

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Plants Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 April 2008

TIMBER ISSUES

(Agenda items 16.1.1, 16.1.2, 16.1.3 and 16.3)

Membership (as decided by the Committee)

Chairman: Canada;

Members: Central South America and Caribbean (Sra Rivera);

Parties: Brazil, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, United Kingdom and United States of America;

IGOs and NGOs: European Commission, ITTO, National Resources Defense Council, TRAFFIC and WWF.

Mandate

1. In relation to *Swietenia macrophylla* (bigleaf mahogany), select the countries for the Review of Significant Trade;
2. Define the terms of reference for the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group work until CoP15;
3. Discuss the possibility of endorsing document PC17 Doc. 16.1.2;
4. Analyze document PC17 Doc. 16.3 and formulate recommendations;
5. Review document PC17 Doc. 16.1.3 and formulate recommendations.

Recommendations

Regarding Selection of countries for the Review of the Significant Trade:

1. Having considered the analysis by the Chairman of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group of information provided by bigleaf mahogany range States in response to the questionnaire sent by the Secretariat on 5 November 2007 (which addressed all tasks directed to range States in paragraph 1 of the Action Plan for bigleaf mahogany and progress in implementation of the plan), the Working Group recommends:
  - i) that Belice, Bolivia, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Venezuela and Santa Lucia should be selected for the Review of Significant Trade of bigleaf mahogany; and

- ii) that Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico should not be selected for the Review of Significant Trade of bigleaf mahogany.
2. Having determined that Nicaragua's response to the questionnaire sent by the Secretariat on 5 November 2007 was received as requested before 5 December 2007 and noted in the Secretariat's report, but was not forwarded to the Chairman of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group for analysis until after Working Group 10 began deliberations, the Working Group asks the Chairman of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group to analyze Nicaragua's report and, if the result of the analysis is positive, recommends that the Plants Committee not select Nicaragua for the Review of the Significant Trade of bigleaf mahogany.
3. The Working Group recommends that the Plants Committee note that information in response to the questionnaire sent by the Secretariat on 5 November 2007 was received from Peru on April 16, 2008.

Regarding the Terms of Reference For the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group work until CoP15:

4. The Working Group recommends the Terms of Reference be defined as follows:

1. *Terms of Reference of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group:*

- a) *promote the preparation and official adoption, as a priority, of mahogany management plans at national and subregional level;*
  - b) *promote the conduct of forest inventories, as well as progress, and promote programmes to determine and monitor the distribution, population size and conservation status of mahogany;*
  - c) *facilitate and promote the development of capacity-building programmes in monitoring and management relating to CITES procedures and documents. To this end, if considered appropriate, it may request assistance from the Plants Committee and the Secretariat;*
  - d) *utilize the existing action Plan for Bigleaf Mahogany for further guidance; and*
  - e) *facilitate the organization and establishment, if considered necessary, of working groups.*
2. *The Working Group should continue its work composed of at least the following members:*
    - *main bigleaf mahogany exporting Parties (Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Peru);*
    - *main bigleaf mahogany importing Parties (the Dominican Republic, the Member States of the European Union and the United States of America);*
    - *members of the Plants Committee (both representatives of Central and South America and the Caribbean, and both representatives of Europe);*
    - *a member of the CITES Secretariat; and*
    - *by invitation, members of relevant NGO organizations and relevant timber industry associations.*
  3. *The Working Group shall conduct its work intersessionally (between PC17 and PC18), mainly through remote communication (email, fax or phone) and shall present at CoP15 substantive results in accordance with the Terms of Reference mentioned above.*

Regarding document PC17 Doc 16.1.2 International Workshop of Experts on Non-Detriment Findings on Bigleaf Mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*):

5. The working group recommends:

- i) that the Plants Committee endorse the document resulting from the International Workshop of Experts, recognizing it contains a set of indicative guidelines that can contribute to improvement of non-detriment findings, particularly in regards to mahogany in natural forests within its native range. To recognize concerns expressed in the Working Group regarding exact interpretation of technical terms, ongoing efforts to produce alternate methodologies for timber non-detriment findings, and limited capacity and resources available to range States to fully implement the methodologies contained in the report, the following introductory text should accompany the Plants Committee's endorsement:

*The Plants Committee welcomes the report of the International Experts Meeting and expresses appreciation for the comprehensive description of elements requiring consideration in the process of making non-detriment findings for bigleaf mahogany (Swietenia macrophylla).*

*The Plants Committee endorses document PC17 Doc. 16.1.2 recognizing that the elements it contains represent ideal guidelines for non-detriment finding determination for bigleaf mahogany, and that specific implementation of this idealized approach will necessarily require modification to respond to specific national circumstances.*

- ii) that the document's elements be interpreted to include adaptive management as an approach to respond to future uncertainties including the effects of climate change;

Regarding PC17 Doc.16.3 *Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo and Dalbergia stevensonii*

6. The Working Group recommends:

- i) that the Plants Committee urge any Parties that have not responded to the questionnaire referenced in document PC17 Doc.16.3, to provide immediately the requested data and information;
- ii) that the Plants Committee ask the Secretariat to send notification asking range States to provide, prior to PC18, additional information regarding the status of conservation and trade in *Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii* in their countries, and its relation to the sustainable management of these species;
- iii) that the Plants Committee discuss at its 18th meeting, the species indicated in PC17 Doc.16.3, with the intent of developing recommendations for CoP15. This discussion should address the data contained in CITES CoP14 proposals 31, 32, and 33, data contained in PC17 Doc16.3, any additional data collected through the Secretariat's notification requesting data;
- iv) that the PC18 discussions include identification of these species, and in particular, potential look-alike difficulties that exist within the genera *Cedrela* and *Dalbergia*;
- v) that parties submit for analysis at PC18, new listing proposals for these genera that are intended for presentation at CoP15;
- vi) that the Secretariat ask range States to provide additional information on any observed increases in *Cedrela odorata* exports, particularly with respect to the sustainable management of the species;
- vii) that Parties, in particular range States considering an Appendix III listing of any of these species, should provide updated status and trend information.

Regarding Document PC17 Doc.16.1.3 Volumetric Conversion of Standing Trees to Exportable Mahogany Sawn Wood:

7. The Working Group recommends that:

- i) the Plants Committee endorse the document, recognizing it as an important step for improving management of timber export quotas, and the direct relationship these quotas have to timber non-detriment findings;
- ii) range States note the critical need for transparency in the identification of methods, such as conversion factors, to link harvest volumes approved by Scientific Authorities to export shipments;
- iii) the Plants Committee note that wide variation exists in potential results and methodologies for determining conversion factors given differences in species, harvest and production systems, mill efficiencies, sampling sizes, and products produced;
- iv) the Plants Committee undertake to further explore and clarify the term "export grade" given variations in annotations, markets, and changing technologies and demands;
- v) the Plants Committee consider establishment of a timetable for implementation of volume conversion methodologies for quotas by range States;
- vi) the Plants Committee urge Parties to explicitly and transparently address, in future non-detriment findings, the identified need for application of conversion factors and/or other methodologies that link harvested wood volumes to export shipment volumes;
- vii) volumetric conversion factors be considered in deliberations on guidance for timber non-detriment findings of the Intersessional Non-detriment Finding Working group and at the International Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings in Cancun Mexico, November 2008.