

Written Comments by Dr. Martin Bilio regarding his contributions to the open discussion of the General Assembly

1. *Expression of appreciation for the heavy work load shouldered by the founders of the WSCS, in particular Harald Rosenthal, Sergej Doroshov, Ron Bruch, Paolo Bronzi, Jörn Gessner, etc., and congratulations on their successful efforts.*
2. *Is the Russian sturgeon database of which Vera Krilova of VNIRO told me in 1999 in Astrakhan now connected with FISHBASE? – Michail Chebanov said that it is restricted to a few aspects only, e.g. morphological characters.*
3. *Would the WSCS be ready to collaborate in Phase II of the TACIS component of the Caspian Environment Programme funded by the European Commission?*
4. *Is it correct that the WSCS is in a position to express opinions more freely than a government-determined organisation such as CITES (in a way similar to that of the EAS with respect to FAO)?*
5. *How can the WSCS deal with Governments, i.e. how much influence could WSCS exert when critical issues are concerned?*
6. *One should strive after having training courses in scientific English language funded by international organisations, especially for native speakers of Russian and Chinese! – Information obtained from the EC after the meeting: No possibilities for extra funding, must be incorporated in cooperation projects. (Will be considered in the current project implementation offer to the EC in which I myself am involved.)*
7. *The approach to controlled reproduction should be different according to the purpose – when stocking of natural waters is the objective, domestication effects must be avoided; when production for human consumption is aimed at, such effects are desirable. – According to Harald Rosenthal, this is already being considered by the WSCS.*
8. *How could sturgeons be influenced by the ctenophore Mnemiopsis leidyi? Detailed research on food relations in the Caspian Sea is needed!*
9. *There is considerable unpublished material available in Russian fishery institutions (in contrast to Academy institutions) the publication of which should be promoted.*
10. *Libraries of fishery institutions of NIS (Newly Independent States = ex-components of the Soviet Union) are in great need of western literature (journals as well as books).*
11. *Iran is in possession of important scientific information in Persian, thus not accessible to western scientists (example: first appearance of the invasive ctenophore Mnemiopsis leidyi in the Caspian Sea recorded **four** years earlier **according to** Persian reports than **to other sources**). Efforts should be made to achieve more information exchange at the scientific level.*