

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

Fifty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Bangkok (Thailand), 1 October 2004

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

ILLEGAL TRADE IN RAMIN

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 50th meeting (Geneva, March 2004), the Standing Committee noted concerns relating to illegal trade in ramin wood (*Gonystylus* spp.) from Asia and directed the Secretariat to prepare a document on this subject for discussion at its 51st meeting. It also directed the Secretariat to participate in an upcoming workshop relating to ramin at which Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore would address this issue.
3. Currently *Gonystylus* spp. is listed in Appendix III (Indonesia). The listing includes all parts and derivatives, except:
 - a) seeds, spores and pollen (including pollinia);
 - b) seedling or tissue cultures obtained *in vitro*, in solid or liquid media, transported in sterile containers; and
 - c) cut flowers of artificially propagated plants.
4. Malaysia has a reservation on this listing for all recognizable parts and derivatives except sawn timber and logs. A proposal has been submitted by Indonesia for the inclusion of *Gonystylus* spp. in Appendix II, subject to the same annotation (CoP13 Prop. 50).
5. Concern over illegal trade has been raised largely as a result of reports from non-governmental organizations alleging illegal harvesting of ramin in Indonesia, illegal trade in logs and sawn timber between Indonesia and Malaysia, and re-exports from Malaysia of ramin illegally obtained in Indonesia and mislabelled as originating in Malaysia. Information provided by these organizations has led to a number of law enforcement actions and trade policy changes in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.
6. To facilitate discussion and improve coordination between these three countries, a workshop on Trade in the Commercial Timber Species, Ramin *Gonystylus* spp., was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on 15-16 April 2004. The workshop was facilitated by TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, and involved participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as the ASEAN Regional Forest Programme and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).
7. Participants recognized that while important progress was being made on addressing illegal trade, more information needed to be exchanged between the range States concerned and with transshipment and importing Parties. Participants also noted discrepancies between

trade data collected by various governmental agencies, and difficulties in comparing trade information as a result of different Customs codes being used to identify products in trade. The participants discussed how these matters could be addressed in a timely and cooperative manner.

8. The participants from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore agreed to a series of recommendations, subject to approval by their Governments. These are as follows:

- a) *Improve existing mechanisms for rapid exchange of information on infractions and to encourage law enforcement regarding trade in ramin;*
- b) *Disseminate information on all national ramin export and re-export requirements (legislation and procedures) of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (all jurisdictions) to the three countries and to the authorities of importing States to ensure all relevant agencies are informed of existing regulations and the specific documents that are required to accompany each shipment;*
- c) *Harmonize ramin-specific Customs codes used by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore on ramin cargoes and products;*
- d) *Clarify discrepancies that exist in national statistical data on ramin trade through consultation between CITES Management Authorities and Customs departments; and*
- e) *Create a tri-national task force on ramin trade law enforcement, whose specific tasks would involve intelligence sharing and monitoring of CITES implementation, in order to help prevent illegal trade and to frame long-term cooperative action.*

General observation

9. The Secretariat believes the actions recommended by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore would improve coordination of law enforcement activities as well as the regulation of trade in ramin.