

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



Sixty-second meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 23-27 July 2012

Regional matters

Reports of Regional Representatives

OCEANIA

This document has been submitted by Australia as the Regional Representative for Oceania².

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- Regional Representative: Australia
- Alternate Regional Representative: Fiji
- Number of Parties in the Region: 8 (Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu)
- Number of Parties providing information for this Report: 5

Parties providing information for this Report: Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Samoa.

2. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the activities undertaken by the Parties of the Oceania region to implement and enforce CITES during the period between the sixty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (August 2011) to date.

3. OVERVIEW OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

AUSTRALIA

Australia continued as the Oceania regional representative on the Standing Committee (SC) with Ms Deb Callister, Assistant Secretary, Wildlife Branch, Australian Government Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, representing the region. Australia participates in several CITES working groups.

Education and awareness activities

Australia has continued its targeted education, awareness and training activities in relation to CITES fauna and flora obligations. In particular, activities have focused on specific stakeholders including complementary medicine practitioners and traders, Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (ACBPS) officers and the general public. Activities include:

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² The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

- The Australian CITES Management Authority presented eleven interactive training seminars to ACBPS officers across Australia since August 2011.
- In October 2011, the Australian CITES Management Authority undertook awareness raising activities with the Chinese Medicine Industry Council of Australia on species used in complementary medicines and CITES and Australian regulatory requirements.
- Australia has continued to work closely with the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association in promoting the Australian Endangered Species Certification Scheme (ESCS). The ESCS recognises efforts undertaken by complementary medicine practitioners and traders to protect endangered species – each certifying that products they use and sell do not contain illegally acquired parts or derivatives of wildlife (see http://www.acupuncture.org.au/Endangered_Species_Certification_Scheme.aspx).
- The Australian CITES Management Authority wrote to Australian Museums and Art Galleries in January 2012 to provide information on CITES import/export requirements.
- Australia has updated the wildlife-trade related pages on the Management Authority's internet site.

Policy development

Australia is currently finalising Australian operational procedures relating to the treatment of:

- *Hoodia gordonii* (Hoodia), and
- imports of CITES wildlife specimens categorised as personal or household effects or personal baggage;

which will be made available via the internet to the public, import/exporters and other CITES regulatory agencies.

Amendment of national legislation

On the basis of recommendations made by the independent review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) (Australia's CITES-implementing legislation), the Australian Government is currently drafting amendments to the EPBC Act to facilitate streamlined administration and accreditation of importers and exporters of wildlife products. The provisions ensure Australia's international obligations under CITES are better met.

Enforcement

Australia has a strong commitment to investigating and prosecuting illegal wildlife trade activity. During the 2011-12 financial year, over 1500 seizure and caution notices were issued by Australian enforcement authorities for the import of suspected CITES specimens without appropriate permission.

Australia undertook its largest wildlife seizure on record in August 2011, seizing close to 400 alleged illegal CITES wildlife products from a single individual. The seizure followed detailed monitoring and investigation work by enforcement officers. The case is still under investigation.

Officials within the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (CITES Management Authority of Australia) attended the first INTERPOL International Chiefs of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (ICECE) meeting in Lyon, France (March, 2012). Officials from the Department now hold a number of positions associated with the ICECE including:

- Sitting on the temporary international advisory board which will review the outcomes of the ICECE summit and steer collective international efforts on environmental security, via INTERPOL's Environment Crime Programme.
- Secretary of INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Committee.
- Vice Chair of INTERPOL's Wildlife Crime Working Group.

Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking

Australia has taken over the role as Chair of the Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT). Australia holds the position of Chair from May 2012 until 2014. CAWT brings together like-minded government and non-government parties to combat wildlife trafficking on a global scale. CAWT partners have agreed to a three-pronged approach of: jointly and separately, reducing consumer demand for illegally traded wildlife; improving.

Australian coral taxonomy

In response to concerns by some importing countries about the scientific names specified on Australian export permits for some coral species, where the species name and distribution does not reflect the information in UNEP-WCMC's CITES Species Database, Australia developed its own list of 'acceptable' species names for corals occurring in Australian waters. The list was compiled by the Australian Biological Resources Study, derived from data supplied by UNEP-WCMC, and is available on the Australian CITES Management Authority's website at <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-trade/permits/pubs/notice-cites-annex-a.pdf>.

It is intended to assist exporters, as well as permit officers, to use the 'acceptable' species names and avoid the use of synonyms. The list is alphabetical list by Class of Australian corals listed under CITES, and includes 'greyed-out' names that are synonyms that should not be used. Most coral specimens need to be identified to species level, although some are acceptable if only identified to genus level in accordance with CITES Notification to the Parties 2010/014.

Online permit application and workflow

The Australian CITES Management Authority is developing a new permits database that will enable online applications and payment, and an internal workflow system for assessing and issuing permits. It is intended that this database will also enable traders to acquit their own permits following import or export, and will have linkages to the Australian Customs and Border Protection's Integrated Cargo System. It is further planned to transfer permit data to the UNEP-WCMC's EPIX database; trial data have been transmitted. Discussions and further enhancements are ongoing, including examining the potential for e-permitting.

FIJI

Legislation:

- Fiji is currently reviewing the Endangered and Protected Species (EPS) 2002 Act Listing (Schedule I &11)
- Final consultation stage.
- Drafting of cabinet paper for the new EPS Species Listing.

Implementation & Enforcement:

- CITES enforcement training was conducted to appoint new CITES enforcement officers to help enforce the Endangered and Protected Species (EPS) Act 2002. Participants for the training included: Police Officers, Military Officers, Customs Officers, Biosecurity Officers Fisheries Officers and Forestry Officers.
- Complaints have been received on some of the Captive Breeding facilities
- Fiji has actively and continually issued permits for CITES listed specimens (as outlined below).

Permit and Revenue Collected

Tabua-whale tooth (*Phyceter macrocephalus*)

Quarter	Quantity exported	No. of permits issued	Revenue Collected
Q 3 (2011)	45 pieces	31	\$953.25
Q 4 (2011)	71 pieces	42	\$1291.50
Q 1 (2012)	68 pieces	43	\$1322.25
Q 2 (2012)	45 pieces	30	\$922.50

Coral and live rock

Quarter	Quantity exported	Revenue collected
Q 3 (2011)	Coral: 19,101 pieces Live rock: 154,137 kg	\$3,906.00
Q 4 (2011)	Coral: 19,199 pieces Live rock: 212,660 kg	\$2,952.00
Q 1 (2012)	Coral: 15,471 pieces Live rock: 215,132 kg	\$4,028.25
Q 2 (2012)	Coral: 18,190 pieces Live rock: 240,338 kg	\$4,367.00

Total Revenue Collected: \$30.641.00

Reporting:

- Fiji has submitted annual reports for 2008, 2009 and 2010 to the Secretariat. Fiji has also completed the 2011 report and is in the process of submitting it to secretariat.

Awareness and Education:

- Fiji has launched the CITES Guidance Manual for enforcement officers and also the Guidelines for making Non-Detrimental Finding (NDF) for CITES Appendix II listed species in Fiji.
- Awareness on the implementation of the Endangered and Protected Species (EPS) Act 2002 was executed based on requests from stakeholders and resource owners.

Internal Meetings & Workshops:

- A quarterly meeting for the Fiji Island Scientific Council and the Fiji Islands Management Authority is being held every quarter. Two meetings have already been conducted for both committees for 2012.
- Fiji attended the Regional CITES workshop that was organized by SPREP and the CITES Secretariat that was held in Nadi from the 5- 7 March 2012.

NEW ZEALAND

Capacity-building in the Oceania region

The New Zealand Wildlife Enforcement Group secured funding for two workshops on *Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade* in the Pacific region. The project takes a "whole-of-government" approach to preventing illegal wildlife trade, in that representatives from various New Zealand government agencies (NZ Customs Service, Department of Conservation, Ministry for Primary Industries) work closely with representatives from government agencies in the recipient country. The training workshops are supported in part by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (Oceania Office). Please see 6. Meetings and Workshops for further detail of New Zealand's work with the Cook Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa and the Solomon Islands.

Participation in CITES activities and projects

New Zealand continues to actively participate in various CITES Working Groups, including those on: Introduction from the Sea; the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade process; Personal and Household Effects; Purpose Codes; and CITES Criteria (to amend Appendix II).

Enforcement

The New Zealand Wildlife Enforcement Group has secured additional funding to continue its project for the design, publication and distribution of species identification and border control manuals. These manuals are specific to species traded in the Oceania region. Thus far, ID sheets have been published for birds, reptiles, marine species and invertebrates, as well as for related issues such as traditional medicines, smuggling techniques, and permit verification. These have been distributed to border agency representatives in 25 countries.

PALAU

No input provided.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Papua New Guinea has only been able to provide limited input regarding their progress with CITES implementation. Funding for the Papua New Guinea Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife and Enforcement Branch, has been significantly reduced over the last few years, and it is estimated that only two officers remain in the Branch. The Department has also recently experienced difficulties with maintaining appropriate accommodation due to extenuating circumstances.

Papua New Guinea wish to see assistance for Parties to establish database systems for CITES permits included in the capacity building framework (Agenda Item 19). PNG, and other Pacific Islands Parties such as Samoa and Solomon Islands, do not have databases that are automatically updated when CITES permits are granted. Instead, officers in DEC manually update their records every year in order to produce the annual report for the CITES Secretariat.

SAMOA

Legislation and policy:

Samoa is in the process of preparing a final draft of the Environment Management and Conservation Bill 2012 to fully incorporate its CITES obligations in national legislation. The section specific to CITES focuses on the composition and functions of the Management Authority, composition and functions of the Scientific Authority, Secretariat to the Management and Scientific Authorities, permits and exemptions, offences, enforcement, confiscation and penalties. Although Samoa has not yet finalised its CITES national legislation, enforcements are carried out under the Samoa Marine Wildlife Protection Regulation 2009 through assessments and issuance of permits for exportation of CITES listed species.

Awareness:

Brochures and posters on wildlife protection and management were developed with the assistance from the New Zealand Department of Conservation and translated to Samoan for the public. These awareness materials were displayed during the Ministry's national events.

Information on CITES through presentations have also been made during communities and public consultation. Articles on the Convention have also been published in the National newspapers as part of the Ministry's awareness program.

The Government of Samoa would like to acknowledge the New Zealand Department of Conservation for its continued technical assistance and support.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

From 1 January 2012, the Solomon Islands Government implemented a ban on the export of live dolphins. The ban was implemented in response to the call for conservation of marine species as specified in the National Coalition and Rural Advancement (NCRA) Policy Statement and respective strategic and corporate plans of the Environment Ministry and Fisheries Ministry.

VANUATU

No input provided.

4. ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Australia, as Standing Committee representative, maintains ongoing contact with Oceania CITES Parties, including distributing relevant reports, documents and Notifications to Oceania Parties for information and comment, and consultation prior to CITES Standing Committee meetings. For example, Australia consulted relevant Parties in Oceania with ratings in Category 2 and Category 3 under the National Legislation Project, to help coordinate their responses to CITES Notification 2012/036 on national laws for implementation of the Convention. Responses to the Notification were successfully provided by Samoa and the Solomon Islands. Australia also updated an Oceania regional directory of CITES authorities, and other relevant contacts (i.e. intergovernmental and non-government organisations).

Australia has represented the region in numerous fora, including:

- The Agarwood workshop in Kuwait from 3 – 6 October 2011, where Dr Greg Leach co-chaired the scientific issues sessions.
- The joint sessions of the 26th meeting of the Animals Committee and the 20th meeting of the Plants Committee held in Dublin in March 2012.
- A meeting of the Introduction from the Sea Working Group, hosted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in West Virginia, in April 2012.

5. REGIONAL COOPERATION

Regional cooperation in Oceania has been effective, with collaboration and liaison between Parties within the region. Much of the regional cooperation has occurred through bilateral capacity-building workshops and meetings (refer to 6. Meetings and Workshops). Of note, New Zealand should be commended for their role in undertaking capacity-building with Pacific Island Nations.

6. MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Food and Agriculture Organisation workshop on sea cucumber

In November 2011, 15 fisheries officers from 13 Pacific Island countries (including Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) attended a regional workshop "Sea cucumber fisheries: an ecosystem approach to management in the Pacific". The 4-day Food and Agriculture Organisation workshop was held in Fiji, and the wide attendance highlights the regional interest in sea cucumber fishery management.

Prevention of illegal wildlife trade workshops in the Cook Islands and Vanuatu

The New Zealand Wildlife Enforcement Group has secured funding for two workshops on *Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade* in the Pacific region:

- In March 2012, a workshop was held in Rarotonga, the Cook Islands. The workshop was well attended with 25 participants from the: National Environment Service; Ministry of Marine Resources; Cook Islands Quarantine; Cook Islands Customs Service; Cook Islands Police; and Cook Islands Aviation Security.
- In June 2012, a similar workshop was held in Port Vila, Vanuatu. This workshop was attended by participants from the: Vanuatu Department of Environment Protection and Conservation; Vanuatu Police; Vanuatu Customs Department; Vanuatu Department of Livestock/Quarantine; Vanuatu Department of Fisheries; and Vanuatu Airports, Ltd.
 - Three participants from previous *Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade* workshops were invited to the Vila workshop to provide an opportunity for peer educator training. During the week in Vanuatu, these participants (from the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Solomon Islands) received parallel training on topics such as public speaking, information-sharing techniques, co-facilitation skills, team building, and monitoring/evaluation.
 - The idea is for these participants to feel more comfortable going back to their home countries and disseminating what they have learned about preventing illegal wildlife trade.

CITES implementation workshops in Samoa and the Solomon Islands

The New Zealand CITES Management Authority has obtained funding to provide in-country CITES implementation assistance to Samoa and the Solomon Islands. This project is intended to follow-up the workshops held by the New Zealand Wildlife Enforcement Group in 2010-2011, and will provide additional CITES implementation support as identified by the Samoan and Solomon Islands governments during those workshops.

Two workshops will be held in each country: the first one is to provide in-depth support to advance CITES implementation, and the second will provide an opportunity to follow up and "trouble-shoot" any specific implementation issues.

- The first workshop in Samoa was held in March 2012. This workshop was attended by representatives of the: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Office of the Attorney-General; Ministry of Finance and Revenue (Customs); Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Fisheries and Quarantine); National University of Samoa; and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.
 - The focus was on providing comprehensive input regarding Management Authority functions and draft legislation to implement CITES.
- The first workshop in the Solomon Islands was held in June 2012. The workshop was attended by representatives of the: Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management, and Meteorology; Ministry of Forestry; Customs and Excise; Ministry of Fisheries; Transnational Crime Unit; and Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership.

- The focus of this workshop was on providing comprehensive input regarding Management Authority functions and fostering effective interagency collaboration. This workshop also had a one-day component dedicated to dialogue with wildlife exporting companies.
- Two local companies that export wildlife (butterflies and birds) attended the workshop to discuss the nature of harvesting and exports, capacity-building opportunities, and ways to enhance sustainability of trade.

The second series of workshops to be held in Samoa and the Solomon Islands will take place in November/December 2012, and aims to troubleshoot any implementation issues. This workshop will also assist with the preparation for the next Conference of the Parties in June 2013.

Oceania capacity building and marine species workshop

A multilateral regional capacity-building meeting was held by the CITES Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme in Fiji in March 2012. The workshop provided an opportunity for CITES Parties to meet and discuss issues with implementation of the Convention in the region. Non-Parties within the region were also invited (and attended) as an outreach to encourage further accession to the Convention.

A marine species workshop on non-detriment findings and introduction from the sea was also held at the cessation of the capacity building workshop.

Both workshops were widely attended and well-received by the region and Parties were extremely grateful for the provision of funding by the European Union and the CITES Secretariat

7. PROBLEMS FACED BY THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

A number of factors have impacted Australia's ability to maintain communication with Parties within the region, particularly Pacific Island Countries. For example, Pacific Island Countries face a number of challenges in securing reliable electronic communication (i.e. internet), telecommunications and electricity; and many Pacific Island countries have very small environment agencies, with constrained resources.