UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCE AND TOURISM

COUNTRY REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE (RST) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

PRUNUS AFRICANA

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Tanzania is one among the three countries in East Africa and is located along latitude 1^{o}-12^{o} South and Longitude 29^{o} – 41^{o} East. Tanzania has an area of about 945,087 km^2 of which 886,040 km^2 constitutes dry land and 590,050 km^2 water bodies. It has varied physical and climatic conditions. In some areas at higher altitudes the rainfall is reliable, temperature is low and the vegetation is lush, where as in lowland areas are generally hot and humid. This wide range of conditions provides an environment for many species of plants and animals.

Prunus africana, (syn. *Pygeum africana*) is an indigenous tree species with natural occurrence in the upland rainforests from West to South Africa (Mbuya *et al*, 1994) and moist *Brachystegia* woodlands. Tanzania is one of the countries in Africa where *Prunus africana* is found and is also one of the seven countries/states identified as of urgent concern for the conservation of *Prunus africana*. It is found naturally growing in Kilimanjaro, Pare, East & West Usambaras, Nguru, Uluguru Mts, Mufindi and Mahenge escarpments. The species is also recorded in the Udzungwa Mts, Southern Highlands, and Western to central Tanzania (Ruffo, *et al*. 1996, Shangali, *et al*. 1998 and Zilihona, *et al* 1998.

2.0 Harvest Technique and post harvest recovery

The barks extraction is restricted to harvesting matured trees. According to harvesting procedures provided by Ministry of Natural Resource and Tourism (MNRT), trees which are of minimum of forty years of age are selected. This is because barks from the selected trees contains higher medicinal compound than young trees. To date there are no specific

mechanisms involved in bark extraction. Currently, there is evidence of using local method for debarking, i.e. the use of machette and sharp knives. The extraction involves removing half to three quarter of barks from the mature tree. Then the tree is left for some years to allow regrow of the bark. But in some areas local people use soil to prevent fungal infections and speed up regrow of the bark. In the whole process no single tree is felled down during the extraction.

3.0 Trade.

Like trade in any other tree species, trading in *Prunus africana* currently requires trading procedures including permits and licence from respective authorities. There is limited information readily available on statistics on the volume of such trade. However, some data from Forestry and Beekeeping Division (FBD) under Ministry of Natural Resource and Tourism (MNRT) shows that fifteen (15) tonnes were exported to Spain and a total of forty (40) tonnes of *Prunus africana* barks to have exported to United Kingdom by last year (2007). On other hand, there are some companies are involved in exporting *Prunus Africana* to different countries in the world. For example The TABECO International Ltd and Afro-Scan International Ltd both based in Dar es Salaam are exporting *P.africana* to countries like USA, China, France, and Germany.

To date there is no evidence of commercial harvesting and trading that is going on after receiving request for more information on *Prunus africana* from CITES. However, in 2006/07 some companies (TABECO and Afro-Scan) were given harvesting licences and there are barks of 80 tonnes which are not yet exported..

Currently, Tanzania Forestry Research Institute (TAFORI) has been assigned by MNRT to conduct trading status of *Prunus africana* of which preparation have been started.

4.0 Biology and Status of the species.

In most cases in Tanzania it occurs in tropical mountain forest (montane) dominated by high rainfall, at altitudes of 1500-2300m (Mbuya et al.1994). In the high forests foliage is open, branch often pendulous, but in grassland the tree is more rounded and compact. *Prunus africana* is found growing naturally in Kilimanjaro, Pare, East & West Usambaras, Nguru, and Uluguru Mountains. The trees also found in Mufindi and Mahenge escarpments. The species has also been recorded in the Udzungwa Mountains, Southern Highlands and Western to central Tanzania. (Annex 1)

The MNRT has already assigned the Tanzanian Forestry Research Institute (TAFORI) to carry out an Inventory to come up with the status and biology of this tree species The reconnaissance survey have been started.

5.0 Management.

The **MNRT** has received comments from **CITES** on the current trend of *P .africana* bark trade in the country. **FBD** is now preparing for the inventory to be carried out in order to come up with the rapid assessment of the species stock and distribution in the country. The inventory will come up with proper recommendation on sustainable *Prunus africana* trade in Tanzania.

6.0 Control

The FBD asks for no any harvesting to be carried until the requested recommendation from CITES has been completed .This will help in getting allocation for harvesting and the amount to be harvested as directed by authorities like District Forest Officers (DFO).

7.0 Monitoring

Approval of the export is the only way of monitoring the trade of *Prunus africana*. At the point of harvesting one must go to the village and district committee to have allocation the amount requested. Thereafter s/he has to go to the District Forest Officer (DFO) to get a harvesting licence. Finally at the point of exportation he has to go to the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNRT-FBD) to get an export permit. At point of shipping, the product has to be inspected and graded and the Ministry has selected specific depots to undertake these tasks i.e. ZAMCAGO and NASACO. Finally the product will be scanned in the process of shipping. On other hand at the Airports there are Officers from Wildlife Division who finally inspect the product before exporting by Air. For this case monitoring system has been instituted and is very effective in Tanzania.

8.0 Incentives for domestication

Prunus africana is an important source of income but so far there are no incentives directed towards the local people to domesticate it. However, the current project between TAFORI and the Bioversity International is expected to be the starting point where sites have already been identified for experiment. It is expected that areas around these sites will be the focal point if it comes to an issue of providing incentives for domestication of *prunus africana*.

9.0 Protection from harvest

Extraction of the *P.africana* bark is restricted from harvesting matured trees. According to experience from the FBD-MNRT trees which are forty (40) years are harvested to allow for regeneration from the young trees. In addition trees which are above forty years of age are suitable for harvesting because their bark contains higher medicinal active compound than young trees.

So this regulatory mechanism of extracting barks from older trees guarantees the continuity of this business and ensures environmental protection thus there is no serious environmental destruction.

There is also no harvesting which is allowed to take place in the protected forests instead harvesting is taking place in the plantations which are owned by private individuals or village forests by using the permit from the relevant authority, district or village.

The Tanzanian government through the MNRT is following the guidelines of CITIES for the conservation of *Prunus africana and* the tree has been declared to as one of the endangered tree species and therefore there are regulatory mechanisms for its harvesting and trade have been instituted.

There is no harvesting of trees which is allowed without the Management Plan of the forest concerned and has to be approved by district authority or FBD depending on the ownership status. And above all the certificate from CITES must be provided.

Conclusion

Prunus africana is an important source of income to local community in Tanzania and the national in general. After carrying out inventory and trade status studies, Tanzania will come out with recommendation as requested by CITES and hence improve sustainable harvesting and trade of *Prunus africana.* However, we request the CITES to give special permission to Tanzania to allow the companies to export already harvested barks.

Annex I

Major ecological zones of Tanzania (after Stuart *et al.* 1990) and *P. africana* distribution