

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

August 2025

Updates



COMMUNICATIONS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INPUT:

Most of the IUCN motions have been finalized and are awaiting electronic vote between August 27 to September 10. With input from states, provinces, and territories, AFWA Committees, and partners, AFWA will vote in support of, against, or abstain on each motion. CITES listing proposals and documents are being reviewed to develop AFWA positions. Stay tuned for an opportunity to weigh in on CITES topics.

ACTIONS:

None at this time

RECENT/UPCOMING MEETINGS AND DATES OF INTEREST:

- Documents and Species Listing Proposals Uploaded to the CITES [CoP20 website](#): June 27 (some documents still await uploading.)
- Ramsar CoP15: 23 July 23 - 31
- IUCN World Conservation Congress: October 8 - 15
- CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) 27: October 20 - 24
- CITES CoP20: November 24 - December 5
- Convention on Migratory Species CoP15: March 23 - 26, 2026

Updates

RAMSAR

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands CoP15 met in July. They approved the fifth Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2034. They also discussed topics such as waterbird population estimates, regional Ramsar initiatives, equitable governance, promoting sustainable lifestyles for the wise use of wetlands, the management of urban wetlands, the status of Ramsar sites, and more. Once the final documents are posted, AFWA will share any pertinent information.

CBD

Upcoming meetings include the 27th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the 17th CoP, which will be held in Yerevan, Armenia in the last quarter of 2026. AFWA will keep Directors informed about issues of importance.

Road to CITES CoP20

The CITES Technical Work Group—comprised of Stewart Liley (Western), Carolyn Caldwell (Midwest), Buddy Baker (Southeastern), Gordon Batcheller (Northeast), and Deb Hahn (AFWA)—has begun reviewing species listing proposals and related documents submitted for CoP20. Over the coming months, the group will collaborate with states, provinces, and territories to shape (continued next page)

IUCN

The online discussion on the motions has concluded, and the final text for 101 motions is now available for electronic voting. Voting will take place from August 27 to September 10. AFWA will be submitting a vote to approve, disapprove, or abstain on each motion. Your input is essential in guiding how AFWA should vote.

The following are particularly (continued next page)



significant motions.

- [Protection and restoration of diverse native grasslands](#)
- [Conservation and sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism](#)
- [For a protection of glaciers and post-glacial ecosystems](#)
- [Wetlands conservation to tackle climate and biodiversity crises](#)
- [Synergistic delivery of multilateral commitments on coastal ecosystems](#)
- [Mobilising the role of wild animals in ecosystems](#)
- [Preventing population impacts of wind energy facilities on bats](#)
- [Addressing wildlife trafficking and seizure of live wild animals](#)
- [Updating the IUCN policy on the sustainable use](#)
- [Enhancing sustainable tourism practices](#)
- [Advancing the sustainable management-use and trade of wild species](#)
- [Ensure the effective management of protected and conserved areas](#)
- [Advancing the One Health approach](#)
- [Implementation One Health](#)
- [Action for threatened freshwater fishes through ex situ conservation](#)
- [Conservation of the Critically Endangered scalloped hammerhead shark](#)
- [Increasing participation of subnational governments](#)

A huge thank you to Christie Curley for her support of the International Relations Committee and international conservation work.



positions. They are working closely with partners to advance member priorities and gather scientific and policy information. Among the listing proposals submitted are several involving species native to the U.S. and Canada, including:

- All *Anguilla* species: inclusion in Appendix II, with a delayed entry into effect until June 5, 2027
- Several manta and devil ray species: transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I
- Oceanic whitetip shark: transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I
- All gulper shark species: inclusion in Appendix II
- Select sea cucumber species: inclusion in Appendix II
- Genus-wide listings for *Crotalus* and *Sistrurus*: inclusion in Appendix II
- American ginseng: exempt products from artificially cultivated ginseng
- Peregrine falcon: transfer from Appendix I to Appendix II (submitted by the U.S. and Canada)

Meet the new Canadian Co-Chair, Celine Davis

We are excited to welcome Celine Davis, Executive Director of the Biodiversity and Ecosystems Branch for the Province of British Columbia. Director Davis is also a Ex Officio voting member of the AFWA Executive Committee.

CONTACTS

U.S. Co-Chair

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