</i>	<p>CoP15 Prop. 8 [Mexico]. Transfer from Appendix I to Appendix II with a zero quota for wild specimens.</p> <p>The range of Morelet's Crocodile <i>Crocodylus moreletii</i> includes Belize, Guatemala and Mexico, with almost 90% of its distribution in Mexico, and an estimated population size of 100 000 (including some 20 000 adults). The species is legally protected in all range States. Mechanisms to combat illegal trade in wild specimens and management of the habitat of the species are largely in place, as are control measures for international trade in the species (e.g. <i>Resolution Conf. 11.12 Universal tagging system for crocodylian skins</i>). If this downlisting proposal were accepted, future modification of the zero export quota for wild animals would require another proposal to be approved by the Parties.</p> <p>Based on the recent population estimates, it is clear that <i>C. moreletii</i> no longer meets the biological criteria for an Appendix-I listing. The proposed annotation for an Appendix-II listing with a zero export quota for wild animals would not allow trade in wild specimens for scientific and educational purposes and the proponent may consider modifying the proposal to apply only to wild specimens traded for commercial purposes. With very few reports of international illegal trade over the past 30 years, there is no indication that downlisting the species to Appendix II with a zero quota for specimens from the wild would impact the wild population.</p> <p>There is a concern raised by the IUCN/SSC Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG) related to hybridization between <i>Crocodylus moreletii</i> and <i>C. acutus</i> in captivity. It states that all captive breeding facilities producing <i>C. moreletii</i> are potentially stocked with these hybrids. Given that <i>C. acutus</i> is an Appendix-I species, trade in these hybrids would need to be in accordance with Appendix-I regulations and captive breeding operations would still need to be registered with CITES for commercial trade, clarifying that they were producing hybrids, unless there were evidence that captive-bred specimens were pure-bred <i>C. moreletii</i>.</p>	ACCEPT