

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



Twelfth meeting of the Plants Committee
Leiden (The Netherlands), 13-17 May 2002

Regional reports and reports on regional meetings

OCEANIA

A) General Information

- Name of Member (author of report): **Greg Leach (Australia)**
- Name of Alternate Member: **Osia Gideon (Papua New Guinea)**
- Number of Parties in the Region: 5
- Number of Parties responding to communications: 3
- Names of other institutions or NGO's contacted for CITES work during the period: TRAFFIC (Oceania).

B) List of Items

REGIONAL DIRECTORY

The Regional Directory has been maintained and a revised edition dated December 2001 has been provided to CITES Secretariat. There has been some discussion with the Australian Management authority to produce a single Oceania directory covering both plants and animals.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARTIES IN REGION

There have been difficulties in communications with Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. A report of the 11th PC meeting was distributed to all Oceania parties and plant specialists. Information was sought on issues such as examples of different plant production systems, *ex situ* propagation versus *in situ* conservation, impact of Ramin listing, review of Orchidaceae listing and the illegal trade in *Paphiopedilum*. At the time of writing of this report Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea had responded.

Some of the material presented in the report has been extracted from the Oceania regional report to the 46th Standing Committee meeting, particularly where it relates to plant issues.

CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

There has been no regional meeting since PC11. However the 2 forthcoming workshops will be a major contribution to capacity building in Oceania and neighbouring Indonesia.

Oceania Capacity Building Workshop

CITES Parties and Non-Parties in the Oceania region have been invited to a Capacity Building Workshop to be held in Fiji from 29 April to 1 May 2002. Whilst TRAFFIC Oceania are organising the logistics of the workshop, and the Secretariat is conducting the workshop, Australia, as the Oceania representative on the Standing Committee has been providing support and guidance. It is expected that the Oceania representatives from both the Animals and Plants committees will be attending.

Species Management Workshop - Indonesia

Australia is funding and facilitating a workshop to be held in Bogor, Indonesia from 15 to 17 April 2002. The aim of the workshop is to enhance the administrative and technical capacity of the CITES Scientific Authority and Management Authority of Indonesia to implement the provisions of CITES that relate to sustainable use of Appendix-II species of wild fauna and flora.

Australia

Australian legislative reform

Legislation to replace Australia's *Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1982* was passed by the Australian Parliament on 29 June 2001. Provisions relating to CITES and wildlife trade now form a new Part, Part 13A, within the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The provisions of the new legislation came into force on 11 January 2002.

The new legislation introduces a number of new or changed provisions in relation to the import and export of CITES listed species and their products. These changes are designed to enhance Australia's ability to comply with CITES obligations and to streamline permitting and administrative processes. For example, the new legislation now has provisions for Australia to issue and accept a pre-CITES Certificate.

The new legislation provides a more efficient and effective regulatory framework. There is no weakening of the strict controls that Australia has traditionally maintained on the export of native wildlife, import of exotic species or the movement of CITES-listed species.

More information at: <http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/html/comact/11/6370/top.htm>

Australian Wildlife Trade Management Database

Australia has developed a new Wildlife Management Database that came on line on 11 January 2002, coinciding with Australia's new wildlife trade legislation. The primary functions of the database enable Australia to improve management and accountability and to improve capacity to assess and analyse all of the information associated with wildlife management. This includes capturing details about all approved categories of non-commercial and commercial wildlife trade and CITES certificates.

New Australian CITES Permits

Australia has new permits that reflect the CITES recommendation for standardisation of these documents in Resolution Conf. 10.2 (Rev). They are being printed on high standard security paper that will render permits void if photocopied. Specimen permits have been sent to the Secretariat for distribution to the Parties.

Wildlife law enforcement conference in Australia

In November 2001 Australia hosted the second conference on Combating Wildlife Crime in the 21st Century for the purpose of promoting inter-agency cooperation and issues of mutual interest and concern in the area of wildlife enforcement.

Fiji

Fiji has been liaising with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), TRAFFIC Oceania, the CITES Secretariat and the Australian Embassy in Fiji on the CITES Capacity Building Workshop for Small Island Developing States in Oceania. Fiji has accepted an invitation to host the Workshop from 29 April to 1 May 2002.

Papua New Guinea

In conjunction with WWF South Pacific Programme and the CITES Secretariat, TRAFFIC Oceania published a report "*The Final Frontier. Towards sustainable management of Papua New Guinea's Agarwood resource*" in October 2001 (available at www.traffic.org) with recommendations for further action including:

- raise awareness amongst stakeholders to ensure best practice sustainable harvest guidelines;
- conduct CITES assessment with specific reference to Decisions 11.112 and 11.113 an analysis on whether to include additional species in the genus *Aquilaria* in CITES Appendix II;
- develop a conservation and management strategy in PNG;
- conduct further field research on gaharu trade in New Guinea;
- develop legislative mechanisms and enforcement /management capacity in PNG;
- conduct taxonomic research, noting that the systematic relationship between *Aquilaria* and *Gyrinops* requires further study; and
- further cooperation between stakeholders in PNG.

Papua New Guinea will require further scientific work and investigation to be done on this trade:

- to determine whether a proposal to list the entire genus *Aquilaria* on Appendix II is appropriate; and
- as very little is known about grading of the products, to support development of standard trade controls and guidelines for this trade.

Of relevance to Plants Committee was the statement concerning "Consideration of imposing a CITES Appendix III listing on PNG gaharu-producing species until the harvest and trade situation is further clarified".

The report also recommends that Decisions 11.112 and 11.113 be widened to include at least the two species of *Gyrinops* (*G. versteegii* and *G. ledermannii*) known to be harvested for gaharu.

In October 2001, TRAFFIC Oceania initiated further research into the trade in agarwood (gaharu) from the Indonesian (Irian Jaya, now known as the province of Papua) side of the island of New Guinea. Observations on the gaharu trade in the southern district of Merauke were collected and discussed with the Indonesian CITES Management Authority in Jakarta (in February 2002). Some priorities for further action include the following points:

- Designing standard methodology for determining wild population status for the purpose of setting quotas for gaharu-producing species along the lines of a CITES-standard "non-detriment finding";
- Initiating field surveys to 'ground-truth' levels of harvest in relation to non-CITES export quotas set for Papua (Irian Jaya), and CITES export quotas for *A. malaccensis* in other provinces of Indonesia;
- Confirming the identity and number of tree species being harvested for gaharu in Papua (Irian Jaya).

New Zealand

In June 2001 a national meeting was held with key CITES staff to discuss implementation of CITES and to discuss issues New Zealand would like to focus on in future/ national direction and consistency. The meeting focused on training, new legislation, standardisation, information sharing and the establishment of a national electronic database.

DIFFICULTIES OF IMPLEMENTATION ENCOUNTERED IN THE REGION

Fiji

Implementation difficulties - National legislation project

The environment legislation which Fiji planned to have enacted by April 2001 and which included provisions relating to subsidiary legislation on CITES, has been deferred due to reasons beyond the Government's control. Fiji had however envisaged early in 2001 extracting provisions relating to CITES from an earlier Bill and enacting these separately.

Enactment of CITES legislation has been included in the Fiji Department of Environment's corporate plan for 2002. The Management Authority of Fiji has advised the Secretariat that they are moving forward and assured that, by December 2002 or even before CoP12, they will have new National CITES legislation.

Fiji requested the CITES Standing Committee to consider the efforts of the new elected Government, and to remain mindful of the difficulties associated with the passage of the revised Fiji Sustainable Development Bill (FSDB), in light of political events in 2000 and 2001.

However, Fiji was unable to adopt legislation that complied with implementation of CITES by the deadline of 31 October 2001. Notification 2002/003 advised parties of the recommended suspension of trade with Fiji for any CITES listed species until further notice.

Papua New Guinea

A legislative review of Papua New Guinea's national legislation was completed, with appropriate instruments submitted to legislators in 1998. It is anticipated that the national legislation will be debated in the Parliamentary Council in March 2002.

Vanuatu

Late or Non-Submission of annual reports

Vanuatu has already responded to the CITES Secretariat in 2001 regarding non-submission of its annual reports. In document SC46 Doc. 17 the Secretariat has listed Vanuatu as one of a number of Parties having failed to provide annual reports without adequate justification. Vanuatu is currently compiling the report for the periods 1997-2001 which should be submitted to the CITES Secretariat before CoP12.

OTHER TOPICS

Tree Ferns

The issue of correct documentation and tagging requirements for Tree Ferns originating from Oceania has arisen a number of times. The link between Tree Fern exports from Australia and salvage from logging operations has raised some emotive debate, particularly in the UK, which is a major importer of Tree Ferns from Australia. The major species exported from Australia is *Dicksonia antarctica*.

The report "Traded towards extinction? The role of the UK in wildlife trade" produced by WWF in February 2002 erroneously states "*Dicksonia* spp. from Oceania were downlisted at CoP11 in 2000, so no longer require export permits for legal trade."

Certainly all *Dicksonia antarctica* specimens exported from Australia still require an export permit issued by the Federal government regardless of the state of origin. There is also a requirement that all stems are tagged. Any imports from Australia not meeting these requirements are illegal. Sample permits and an information paper will be available at the meeting.

Much of the Tree Fern trade from New Zealand is based on species of *Cyathea* which still require CITES permits.

Prunus africana

Australia recently received a request to import *Prunus africana* bark, which was wild-harvested in Cameroon. Under the new Australian legislation, such an import requires approval as an "Approved Commercial Import Program". Approval must be based on aspects of sustainability of the harvest. Based on information considered at recent Plants Committee meetings, the Australian government was not satisfied that the harvesting met the requirements of the Australian legislation and the import was not approved.

Ramin (*Gonostylus* spp.)

Based on responses from some Oceania Parties it appears there is little regional capacity to support the recent Appendix III listing by Indonesia. The listing impacts Oceania as both Papua New Guinea and Fiji are range states for *Gonostylus* and Australia and New Zealand appear to be importers.

In New Zealand, Ramin imports are lumped with a number of other hardwood species and they are reported together as sawn timber. New Zealand currently does not report on manufactured products that may contain Ramin. Enforcement of Ramin reporting cannot be implemented until their schedules are updated. This is planned following CoP12.

In PNG *Gonystylus* comes under the trade name of *Gonystylus*, and is classed under Group 4 timber or basically miscellaneous species. Only one species, *G. macrophyllus*, is known from PNG but the volume of extraction and export is not known.