

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

Regulation of trade

Identification materials

IDENTIFICATION OF TIMBER AND OTHER WOOD PRODUCTS

1. This document has been submitted by the Plants Committee.*
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.140 to 18.143 and renewed Decision 16.58 (Rev. CoP18) on *Identification of timber and other wood products*, as follows:

Directed to the Plants Committee

18.140 *The Plants Committee shall, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and building on information on existing initiatives:*

- a) *determine gaps and complementarities in various tools and knowledge sources for timber identification, such as existing field identification guidelines and keys, and on their availability and usefulness;*
- b) *develop standardized information templates and other tools that could be used by Parties to facilitate sharing information on the content and status of wood sample collections, and exchange with research institutions, law enforcement agencies, and other authorities;*
- c) *assist Parties to identify existing laboratory services for the identification of timber and wood products and to strengthen screening and forensic capacity to identify CITES-listed tree species in trade;*
- d) *determine methods to stimulate global, regional and national exchange of best practices in wood identification technologies between Parties; and*
- e) *update the Standing Committee, as appropriate, on progress made on the implementation of Decisions 18.140 to 18.142; and report its findings and recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

Directed to Parties

18.141 *Parties are encouraged to collaborate with the Plants Committee, with relevant stakeholders and with existing initiatives in the implementation of Decision 18.140, by:*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

- a) *working with institutions having wood identification expertise, in order to share information related to timber identification methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers;*
- b) *identifying existing laboratory services for the identification of timber and wood products, and strengthening screening and forensic capacity to identify CITES-listed tree species in trade;*
- c) *identifying effective wood identification training methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers;*
- d) *prioritizing the species of rosewoods and palisanders that would most benefit from the development of timber identification tools, protocols and materials; and*
- e) *reporting information on existing laboratories, effective wood identification training methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers, and the priority species of rosewoods and palisanders to the Plants Committee.*

Directed to the Secretariat

18.142 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *liaise with organizations having relevant expertise on timber identification, including the Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN), the International Association of Wood Anatomists (IAWA), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Thünen Centre of Competence on the Origin of Timber, the European Forest Institute (EFI), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the World Resources Institute (WRI) to identify shared priorities, in consultation with the Plants Committee, including priority species, emerging techniques, standardized procedures, and collection and sharing of wood samples applicable to timber tracking tools;*
- b) *make the currently available guidance on wood identification accessible to Parties through the CITES website; and*
- c) *report to the Plants Committee on progress with the implementation of this Decision.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.143 *The Standing Committee shall review any updates received from the Plants Committee on the implementation of Decisions 18.140 to 18.142, and provide recommendations to the Plants Committee, as appropriate.*

Directed to the Secretariat

16.58 (Rev. CoP18) *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *obtain information and materials from those Parties that have reported that they have developed tools and procedures for the identification and measurement of CITES-listed tree species, and the physical inspection of timber shipments;*
- b) *publish the information on the CITES website so that it can be accessed by CITES plant inspection and enforcement authorities; and*
- c) *incorporate this information into its capacity-building activities related to timber trade.*

3. On 21 September 2020, through Notification to the Parties [No. 2020/056](#), the Chair of the Plants Committee informed on, *inter alia*, the establishment of an intersessional working group on *Identification of timber and other wood products* with co-Chairs: Rosemarie Gnam (representative for North America), César Augusto Belletón Chacón (representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean), and Yan Zeng (alternate representative for Asia).
4. The Secretariat and the co-Chairs of the Plants Committee's working group on *Identification of timber and other wood products* submitted documents [PC25 Doc. 19](#) and [PC25 Doc. 19 Add.](#) to the Plants Committee

at its 25th meeting (PC25, online, June 2021). These documents outlined in detail the progress achieved in the implementation of Decisions 18.140 to 18.143 and renewed Decision 16.58 (Rev. CoP18). The Annex [PC25 Doc. 19 Add.](#) consisted of the revised compendium of timber identification resources, modified by the Secretariat from information document [PC25 Inf. 11](#).

5. Based on the recommendations of the working group as reflected in document [PC25 Doc. 19 Add.](#), the Plants Committee *inter alia* requested the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Plants Committee and with relevant experts, to publish on the relevant section of its website relevant elements of the revised compendium of timber identification resources, as contained in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 19 Add., in line with Decision 16.58 (Rev. CoP18), paragraph b), and Decision 18.142 paragraph b). At the time of writing, this is being undertaken and will be found on the CITES website upon completion.
6. The Plants Committee further agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the draft decisions in Annex 1 to the present document.
7. In its report to the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee (see addendum [SC74 Doc. 33.2 Add.](#)), the Secretariat noted that some of the outcomes from the meeting of the Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species organized in accordance with Decision 18.79 could be relevant to the work of the Plants Committee as anticipated by the draft decisions on *Identification of timber and other wood products* agreed by the Plants Committee. The Standing Committee agreed to propose an additional subparagraph to draft decision 19.CC as follows and as presented by the Plants Committee in Annex 1 to the present document:

b) consider the relevant outcomes of the online *Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* presented in the Annex to the Addendum to document SC74 Doc. 33.2;

Recommendations

8. The Conference of the Parties is invited to adopt the draft decisions as contained in the Annex 1 to the present document.

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends the adoption of the draft decisions in Annex 1 to the document with some minor edits as outlined in paragraph E. The Secretariat further recommends deleting Decisions 18.140 to 18.143 and Decision 16.58 (Rev. CoP18) as they have been implemented or carried forward in the new set of draft decisions contained in Annex 1 to the document and paragraph E below.
- B. Since the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC25, online, June 2021), the Secretariat has made progress in identifying funding to develop a dedicated webpage on timber identification resources in accordance with Decisions 16.58 (Rev. CoP18) and 18.142 and so the draft decisions proposed by the Plants Committee need updating accordingly, as detailed below.
- C. In the framework of its agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the project “*Support to the implementation of the UN-REDD Initiative for Sustainable Forest Trade in the Lower Mekong project, with a focus on trade in CITES-listed timber species*” (SFT-LMR-CITES)¹, the Secretariat has secured the funds for a dedicated webpage on timber identification resources (a digital repository on ‘timber identification resources and tools’).
- D. As the digital repository on timber identification resources and tools is scheduled to go live ahead of the present meeting, the Secretariat is of the view that the draft decisions proposed by the Plants Committee would benefit by referring to it.
- E. The Secretariat therefore proposes the following revisions to draft decisions 19.AA, 19.BB and 19.CC::

Proposed new text is underlined, proposed deletions are indicated in ~~strike through~~.

¹ For further information on the SFT-LMR-CITES project, please refer to the relevant report available as an information document to the present meeting.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 19.AA** The Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Plants Committee, and subject to external funding:
- a) liaise with relevant organizations and experts in ~~the development of a depository of timber identification resources and a dedicated webpage~~ updating, improving and expanding the digital repository on timber identification resources and tools, taking into account the progress and recommendations reported in document PC25 Doc. 19 and its addendum;
 - b) in undertaking the above, consideration should be given to tailor the compilation of timber identification resources for both frontline enforcement officers and to experts involved in identifying timber for forensic or legal purposes; and
 - c) report on progress or results of this work to the Plants Committee ~~at its first regular meeting after CoP19~~ and seek its advice and input.

Directed to Parties

- 19.BB** Parties are encouraged to collaborate with the Secretariat in sharing relevant information in support of the implementation of Decision 19.AA, and for its incorporation in the digital repository on timber identification resources and tools.

Directed to the Plants Committee

- 19.CC** The Plants Committee shall:
- a) consider progress and results reported by the Secretariat as per Decision 19.AA;
 - b) consider the relevant outcomes of the online *Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* presented in the Annex to the [Addendum](#) to document SC74 Doc. 33.2 concerning identification of timber and other wood products; and ~~{sub-paragraph agreed by the Standing Committee}~~
 - c) make recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee, ~~and~~ or the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
IDENTIFICATION OF TIMBER AND OTHER WOOD PRODUCTS

Directed to the Secretariat

- 19.AA** The Secretariat shall, in consultation with the Plants Committee, and subject to external resources:
- a) liaise with relevant organizations and experts in the development of a depository of timber identification resources and a dedicated webpage, taking into account the progress and recommendations reported in document PC25 Doc. 19 and its addendum;
 - b) in undertaking the above, consideration should be given to tailor the compilation of timber identification resources for both frontline enforcement officers and to experts involved in identifying timber for forensic or legal purposes; and
 - c) report on progress or results of this work to the Plants Committee at its first regular meeting after CoP19 and seek its advice and input.

Directed to Parties

- 19.BB** Parties are encouraged to collaborate with the Secretariat in sharing relevant information in support of the implementation of Decision 19.AA.

Directed to the Plants Committee

- 19.CC** The Plants Committee shall:
- a) consider progress and results reported by the Secretariat as per Decision 19.AA;
 - b) consider the relevant outcomes of the online *Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* presented in the Annex to the [Addendum](#) to document SC74 Doc. 33.2; and [sub-paragraph agreed by the Standing Committee]
 - c) make recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee, and the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 19.DD** The Standing Committee shall consider any report by the Plants Committee relating to the implementation of Decision 19.CC and convey, as appropriate, any recommendations it may have to the Conference of the Parties.

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.

Draft decision 19.AA

There are two possible options, as summarized in the table below:

Draft decision	Activity	Indicative costs (USD) (excludes Programme Support Costs)	Source of funding
19.AA - Option 1: as proposed by the Plants Committee	<p>Developing a depository of timber identification resources and a dedicated webpage</p> <p><i>Note: The development of the structure for a new dedicated webpage is estimated to cost up to USD 80,000. Additional costs such as those relating to its maintenance and content curation are the same as those outlined in Option 2.</i></p>	200,000	Extrabudgetary
19.AA - Option 2: with revisions proposed by the Secretariat	Maintaining and updating the digital repository on 'timber identification resources and tools'	100,000	Extrabudgetary
	<i>Note: Breakdown of sub-activities under Option 2</i>	<i>Note: Cost breakdown of Option 2</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of the online repository on 'timber identification resources and tools' and technical enhancements during the intersessional CoP19-CoP20 period. 	50,000	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Secretariat staff costs relating to the content curation and maintenance of the online repository.</i> 	35,000	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Translation of new content of resources to be incorporated in the online repository.</i> 	15,000	

Draft decisions 19.BB to 19.DD

There will be workload implications for the Parties, the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee from the adoption of draft decisions 19.BB to 19.DD, but it is expected that these can be delivered using existing resources.