

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



Fifty-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6-10 July 2009

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade control and marking

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.19, paragraph g), the Secretariat herewith provides a report on the progress made with the production of the Identification Manual.
3. The CITES Identification Manual was initiated in 1977. Since the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Girji, 2000), the Secretariat has been directed to publish, within its financial capacity, the Identification Manual. At the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, July 2008), the Secretariat explained the difficulty of maintaining the present sheet-based ID Manual, and the impossibility of updating all sheets, under the present staffing and financial limitations. There is no provision for funding of the Identification Manual from the Trust Fund in the current triennium.
4. In 2008, the Secretariat contracted the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to determine the feasibility of converting the existing CITES Identification Manual into a partial "wiki" format. UNEP-WCMC considered, *inter alia*, the software requirements to create and operate such a database, the steps required to convert the existing sheets into a "wiki" format (with certain data elements linked to or derived from other databases), copyright matters, and recommendations on a policy for adding, editing and reviewing material.
5. In January 2009, the Secretariat contracted UNEP-WCMC to develop a full working version of the Web-based Identification Manual database. This new database will be linked to the existing species and trade databases and other information sources, and will allow for improved searching and organization of information. The Web-based ID Manual will also provide users with the possibility to create and modify themselves the relevant section on identification, through a "wiki" system. Different user rights will be allocated to the Secretariat, editors registered with the Secretariat, and public viewers. The Identification Manual database is expected to be completed by July 2009. Existing ID Manual data will be transferred to the database.
6. The Secretariat circulated with Notification to the Parties No. 2008/043 of 7 July 2008 a copy of "*The Aloes and Euphorbias of CITES Appendix I & the Genus Pachypodium*", published by the Management Authority of Switzerland. This work is available in book and CD-ROM versions, in English.
7. The Secretariat received in November 2008 a submission from Switzerland on orchid hybrids exempted from CITES provisions. In January 2009 the Secretariat received a submission from Sweden on the identification of the European eel *Anguilla anguilla*. These valuable submissions will be added to the Web-based database, and the Secretariat is grateful to the Governments of Sweden and Switzerland for these important contributions.