

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

ADDITIONAL TRADE AND DECLINE INFORMATION  
IN SUPPORT OF COP 19 PROP. 41 (ZEBRA PLECO)

This document has been submitted by Brazil \* in relation to proposal CoP 19 Prop. 41.

1 - *Hypancistrus zebra* is an endemic small freshwater fish that inhabits rock crevices in shallow-water rapids (< 10m) along a very restricted stretch of the Xingu River, in the Amazon Basin. It is a low fecundity species with slow growth and high natural mortality rates.

This species has an estimated populational decline of at least 80% in a 10-year period (2016-2026) in its core habitat and was assessed as a Critically Endangered (CR) in both the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species and in the Brazilian National Red List (ICMBio, 2022).

Illegal captures for the ornamental fish trade and habitat loss are the main causes of population declines for the Zebra Pleco.

2 - This species faces a very high risk of extinction in the wild and since 2004 its captures have been prohibited in all its range.

Despite this capture prohibition and efforts of the authorities at the national level, illegal captures and trade have not ceased and approximately 10,000 individuals/month are trafficked to neighboring countries (Sousa et al., 2021), from where they are regularly exported to other countries (ICMBio, 2022).

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\* *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.*

3 - All distribution range of this species has been severely impacted by the flooding from the construction of the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Power Plant in the Xingu River. Depth, water quality and the rapids where this species was found were dramatically changed leading to major habitat loss.

4 - Despite a divergent understanding from the Secretariat, the species meets the criterion provided for in item iv) of item B of Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17), which regulates the criteria for inclusion of species in Appendix I of the Convention.

The benefits of an Appendix I listing are improving compliance and increasing international enforcement efforts towards the needed conservation of this species. The high extinction risk and ongoing illegal trade makes an Appendix II listing unlikely to provide the required protection for this species.

#### References

Beltrão, Hélio et al. Trafficking of ornamental fish in the Brazilian Amazon. Boletim do Instituto de Pesca, [S.l.], v. 47, nov. 2021. ISSN 1678-2305. Available at: <<https://www.pesca.sp.gov.br/boletim/index.php/bip/article/view/1621>>. Date accessed: 13 may 2022. doi: <https://doi.org/10.20950/1678-2305/bip.2021.47.e639>.

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ICMBio, 2022. Sistema de Evaluación del Riesgo de Extinción de la Biodiversidad – SALVE. Disponible en: <https://salve.icmbio.gov.br/salve/>. Consultado el: 24 de mayo. de 2022.

Sousa, LM; Lucas, O.; Arroyu-Morra, J.P.; Kalascka, M. 2021. Conservación y comercio de la cebra *Hypancistrus* (Siluriformes, Loricariidae) en peligro de extinción, uno de los peces brasileños más traficados. *Ecología Global y Conservación* 27: e 01570. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2021.e01570>.