

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Plants Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 17-21 May 2005

Regional Reports

AFRICA

General information

- a) Names of representatives (Authors of the report): Dr Beatrice Khayota and Dr David L.N. Hafashimana.
- b) Names of Alternate representatives: Mr. Quentin Luke and Prof. Koffi Akpagana.
- c) Number of Parties in the region: 51.
- d) Number of Parties responding to communication: Nine (Egypt, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe).
- e) Names of other Institutions contacted for CITES work during the period: IUCN (Eastern Africa Regional Office), ICRAF (Uganda Office), Prime West (a USAID –Funded Project in Western Uganda) and South African National Biodiversity Institute.

1. Activities since last Plants Committee

1.1 Significant Trade

KENYA is developing *Aloe* utilization guidelines to regulate trade in *Aloe* spp. An inventory of the *Aloe* resources is planned for mid May 2005 and a workshop to finalise the development of the guidelines is scheduled for June 2005. The process has brought together key stakeholders in aloe sub sector through the Kenya Aloe Working group (KAWG).

UGANDA: started a preliminary survey of *Prunus africana* on privately owned land in two regions (Central and Western), where the owners had expressed interest in exporting the bark.

In addition a field visit was made to the site where *Encephalartos whitelockii* grows in the wild, following several enquiries from potential dealers and tourists. The population was found to be healthy and regenerating naturally.

SOUTH AFRICA: In response to concerns raised in the Significant Trade Review of cycads, South Africa is investigating the use of finger printing technology to improve law enforcement.

ZAMBIA: Part of the management plan for 2005 for the Botany Section of the Scientific Authority, include the establishment of the current status of the three *Encephalartos* spp. occurring in the country and the development of a framework for collaborative management of populations outside Protected Areas with rural communities.

## 1.2 Review of the Appendices

Nothing to report.

## 1.3 CITES Projects

SOUTH AFRICA: Is developing regulations and CITES species lists as part of the new legislation (National Environment and Management, Biodiversity Act), which came into force in Sept 2004.

## 1.4 Nursery Registration

ZIMBABWE: is in the process of registering operations that are artificially propagating CITES controlled and specially protected indigenous plants under national law.

## 2. Communication with Parties in the region

Distribution of the draft Agenda (English and French) for CITES PC15 to all Management and Scientific Authorities and regional plant experts (as per the current Directory) for their input.

Request for CITES related information with regard to trade, conservation, capacity-building from all Management and Scientific Authorities and regional plant experts.

## 3. Capacity Building Activities

### 3.1 Training seminars

SOUTH AFRICA: Capacity building project undertaken by TRAFFIC Eastern and Southern Africa is being implemented.

The Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism undertook training of Issuing Authorities.

### 3.2 Education

UGANDA: The Scientific Authority met with a number of target farmers who are both conserving *Prunus africana* on their land and growing it as a cash crop on their land. There was need to allay fears of the growers that they would not be allowed to sell the bark of the artificially propagated plants due to CITES restrictions.

### 3.3 Meetings

BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA, SOUTH AFRICA and ZIMBABWE: The Devil's Claw (*Harpagophytum*) Working Group had a meeting in 2004 and are planning another for June 2005 as a follow up to reports compiled for CITES in 2004.

## 5. Difficulties of Implementation Encountered in the Region

### 4.1 Conservation Issues

Inadequate information/sensitization on conservation.

Inadequate interest in conservation of plants especially those of no immediate economic value.

Inadequate financial resources for plant conservation in general.

### 4.2 Technical Issues

- Inadequate/or unreliable telecommunication facilities (making information exchange rather difficult).
- Poor response to communication.
- Inadequate capacity to handle CITES-related technical issues (the few available botanical scientists are over stretched) due to the complexity of scientific issues related to trade in plant species and increase in trade thereof.

- High turn staff turn over (necessitating continuous training).

## 5. Other Topics (Medicinal Plants, Timber)

### 5.1 Medicinal Plants

KENYA: An Eastern African regional Project on Network on Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicine was launched in December 2003. It aims at promoting the conservation and sustainable, safe and effective use of Medicinal Plants and herbal products, as well as the integration of Traditional Medicine in Public Health Services.

ZIMBABWE: An inter-ministerial committee is working on a project on Medicinal plants aimed at promoting their conservation and sustainable use/ harvesting.

ZAMBIA: A study to determine the existence, abundance and distribution of *Hoodia* spp. is planned for December 2005.

### 5.2 Timber

KENYA: A survey on the illegal exploitation of the East African Sandalwood (*Osyris lanceolata*) was carried out.

SOUTHERN AFRICA: An inter-governmental working group on timber trade has been established, including customs officers, the Forestry department and the Police service.

## 7. Work to be undertaken until the next Plants committee meeting

- Share with Parties in the region, the outcomes of PC15.
- Review and update of experts' database.
- Assess the cause of poor response to CITES Plants Committee communication.
- Mobilise Parties to raise awareness and encourage them to take greater interest in Plants.