

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

OCEANIA

General Information

- a) Regional Member (author of report): **Greg Leach (Australia)**.
- b) Alternate Member: **Osia Gideon (Papua New Guinea)**.
- c) Parties in the Region: Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Vanuatu.

Regional Directory

The Oceania Regional Directory of plant specialists has been maintained and a revised edition dated April 2005 has been provided to CITES Secretariat for placement on the web site.

Communication with Parties in region

Significant communication has been maintained in the region through the auspices of the second Oceania Capacity Building Workshop held in Australia (2-5 August 2004) and through the attendance of all Oceania Parties at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP13). A segment of the Capacity Building workshop was dedicated to a regional meeting. This was extremely valuable for discussion on regional positions for issues leading into CoP13. At CoP13, the region held daily meetings and held an informal regional dinner. These occasions have helped establish communication networks within the region such that information flow and cooperation on CITES issues is probably the best it has ever been.

Since the last Plants Committee meeting, two new Oceania Parties have signed the Convention – Palau and Samoa.

The Regional representative had communications with:

- a) All Oceania Parties advising of PC 15 and seeking input to the agenda;
- b) Australian Management and Scientific Authorities on orchid hybrids and implementation of the new annotation;
- c) TRAFFIC SEA concerning on-going activities with studies on the trade in Agarwood;

- d) Fiji on the implementation of the new annotation for Orchids and the new definition of "artificially propagated";
- e) Palau on plant survey methodologies and assessment of conservation status for plants;
- f) Working groups such as Significant Trade review and Review of the Appendices leading up to CoP13; and
- g) Australian Management Authorities on Cycad permits.

Capacity building activities

The major initiative for the region was the second Capacity Building Workshop held in Brisbane, Australia, 2-5 August 2004. The CITES secretariat funded the workshop and it was organised by the Australian government and TRAFFIC Oceania. Of note for the workshop was the attendance by Parties, non-Parties, the regional representatives for both Animals and Plants Committee, TRAFFIC Oceania, South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). Such a diversity of attendance was highly beneficial to the workshop outcomes.

All the Oceania Parties (Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu) were represented along with the non-Parties of Cook Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Both regional representatives presented views on their roles and discussed issues relating to the structure and representation for the region. There were presentations by some of the Parties on various aspects of their implementation of CITES. Vanuatu provided background on how they have set up their MA and SA and discussed their long experience with CITES as a small Pacific Island country. PNG provided their recent example of development of national legislation to comply with CITES. Fiji discussed "Lessons Learnt" in their recent examples of trade suspensions and experiences in attending the CoP. Australia presented examples of the non-detriment finding (NDF) process.

One of the main objectives of the workshop was to focus on the scientific aspects of CITES implementation and in particular the process of NDF. Presentations were given on harvest theory and the basis of quota setting, annual reports & trade data and the significant trade review process. There was extensive discussion on examples of precautionary management projects in a number of Parties and the need to involve industry in on-going monitoring. The IUCN Checklist for NDF was the basis for further examples and discussion. A case study on NDF for corals in Fiji and a group exercise on a hypothetical example provided hands-on experience in the use of the IUCN Checklist.

The needs of the region in conducting robust NDF's were discussed. Highlighted were: the need for obtaining basic biological data, for sharing information and expertise on NDF's, building awareness across all relevant government agencies, the public and traditional leaders. There was some discussion on the idea of a supra-national SA in Oceania. The development of a common Oceania data base on wildlife trade issues was discussed as a mechanism to facilitate the sharing of information.

There was discussion on the need for a successional strategy to increase the involvement of the smaller Pacific Island countries in CITES committee representation.

There is no doubt that in a region such as Oceania, where there will never be the resources to hold dedicated regional meetings, that events such as capacity building workshops provide an effective means for face-to-face regional meetings. As such it is crucial that the regional representatives attend such workshops. In a region that has a majority of non-Party countries it is also crucial that non-Parties participate in such workshops. Their participation has certainly facilitated improved communication within the region on CITES issues and contributed to further countries becoming Parties to the Convention.

Decision 13.100 calls for funding to be sought for another capacity building workshop in Oceania. This would provide a logical progression to training provided in the first two and provide probably the only viable mechanism to hold a regional meeting prior to CoP14.

Difficulties of implementation encountered in the region

Two Parties (Australia and Fiji) have raised possible implementation issues with the new orchid annotation and the new definition of artificially propagated. The outcomes for Decisions 13.72, 13.73, 13.98 and 13.99 will be of interest.

OCEANIA DIRECTORY
FOR
CITES PLANTS COMMITTEE
APRIL 2005

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