

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

Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Gigiri (Kenya), 10-20 April 2000

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Timber species

PROGRESS IN THE CONSERVATION OF *SWIETENIA MACROPHYLLA* (BIGLEAF MAHOGANY)

1. This document has been submitted by Brazil. It is the summary report of the Working Group on Mahogany, which was written in Brasília on 5 June 1998.
2. To meet the commitment undertaken by Brazil during the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Harare, 1997), the Working Group on Mahogany met in Brasília from 3 to 5 June 1998, to examine the status of conservation, exploitation practices, policies, management and the dimensions of international co-operation and trade.
3. Taking part in the Working Group were the Member States of the Amazon Co-operation Treaty: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela. From the invited range States, Panama participated in the work. Importing countries such as Argentina, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America were also present. The meeting had observers from Canada, Chile, China, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Africa and Uruguay, and representatives of interested intergovernmental organizations, including FAO, UNDP, ITTO and the CITES Secretariat, as well as representatives of NGOs, associations, business entities and experts.
4. The Minister of Environment, Water Resources and the Legal Amazon of Brazil, Mr Gustavo Krause, opened the meeting and emphasized that sustainability depends on political will and on the commitment to environmental conservation, without, however, disregarding social and economic aspects. The Minister further proposed intensifying international co-operation to enhance the value of forest assets, noting that only fair, not debased, pricing, for forest products would contribute concretely and efficiently to the sustainability that is sought by all.
5. The agenda adopted by the Working Group included the following issues: species status, mahogany policies and management, and international co-operation and trade in the species. During the meeting, a strong thematic link and the existence of interaction among the three items were observed.
6. The most relevant results of the exchange of information and the debates were as follows.
 - a) The Range States reported the adoption of a number of measures to reduce the risks related to possible threats to the species:
 - i) Precautionary measures adopted by the range countries, including the development of institutional mechanisms for adopting sustainable management policies, regulating production, delimiting legally protected areas where the species occur naturally, and ongoing measures to quantify current stocks of the species.
 - ii) Scientific evidence of the successful natural regeneration of production forests and promising results in commercial planting of the species in various areas, within and outside the area of occurrence.

- iii) Ongoing scientific studies on mahogany, which highlight the need for more information on the sustainability of the species, including distribution and abundance, genetic variability and the history of mahogany.
 - b) The participating countries reported on the mechanisms in place to monitor and control production and trade at several national levels, but recognized that the inclusion of mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) in CITES Appendix III is a complementary precautionary measure, which will assist in the monitoring of, and international co-operation in, the international trade in the species.
 - c) The general debate also concluded that greater knowledge of the species is essential. In this context, carrying out forest inventories on the species was deemed a priority. The Working Group learned of initiatives undertaken in several countries, among them the recent inventories carried out in the area of occurrence of the species in Bolivia, and Brazil's specific project for planning the national mahogany inventory, with ITTO support.
 - d) It was stressed that ensuring access to markets and fair prices are essential factors in the value enhancement of forests and in the generation of additional income to support the introduction of appropriate forest practices, needed to achieve the sustainability of the species.
 - e) The need to proceed with actions to eradicate poverty was underlined, without which the initiatives to achieve sustainability will hardly be successful. In this difficult task, governments and civil society, together with concrete international co-operation actions, are key elements.
 - f) A weakness was identified in the mahogany trade control system among bordering countries; affected countries are already working together to correct this distortion.
 - g) International co-operation is an essential factor in the chain of mahogany production and commercialization. It is particularly needed in technology transfer, training and investments to enhance the value of forest resources.
7. The Working Group concluded that it is in the region's interest to use the experience acquired with mahogany to implement co-ordinated actions to achieve the sustainable development of rain forests.

Conclusions

- 8. The countries that are Parties to the Amazon Co-operation Treaty (TCA) expressed their willingness to forward to the Amazon Co-operation Council, meeting from 30 June to 1 July 1998, an Indicative Agenda for Co-operation among Amazonian Countries on joint actions on the issues. These actions would include a system for assessing the status of commercial species; technical and scientific co-operation for the sustainable management and reproduction of the species; commercial and industrial co-operation, valorization as well as the supervision, control and inspection of products.
- 9. Member countries to the TCA took note of the offer by the CITES Secretariat to assist them, on request, as Parties to the Convention, in the implementation of Appendix III in the region.
- 10. The countries represented at the meeting that had included their *Swietenia macrophylla* populations in Appendix III, taking into account the discussions at the meeting, reaffirmed their commitment to comply with all the obligations concerning the implementation of that listing, including those arising from Article VII of the Convention.
- 11. Copies of this report of the meeting will be sent to the range States that could not attend.
- 12. The information presented at this meeting of the Working Group on Mahogany will be compiled and sent in due time to all the participants.

Action by the Conference of the Parties

13. The Parties are invited to take the following action:

- a) take note of the Summary Report of the Working Group on Mahogany; and
- b) urge the Parties to take the appropriate steps to co-operate in the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Working Group.