



AFWA International Relations Committee

2025-2026 Work Plan

Guidelines: Each AFWA Committee, Subcommittee and Workgroup is required to review their charge and develop a work plan at the AFWA Annual Meeting and finalize in early October. The purpose of the work plan is to improve communication and effectiveness of committee work and enable committee chairs and the Executive Committee to evaluate their status annually.

Committee Work Plan		
Date: September 2025		
Committee Name: International Relations		
Co-Chair: Ryan Brown (Virginia)	Co-Chair: Celine Davis (British Colombia)	Staff: Deb Hahn
Committee Charge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop AFWA positions on all appropriate international matters including agreements, treaties, conventions, regulations and initiatives such as International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and its specialist groups and especially on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Fauna and Flora (CITES) • Further Canadian and Mexican involvement, develop relations with Central and South American and Caribbean nations, and explore contact with other nations across the globe. • Monitor and participate, as needed, in the relevant Conventions, agreements and treaties such as the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Ramsar Convention, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), IUCN, etc. • Serve as AFWA’s source, sounding board and integrator of information and discussion about international issues. • Increase the number of voices informing discussions, positions, and products. 		
Changes to the Charge:		
List Major Activities and Objectives Accomplished During the Last Year: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Represented U.S. State agencies — and, where applicable, Canadian Provinces and Territories — in CITES meetings (see details under Work Group activities). 2. Supported the 41 states participating in Southern Wings by advancing new projects, launching the <i>Full Annual Cycle Online Guide</i>, hosting webinars, and supporting the President’s Task Force — including finalizing its recommendations for the 2025 AFWA meeting. 3. Participated in meetings of the IUCN U.S. National Committee. 4. Engaged with the Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) on international issues and provided regular updates through the International Relations Committee. 		

5. Actively contributed to debates and initiatives of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group.
6. Reviewed proposals submitted to the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) program.
7. Engaged with partners and contributed to positions of the CBD Advisory Group on Subnational Governments.
8. Coordinated with the U.S. Department of State on matters related to CITES, Ramsar, IUCN, and other multilateral environmental agreements.
9. Began planning and preparation for both the IUCN World Conservation Congress and CITES CoP20.
10. Reviewed and discussed IUCN motions with members, incorporating their feedback into motion texts and voting recommendations. Shared final recommendations with partners and cast votes on behalf of the membership.

List Activities and Objectives that will be Accomplished in the Coming Year:

1. Represent AFWA at CITES CoP20, as well as the 2026 Standing Committee and Animals Committee meetings.
2. Participate in the IUCN World Conservation Congress, including active engagement on motions to be debated and voted on.
3. Continue supporting implementation of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) through targeted engagement, including participation in SBSTTA meetings as needed.
4. Support involvement with the CBD's Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments.
5. Engage in discussions and initiatives at the 2025 and/or 2026 Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management.
6. Contribute to AFWA's engagement at the upcoming CMS CoP and future CBD meetings.
7. Collaborate with partners on cross-border conservation issues, as opportunities arise.
8. Coordinate with AFWA staff on policy and legislative efforts related to pandemic prevention and wildlife trade, use, and consumption, as needed.
9. Support Southern Wings, including efforts to secure new funding partnerships.
10. Engage with WHSRN, America's Flyway Framework, and associated flyway investment strategies.
11. Maintain collaboration with the Canadian Wildlife Directors Committee (CWDC) and other Canadian partners on relevant conventions and initiatives.
12. Participate in the Joint Management Committee meeting, if held.
13. Provide regular updates on International Relations Committee activities through written communications and update documents.

Comments:

Workgroup Work Plan

Date: September 2025

Workgroup Name: CITES Technical Work Group	
Members: Gordon Batcheller: Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Carolyn Caldwell: Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Buddy Baker: Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Stewart Liley: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies	Staff: Deb Hahn
Workgroup Charge: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To inform State, Provincial, and Territorial fish and wildlife agency directors of policy developments affecting conservation at an international (i.e., through CITES) scale. 2. To formulate and advocate for policy positions reflecting the interests of State, Provincial and Territorial fish and wildlife agencies in international forums. 3. To formulate and advocate for federal policies (e.g., U.S. and Canadian) that reflect State, Provincial, and Territorial fish and wildlife agency interests. 4. To provide biological and administrative information to assist the federal governments in executing their international responsibilities. 5. To minimize unnecessary oversight and restrictions to State, Provincial and Territorial fish and wildlife agency authority because of policies adopted under international conventions (i.e., CITES). 6. To support sustainable use principles and the tenets of the North American Model internationally. 	
Changes to Charge: None	
List Major Activities and Objectives Accomplished During the Last Year: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminated information on CITES and gathered information from the state agencies on CITES issues to inform USFWS positions in preparation for the Animals and Standing Committee. 2. Met with the USFWS in Washington DC. 3. Participated in 2023/2024 Federal CITES Interagency Coordination meetings. 4. Participated in the CITES Animals and Standing Committee meetings. 5. Participated in International Relations Committee meetings at the North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference and the AFWA's Annual Meeting. 6. Provided a meeting summary of CITES related matters and update the state Directors at their respective regional association meeting and to division and section chiefs, and other state staff. 7. Partnered with the USFWS to develop an addendum to the turtle trade assessment for US native turtle species. 8. Participated in an international working groups. 	
List Activities and Objectives that Will be Accomplished in the Coming Year: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare for, develop positions on important issues, and participate in CoP20 and the 2026 Animal and Standing Committee meetings as needed. 2. Disseminate information on CITES and gather information from the State, Provincial, and Territorial agencies on CITES issues to provide input to the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Service when applicable. 	

3. Collaborate with the USFWS leading up to CoP20.
4. Meet once a year with the Provinces and Territories (likely at CWDC) to discuss important and relevant CITES issues.
5. Communicate regularly with CWDC to discuss issues of importance and relevance to the State, Provincial and Territorial agencies.
6. Participate in US CITES Interagency Coordination meetings.
7. Provide an annual summary of CITES-related matters and update the State, Provincial, and Territorial directors at their respective regional association meeting(s), and other state agency staff, and through the CWDC.
8. Participate in International Relations Committee meetings at the North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference and the AFWA Annual Meeting.
9. Continue efforts to assist government regulatory agencies and turtle population biologists in making informed decisions and recommendations relative to state, national and international issues pertaining to turtle management, regulation, and trade.
10. Continue to emphasize the importance of modernizing the USFWS's permitting system, including development of electronic permitting, to expedite permits for State agencies as well as constituents needing to ship CITES listed species or products internationally. Assist with improvements to the permitting process where possible.

Describe any Changes you Anticipate to the Work Group: N/A

Date Workgroup Formed: 1994

Expected Termination Date: ongoing

Comments