

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 April 2008

Timber issues

PROBLEMS REGARDING POPULATION-SPECIFIC APPENDIX-III TIMBER LISTINGS

1. This document has been submitted by the United States of America.
2. Over the past few years, there have been several instances in which a CITES Party has listed a timber species in Appendix III, but has limited that listing to cover only its own national population. Experience suggests that the intent of such listings and the manner in which they are to be implemented are not clearly understood by the Parties.
3. In the case of the Appendix-III listing of Spanish cedar (*Cedrela odorata*), listed by Colombia, Guatemala and Peru, and annotated to cover only the populations of those three countries, there has been and continues to be inconsistent implementation of this listing. Some non-listing range countries issue CITES certificates of origin for the export of Spanish cedar, whereas other range countries do not issue any CITES documents.
4. For listings of timber species in Appendix III, if those listings are interpreted to require only the issuance of export permits by the listing country, and not to require the issuance of certificates of origin by other range countries, this undermines the effectiveness of the listing. Under such an interpretation, specimens of the listed species could potentially be transported illegally over the border of the listing country into a neighbouring range country and then exported free from any CITES requirements. Such listings also limit CITES's ability to collect information about the trade in these species outside of the listing countries.
5. Appendix-III timber listings annotated to cover only the populations of the listing countries began to appear following the adoption of Recommendation a) iv) in Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev.) [now Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP14)], on inclusion of species in Appendix III, which states that:

for species that are traded for their timber, consideration is given to including only that geographically separate population of the species for which the inclusion would best achieve the aims of the Convention and its effective implementation, particularly with regard to the conservation of the species in the country requesting its inclusion in Appendix III.

This recommendation was adopted at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP10, Harare, June 1997) for the purpose of addressing circumstances similar to Costa Rica's initial listing of the bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in Appendix III in 1995. In that case, Costa Rica limited the listing to the populations in the Americas, and thus excluded plantation-grown specimens originating outside the natural range of the species. However, Costa Rica's bigleaf mahogany listing included the entire natural range of the species and only excluded specimens

originating from outside the natural range, thus allowing for the cooperation of all other Parties within the natural range of the species by requiring them to issue CITES certificates of origin.

6. The United States believes it would be useful to learn from other Parties what problems they have observed with respect to implementing Appendix-III timber listings limited to the population of the listing country. We invite the feedback of the Plants Committee on this issue.