

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



Fourteenth meeting of the Plants Committee
Windhoek (Namibia), 16-20 February 2004

Regional reports and updated regional directories (Decisions 12.14 and 12.15)

North America

REGIONAL REPORT

General information

- a) Name of the Representatives (authors of the report): Dr. Patricia Dávila and Mr. Robert R. Gabel
- b) Number of Parties in the Region: 3
- c) Number of Parties responding to communications: 3
- d) Names of other institutions, NGOs contacted for CITES work during the period: CFS (Federal Canadian Forest Service), DFO (Federal Department Fisheries and Oceans), Many Provincial and territorial MAs and SAs, CCRA (Canada Customs and Revenue Agency), CBCN Canadian Botanical Conservation Network), IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plants Specialist Group, TRAFFIC (South America).

Follow-up on agenda items since last Plants Committee meeting (PC13)

1. Regional directories

An updated version of the regional directories of Canada, Mexico and United States of America is presented.

CANADA: Carolina Caceres, former Assistant to the IUCN SSC Chair, is Acting Head of the Scientific Authority. Adrienne Sinclair, Advisor for Plants, is on maternity leave but will participate at future Plants Committee meetings as an observer from Canada.

2. Significant Trade

MEXICO: As a member of PC13 Working Group 4, Mexico took part in the evaluation and sent its comments to the Chair of the Group, on the provisional terms of reference for the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade (drawn up by the Secretariat and revised during PC13) which had been mandated by Decision 12.75, adopted during CoP12 (Santiago, 2002).

3. Criteria review

At PC13, Canada, Mexico and the United States participated in the Criteria Review Working Group charged with testing the applicability of the criteria to amend the CITES Appendices to a variety of plant taxa.

CANADA: tested the applicability of the criteria to *Panax quinquefolius*, in collaboration with the United States, as well as *Taxus brevifolia* and *Populus tremuloides*.

MEXICO: tested the applicability of the criteria to *Strombocactus disciformis* and *Turbinicarpus pseudomacrochele* (Cactaceae). For this purpose, the sheets for both species were drawn up and these were sent together with some comments and the corresponding proposals for modification of the criteria.

United States: tested the applicability of the criteria to *Panax quinquefolius*, in collaboration with Canada, *Dionaea muscipula*, in collaboration with the United Kingdom, and *Pseudophoenix ekmanii*.

4. Non-detriment findings

CANADA: Canada has continued its work on non-detriment findings (NDF). Work since PC13 has involved clarification of roles and responsibilities with the provinces and territories, development of criteria to identify priority species, as well as presentation and training to use the *IUCN Guidelines to assist Scientific Authorities in making non-detriment findings*. An NDF database and internal website has been developed to assist in the process of developing more comprehensive NDF reports. The website enables Scientific Authorities across the country to participate in criteria selection and identification of priority species; to download the IUCN checklist and guidelines; to view example reports (*Panax quinquefolius*, *Ursus arctos*, *Hydrastis canadensis* and *Opuntia* spp.); to track NDF reports under development; and to view progress of working groups established to address challenges in coordinating a national approach and making information available to the public. NDF reports will be made and updated according to this coordinated national strategy for priority species and eventually all Appendix-II native species. NDF reports have recently been initiated for the Canadian CITES-listed fur-bearing species.

5. Amendments to the Appendices

MEXICO: Document PC13 Doc. 13.1 presented by the Secretariat at the 13th meeting of the Plants Committee referred to two Appendix-II timber species (*Caryocar costaricense* and *Oreomunnea pterocarpa*) that might possibly meet the requirements for inclusion in Appendix I. Mexico had carried out a search in CONABIO's databases and consulted the competent authorities on the presence and utilization of and trade in those species in the country. The species *O. pterocarpa*, far from being common, is found only in the State of Chiapas. There is one sterile specimen in the 'MEXU' National Herbarium in Pueblo Nuevo Solistahuacán. The search for *Caryocar costaricense* conformed that the species is not recorded in Mexico, nor are there any imports of it.

6. Mahogany

United States: The United States provided substantial financial support for and attended the 2nd meeting of the Mahogany Working Group (MWG) in October 2003. At that meeting, the delegation of the United States submitted the proposed definition for plywood, which had been discussed and approved at the 13th meeting of the Plants Committee as an interim definition for use by the Parties. The MWG approved the definition and recommended that the United States submit a proposed revision to Resolution Conf. 10.13 on Implementation of the Convention for timber species at the next meeting of the Plants Committee and later for consideration at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The United States is working with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) to identify funding sources for another meeting of the MWG.

MEXICO: Further to the recent listing of bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in Appendix II, Mexico supplied the information required by TRAFFIC South America in the context of its study aimed at promoting proper implementation of the Convention. At the second meeting of the Mahogany Working Group, held in Belem, Brazil, from 6 to 8 October 2003, Mexico presented a national report on this species and took part in discussions on various topics: guidelines for non-detriment findings, development of national and regional programmes for the sustainable management of the species, establishment of quotas, exchange of information and experience relating to the management of the resource, capacity-building and other aspects related to the implementation of the Convention.

7. Revision of Resolutions

United States: The United States chaired a working group to review and propose draft revisions of, as appropriate, the current Resolutions, Conf. 9.19 and Conf. 11.11, pertaining to trade in plants.

The group consisted of both Management Authorities and Scientific Authorities of countries representing the three official languages of the Convention. Revisions to Resolution Conf. 9.19 were limited to clarification of wording used in the French and Spanish versions of the Resolution. For Resolution Conf. 11.11, the working group focused on clarifying and simplifying the Resolution, especially with regard to the definition of 'artificially propagated', but also examined other sections of the Resolution. Draft revisions of both resolutions have been submitted for consideration by the Plants Committee at PC14.

MEXICO: Mexico was part of the working group referred to in the preceding paragraph. On Resolution Conf. 9.19, Guidelines for the registration of nurseries exporting artificially propagated specimens of Appendix-I species, the language of the Spanish version was revised. With regard to Resolution Conf. 11.11, Regulation of trade in plants, difficulties were encountered in applying the definition of 'artificial propagation' in the case of plants grown from seeds of wild origin, given that such seeds are not subject to the Convention.

8. Research

CANADA: Canada has established a research programme on the Appendix-II medicinal plant *Hydrastis canadensis*. Research is aimed at improving knowledge of harvesting impacts and implications for recovery and management. TRAFFIC has accepted an article on market trends for American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) grown in Canada for publication in TRAFFIC Bulletin Vol. 20. No. 2.

MEXICO: *Guaiacum sanctum* and *Guaiacum coulteri*. With financial support from the United States (USD 15,000), Germany (USD 9,518) and Mexico (USD 13,000) a population study is being carried out in the latter country on *Guaiacum sanctum* and *G. coulteri*. The study, with a total cost of USD 37,500, has been divided into two phases and is under the auspices of the Centre for Ecosystem Research of the National Autonomous University of Mexico. The project started in September 2003 and its purpose is to generate information on the present distribution, abundance, population dynamics, habitat characteristics and population viability of the species, with a view to defining the management measures necessary to its conservation. To date, maps have been created with the potential distribution of the species in Mexico; sample sites have been located; rapid surveys of populations of *G. sanctum* and of the arboreal community associated with the species have been carried out in the Yucatan Peninsula; and the settlers in the areas where *G. sanctum* is distributed have been interviewed.

Cactaceae: Various Mexican cactologists have begun the review of the status of the populations of the Mexican Appendix-I Cactaceae in order to reevaluate their CITES status. The funding for this work was provided by Mexico's National Council on Science and Technology.

9. Enforcement

CANADA: On 31 July 2003, Environment Canada and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) prosecuted a Canadian nursery for smuggling 211 *Paphiopedilum* orchids into Canada from Thailand. The nursery was fined CAD 8,700.00 for one violation under section 6(1) of WAPPRIITA and CAD 1,250.00 for one violation under section 153(a) of the Customs Act. The nursery was also ordered under WAPPRIITA to pay CAD 5,000.00 to a plant conservatory for housing the seized plants as well as to display CITES pamphlets at the nursery and to notify Environment Canada prior to any further orchid importations into Canada for a three-year period. On 25 September 2003, Environment Canada prosecuted an individual for illegally exporting a *Phragmipedium* orchid. Charges resulted in a CAD 3,155.00 fine.

10. Capacity Building

MEXICO: A meeting was held to consider a document examining the functioning of CITES and its problems of implementation in Mexico. The document had been drawn up by a consultant under contract to TRAFFIC North America. The meeting was attended by Mexico's three CITES Authorities, Customs personnel and TRAFFIC.

In coordination with the other parts of the CITES Coordinating Committee of Mexico (Comité de Seguimiento CITES), a start was made on the compilation of the Directory of Plants Specialists in

Mexico, who will constitute part of the Scientific Authority's official contingent of consultants on CITES plants species. The directory will be published in the near future on the CONABIO website: www.conabio.gob.mx.

The Legal Enforcement Authority (Autoridad de Aplicación de la Ley, PROFEPA) has given training courses for personnel at airports, ports and at the borders with the aim of achieving better control of illegal trade. The officers were trained in various aspects such as those relating to health and pest problems and the use and handling of CITES identification manuals, among other topics.

11. Meetings

CANADA: In October 2003, Canada attended the International Biodiversity and Health Symposium which focussed on using and sustaining medicinal plant resources. The work of the Plants Committee was communicated to phytomedicine experts from South Africa, Mexico, the TRAMIL Network and Madagascar.

MEXICO: A coordination meeting was held between the CITES Scientific Authority and the representative of TRAFFIC North America in Mexico to seek ways to increase the cooperation in CITES-related areas such as exchange of information, consultancy by way of experts and participation in joint projects.

The Scientific Authority took part in the second national meeting of cactologists: "Refresher Workshop on the Study of CITES Appendix-I Cactaceae" held in Oaxaca, Mexico, from 24 to 28 November 2003. An introduction was given to the process of amendment of the Appendices and the minimum required information that has to be generated by studies in order for such amendments to be carried out.

12. Other

CANADA: The development of a new 'Permits' section is almost complete and currently under review by the provincial and territorial Scientific and Management Authorities. This section will enable the public to download all application forms, instructions, and Information Notes specific to certain cases including orchids, cacti, ginseng, hunting trophies, primates, pets and many others. The website has also been updated with a new 'CoP13' section complete with general information, calendar, information on proposals, and public consultations; a new 'Animals and Plants' section for species with specific permit requirements; and a new 'Site Plan' feature to help public and staff find the section of the website that is needed. The National CITES newsletter, 'CITES Monthly' is also available on the website and archived.

MEXICO: Identification manual (Cactaceae). In coordination with the CITES Scientific Authority in Mexico (CONABIO) and with funding from the CITES Secretariat, the Spanish translation of the CITES Appendix-I Cactaceae Identification Manual was completed and sent to the Secretariat.