

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



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INFORMATION DOCUMENT ON COP19 PROP. 11 (*CAIMAN LATIROSTRIS*)

1. This information document is submitted by Brazil in relation to CoP19 Prop. 11.*
2. Brazil is proposing the downlist of the population of broad-snouted caiman *Caiman latirostris* of Brazil from CITES Appendices I to II, in accordance with Article II, paragraph 2. a), of the Convention and with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) Annex 4, paragraph A. 2. A, ii), practicing zero quota of ranched or harvested wild specimens for commercial purposes, as a precautionary measure.
3. Firstly, it is important to emphasize that *C. latirostris* biological attributes do not meet CITES Appendix I criteria. As listed below and demonstrated clearly in our proposal:
 - i) the wild population definitely is not small, instead, it is quite large, reaching thousands of individuals. The species area of occupation is estimated to be larger than 20.000 km² (Coutinho et al. 2013), and assuming that only 1/5 of this area is actually occupied, there is a high probability to find the species in 400,000 hectares in Brazil. Applying estimated densities of 1,0 to 2,0 ind/ha ((Marques et al. 2016), which is a conservative number, total population size could vary from 400,000 to 800,000 individuals in its whole distribution range within Brazil.
 - ii) there is no declining trend in population size. Scalon-Luchesenet al. (2021) reports an increasing population size of *C. latirostris*, particularly in suitable areas near urban centers. As an example, they mentioned a large population size inhabiting a mangrove, rivers and drainage channels close to the city of Florianopolis (South Brazil), where the species was rarely observed back in the 1990's. There are also a number of reports of *C. latirostris* being found in urban and peri-urban areas, which indicate that these individuals are dispersing towards new areas, and also suggesting an increasing trend in the size of natural populations;
 - iii) there are several protected areas in which vigorous population can be found (Carvalho Jr. et al. 2013). Within the *C. latirostris* distribution range there are a high number of Federal, State and Municipal protected areas, including those of integral protection oriented to species preservation, and those of sustainable use which are established aiming at promoting the involvement of local communities in resource conservation. Together such a net of protected areas does ensure species conservation. More than 2,000 registers and 14,000 individuals have been captured for biological studies and released inside and outside protected areas in Brazil. Large number of registers and studied animals are all indicative of a large Brazilian population size (see Table 2 of the proposal).
 - iv) the population is widely distributed in different Brazilian river basins and ecosystems, such as the Atlantic Forest, Cerrado and Pampas (Filogonio et al. 2010). As the number of scientific investigations increases, new reports on *C. latirostris* encounters within Brazil are presented. The data obtained from the *Federal Research*

* 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.

Authorizing System (SISBIO) clearly indicates an increase in the geographic occurrence of *C. latirostris* within Brazil, which accounts for more than 70% of the species global distribution range;

v) the species is resilient, individuals are found in highly urbanized areas, showing that the species is rather resistant to human impacts and that habitat modification has limited effect on the species distribution. For instance, there are robust data indicating the species is resistant to the ecological impacts of damming, an important conservation conclusion considering the large number of hydroelectric dams within the species' range in Brazil (Passos et al. 2014; Correia et al. 2021).

Therefore, based on evidence detailed in the proposal and shortlisted above, it becomes clear that the species does not meet the criteria for Appendix I, and does meet criteria for Appendix II.

Moreover, as safeguard and precautionary measure, Brazil is proposing to practice zero quota of ranched or harvested wild specimens until a structured bioeconomic productive chain be developed. In this respect, Brazil has solid legal instruments, which regulates management nationally and internationally, to prevent effectively unsustainable and illegal trade.

Secondly, it is worth highlighting that the transfer to Appendix II is essential to foster local communities' interest to monitoring natural genetic stocks and to developing a structured bioeconomic productive chain, in order to applying effectively the concept of conservation through sustainable use of *C. latirostris*, as recommended by CITES and CSG/SSC/UICN for other crocodylians in the world. In short, Brazil expects the downlisting results in social development of local communities through the management for sustainable use *C. latirostris*, becoming an important incentive to promote natural habitat conservation. In this respect, caiman management in the service of conservation is ongoing in others Brazilian ecosystems such as the Pantanal wetland and the Amazon.

Thirdly, Brazil is confident that downlisting the species in the country will not harm or result in any risk to wild populations because, according to current Brazilian regulation, farming is the only management type allowed and, regarding international trade, Brazilian CITES Administrative Authority has effective mechanisms to manage, trace and control trade. International trade will only be allowed in specimens bred in captivity in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev.).

Fourthly, there are efficient systems to monitor the natural populations and their habitats within Brazilian states, including for applying conservation measures when necessary. More broadly, in accordance with Resolution Conf. 13.2, each of the 14 Addis Ababa Principles for Biodiversity Conservation will be observed closely (see CBD website).

4. Finally, Brazil has been protecting natural populations of *C. latirostris* for at least 40 years. Currently, the population has recovered, and a significant part of species' natural habitats has been preserved. Again, it must be strengthened that the Brazilian population no longer meets CITES Appendix I criteria and, therefore, should be down listed to CITES Appendix II. As result, local communities will be motivated to practice conservation through sustainable use. In order to use caimans legally under current Brazilian regulations local communities must monitor the dynamics of explored populations on their respective natural habitats and the downlisting to CITES Appendix II will be a great incentive to invest resources in research and development.

5. The world needs to move towards bioeconomy and Brazil is ready step forward in this direction. The downlisting of *C. latirostris* is part of national strategic policies to achieve social development and biodiversity conservation.

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