

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Twelfth meeting of the Plants Committee
Leiden (The Netherlands), 13-17 May 2002

Regional reports and reports on regional meetings

NORTH AMERICA

A) General Information

- ◆ Name of the Member (author of the Report): **Bertrand von ARX (Canada)**
- ◆ Name of alternate Representative: **Patricia Davila (Mexico)**
- ◆ Number of Parties in the Region: **3 (Canada, Mexico, United States of America)**
- ◆ Number of other Scientific Authorities responding to communications: **2 / 2**
- ◆ Names of other institutions or NGO's contacted for CITES work during the period.
 - American Orchid Society (AOS),
CFS (Canadian Forest Service),
IUCN/SSC Carnivorous Plants SG,
IUCN/SSC North American Orchid SG
SSC Plant Conservation Committee
etc.

B) List of Items

Introduction

Following the tradition in this region with few Parties, but great distances, work has been performed mostly at a national level. Communication between the Scientific Authorities in the region was slightly less intensive than previously mainly because the United States were disconnected from access to the Internet and including external email on December 6, 2001. Hence no email communication was not possible. This decision was only lifted at the end of March 2002. All traffic had to be either by phone or fax (as in the old days). It reminded to some of us of the difficulties that some Parties have to face on a daily basis.

FOLLOW-UP ON AGENDA ITEMS SINCE LAST PLANTS COMMITTEE

- ❖ **Regional Directory** Several changes occurred since last update, especially in Mexico and the United States were new Chiefs of both the Management Authority (Paul Thomas) and the Scientific Authority (Roddy Gabel) have been appointed.
- ❖ **CITES Carnivorous Plant Checklist** The checklist came finally out of print in early March 2002.
- ❖ **CITES Plant Production Systems** - At PC11, the Regional Representatives on the Plants Committee were tasked with acting as focal points for the collation of information pertaining to the various plant production processes. The USFWS compiled information on the plant production systems utilized in the United States and elsewhere and provided the information to Canada, the North American Regional Representative on the Plants Committee. This information was consolidated with data from other sources and forwarded to the Secretariat for consideration at PC12.
- ❖ **Tree Species (Decision 11.116)** - At PC11 all Parties were requested to send up-to-date data to the Regional Representative of Europe (Netherlands) regarding PC 11 Doc. 13.3 and the *Contribution to an evaluation of tree species using the new CITES listing criteria*, prepared by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre. The United States submitted detailed comments contributed by the U.S. Forest Service and the USFWS. Canada also sent comments provided by the Canadian Forest Service although none of the species listed are native to Canada.

Activities reported by Canada

- ❖ Canada launched a **new Website (www.cites.ca)** which has the aim to compile all information on the implementation of the Convention in Canada. Explanation is given on the issuance of permits, on the native species listed in CITES and it provides the different contacts at federal and Provincial level. Permits application forms can be downloaded and in a future phase the permitting should be accessible on-line. (contact: cites@ec.gc.ca)
- ❖ A **national CITES Workshop** was organised in Ottawa in November 2001. The major goal was to reinforce the network of CITES related agencies and persons, improve communication across the country and coordinate implementation of the Convention. Many Management and Scientific Authorities of both Federal and Provincial / Territorial government attended. Many activities were discussed, such as collection of scientific data, issuance of permits, Non Detriment Findings, new technologies (DNA analysis, websites), registration of captive breeding operation and scientific institutions amongst many other. Resolutions were prepared and consensus was reached to hold similar meeting on a yearly basis with more targeted topics.

Activities reported by the United States

- ❖ **Trade in Mexican Cactus Seeds** - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has explored artificial propagation and reintroduction programs for Threatened and Endangered U.S. cactus species and provided Mexico with a list of resource contacts in the United States to support the preparation of a proposal on sustainable harvesting of seeds and artificial propagation of cacti in Mexico. As part of this collaborative effort with Mexico, on November 30, 2001, the USFWS provided the Mexican Management and Scientific Authorities with copies of the Mexican CITES permits that accompanied shipments of cacti exported from Mexico to the United States from 1996 to 2001.

- ❖ **Mahogany Working Group** - The United States, as a major importer of mahogany, attended the 1st meeting of the Mahogany Working Group in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, in October 2001. At the meeting, the United States presented its national report regarding its imports of bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*).
- ❖ **Orchidaceae Review** - At PC11 a Working Group was established under the leadership of the United States and the American Orchid Society (ADS) to carry out a process similar to that which produced the list of Cactaceae and other taxa commonly referred to as 'supermarket plants'. The USFWS is working closely with the AOS on this project and will present a proposal at PC12.
- ❖ **Taxus wallichiana Review** -The USFWS has contacted the Scientific and Management Authorities in several range countries where *Taxus* species occur and are harvested for the international market. Specifically, we have asked for any biological or trade information on yew species. The USFWS continues to review the issues surrounding the international trade in *Taxus* biomass and derivatives. The results will be presented for discussion at PC12.
- ❖ **Guaiacum sanctum Project** - At PC 11 Mexico was asked to conduct a status survey of the Mexican population of *Guaiacum* species. Mexico has since shared a formal proposal with the United States and the U.S. Forest Service has committed \$10,000 to this project.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

One regional meeting will be held from April 22-25, 2002 as part of the North American *Trilateral Committee for Wildlife & Ecosystem Conservation and Management* (aka Trilateral Meeting). The venue is Puerto Vallarta in Mexico. The Mexican authorities have organised and additional day for a meeting of the Scientific Authorities of the region to share experiences in order to improve the cooperation at regional level. At the main meeting several issues of regional importance will be addressed through the "CITES Table". The meeting usually bring together the Management, Scientific and enforcement Authorities of all three Parties. Many other scientist also attend with concurrent interests such a Migratory birds or biodiversity. It is always a good opportunity to share concerns and knowledge regarding CITES species.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Two major activities come easily in mind just before the deadline for sending documents to be considered by the next CoP.

- a) Preparation of the next COP: each Party should take very seriously the responsibility to comment on the proposals. Members of the Plants Committee should make sure that all Scientific Authorities in their region are aware of their role in this review. Members of the PC should be ready to be able to provide – through their regional experts - general information on plant species which occur naturally in their region as well as to share any knowledge of trade in such plant species between countries of their region and more broadly.
- b) A new COP means possible changes in the composition of the membership of the Committees. As those changes will not be final before they are adopted by the COP, it is very important for all members of the PC to be ready to hand-over all information regarding the regional representation to his/her successor in the Committee. Duties of the members and alternates have been discussed several times in the PC and the importance of a proper continuity in the work of the representatives was also highlighted. Each member should hence be ready even before the COP to forward the relevant files.