

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

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

The Proponents propose to include *Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis* in Appendix II of CITES as the species meets the criteria in paragraph 2(a) of Article II of the Convention and criteria A in Annex 2a of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17), as on the basis of available trade data and information on the status and trends of the wild population, it can be inferred that the regulation of trade in the species is necessary to avoid it becoming eligible for inclusion in Appendix I in the near future.

B. Proponent

India*

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

1.1 Class: Reptilia

1.2 Order: Squamata

1.3 Family: Gekkonidae

1.4 Genus, species or subspecies, including author and year: *Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis* (Beddome, 1878)

1.5 Scientific synonyms: *Gymnodactylus jeyporensis* Beddome, 1878; *Geckoella jeyporensis* Kluge, 1993; *Geckoella jeyporensis* Agarwal & Karanth, 2015; *Cyrtodactylus (Geckoella) jeyporensis* Wood et al. 2012 (by implication).

1.6 Common names: English: Jeypore hill gecko
French:
Spanish:

1.7 Code numbers: Not available

* 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.

2. Overview

C. jeyporensis is endemic to Eastern Ghats of India and has been recorded from very few localities (4 localities including historical record) in southern Odisha and northern Andhra Pradesh. The species is listed as Endangered in the IUCN Red List based on the criteria B1ab(iii)+2ab(iii), based on criteria such as that the extent of occurrence is estimated to be less than 5000 km², that it is known to exist at no more than five locations, that its habitat is severely fragmented, and continuing decline is observed in the area, extent and/or quality of its habitat (Mohapatra, 2021). This species meets the listing criteria for CITES Appendix II because it meets the biological criteria found in Resolution Conf, 9.24 (Rev. CoP17), Annex II, specifically Annex 2 a:

A: It can be inferred that the regulation of trade in the species is necessary to avoid it becoming eligible for inclusion in Appendix I in the near future.

C. jeyporensis is or may be affected by trade because it is an attractive species and could become the target of commercial collection (Mohapatra, 2021). The species is handsome looking and docile, which makes it vulnerable for the pet trade and there appears to be demand for it amongst reptile breeders and keepers outside India. Live specimens of the species are in trade outside India as evidenced by advertisements on social media (See Annex I).

Due to the restricted area of occurrence of the species, the ongoing decline in the species' population and continued threats to the species, any collection of the species for the international pet trade is very likely to have a detrimental impact on its status. While the species may actually qualify for inclusion in CITES Appendix I, an Appendix II CITES listing as a start would: a) provide regulation of international trade in the species and penalties for breach thereof, thereby helping to control illegal export of the species from India; and b) generate trade data regarding international trade and demand for the species.

3. Species characteristics

3.1 Distribution

Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis is endemic to Eastern Ghats of India and has been recorded from very few localities (four localities including the historical record) in southern Odisha and northern Andhra Pradesh (Mohapatra, 2021).

3.2 Habitat

The species lives below rock boulders in high hills of the Eastern Ghats in an altitude range of 1100-1400m asl. The species inhabits semi-evergreen forests; primary as well as well-shaded secondary forests and hills with coffee plantations (Agarwal et al., 2012; Mohapatra, 2021).

3.3 Biological characteristics

Nothing much is known about the biological characteristics of the species in the wild except observations on the activities of the species. The species is nocturnal, comes out during the evening, after darkness, and forages on ground. Occasionally, individuals are seen climbing tree trunks and taking shelter below loose tree bark (Agarwal et al., 2012; Pratyush Mohapatra, V. Deepak, I. Agarwal and P. Raj: *pers. comm.* 27 May 2022). Like other congeners using similar biotops, this species is presumed to feed on insects such as termites, beetles and grubs, etc.

3.4 Morphological characteristics

C. jeyporensis is a medium-sized, bent-toed gecko (SVL: 60mm); The head is large, the body depressed, and the limbs are moderate. The head is covered with large subequal flat granules; the body is covered with uniform juxtaposed large squarish or hexagonal flat scales; the tail is cylindrical, tapering, slightly swollen, covered with uniform, large smooth scales, and imbricate beneath; The belly scales are smooth, round, and imbricate. In adults, the body dorsum is orangey-brown with a series of large, almost black, chocolate brown dorsal blotches. The blotches are oblong, arranged in four relatively symmetrical pairs between shoulder and sacrum, with a broad fused blotch across the neck and a similar dark marking on the occiput. The flanks have an additional series of 4–5 dark blotches between the fore and hind limb insertions. The tail dorsum has six dark blotches, the distal three forming bands that alternate with the orangey-brown background colour. Small scattered dark markings occur

between the larger dark blotches, and similar such markings are found on the proximal half of the tail. The limbs are somewhat lighter in color than the trunk with a series of brown bands (fore limbs) or blotches (hind limbs). The crown is less orangey than the body dorsum, bearing roughly symmetrical dark markings. The labial scales and sides of neck are white with scattered dark markings. The venter is white with dark markings under the chin and jaws, across the neck, and along the edges of the flanks; The remainder of the venter is immaculate. The tail venter is pale dull yellow with five narrow incomplete brown bands proximally and five darker, more complete bands distally. The iris is brass colored.

3.5 Role of the species in its ecosystem

Very little is known about the biology and the ecosystem services rendered by the species.

4. Status and trends

4.1 Habitat trends

The habitat of *C. jeyporensis* is degrading due to forest fire, grazing, and mining activities. In the Deomali and Potangi hills (Type locality), the habitat degradation is due to tourist activities, shrinkage of primary forests, mining, quarrying, and forest fires (Mohapatra, 2021).

4.2 Population size

There is no quantitative estimation of the population size of the species.

4.3 Population structure

This species is found along with *Cyrtodactylus nebulosus*, *Sepsophis punctatus*, *Eutropis macularia*, *Lygosoma punctata* and *Uropeltis elliotii* (Agarwal et al., 2012; Mohapatra, 2021 and Mohapatra pers. com. 27 May 2022).

4.4 Population trends

Surveys indicate that the population of the species may be declining at a fast rate. In the Galikonda and Aaraku valleys, Andhra Pradesh, the population spotted by a team of researchers from IISc (Ishan Agarwal, V. Deepak, A. Khandekar and P. Raj, 2012) was revisited by a team of scientists and research scholars of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in 2021, which resulted in no observation during the same month in October. Similarly, Paderu hill, where this species was found in good numbers (6 individuals) during a survey conducted by IISc team, was revisited by the ZSI team in October 2021 and only one individual was observed.

4.5 Geographic trends

Since the discovery of the species in 1878 by Col. R. H. Beddome (type specimen is in the Natural History Museum, London: BMNH bearing Registration number 82.5.22.37) from "a wood on the top of Patinghe Hill (= Potangi hill), 4200 feet [1273 m] elevation", Jeypore Hills, Koraput District, Odisha, India, this species was rediscovered after a gap of 135 years by Agarwal et al. (2012) from three localities (Deomali, near the Type locality and two places near Aaraku valley, Andhra Pradesh). Several herpetological surveys in the type locality turn futile, inferring that the species is likely to be locally extinct from the type locality (see Agarwal et al., 2012). Hence, presently this species is only known from four localities (Mohapatra, 2021) including the historical record from Potangi hill (type locality).

5. Threats

The main threats to the species are from habitat loss, habitat degradation, forest fires, mining activities, tourism and selective collection for illegal trade of the species (Broom 2017). Although there is no official report of live trade of the species, the availability of the species with breeders and pet-traders outside India shows that this endemic species has in all likelihood been illegally exported out of the country from the Eastern Ghats.

This species is handsome looking and docile, which makes it vulnerable to collection for the pet trade. It is in demand by the reptile breeders outside India and the population is threatened due to habitat loss and collection for international pet trade, which is an emerging serious threat for the species.

The species being naturally rare, collection of specimens for commercial purposes, specifically for the pet trade is a major concern for its survival.

6. Utilization and trade

6.1 National utilization

There is no known utilization of this species at the national level.

6.2 Legal trade

In India, the collection or obtaining of the species for research, commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by foreign citizens, foreign corporate bodies, foreign associations, or non-resident Indians, or the transfer of the species to such persons requires permission of the National Biodiversity Authority under Sections 3, 19 and 20 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

The species appears to be in legal trade outside India, as evidenced by advertisements for sale of the species on social media (see Annex I).

6.3 Parts and derivatives in trade

There is no known utilization of the parts and derivatives of this species in trade. Collection of the species primarily appears to be live specimens for the pet trade.

6.4 Illegal trade

The collection or obtaining of the species for research, commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by foreign citizens, foreign corporate bodies, foreign associations, or non-resident Indians, or the transfer of the species to such persons requires permission of the National Biodiversity Authority under Sections 3, 19 and 20 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. As mentioned in Section 6.2 above, the species appears to be in legal trade in outside India. The exports of the species out of India are therefore likely to be illegal in nature.

6.5 Actual or potential trade impacts

The actual and potential trade impacts on this species have not been evaluated. However, based on preliminary study and observations by the survey by the Zoological Survey of India, any trade of the species may have a serious deleterious impact on the survival of the species (Pratyush Mohapatra, *pers. comm*, May 2022). The species is rare, and its habitat is declining at a fast rate, and therefore the potential impact of trade on the species is serious.

7. Legal instruments

7.1 National

The collection or obtaining of the species for research, commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by foreign citizens, foreign corporate bodies, foreign associations, or non-resident Indians, or the transfer of the species to such persons requires permission of the National Biodiversity Authority under Sections 3, 19 and 20 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. The collection of the species for commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by an Indian citizen (apart from communities) requires prior intimation of the relevant State Biodiversity Board under Section 7 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

The species is intended to be included in Schedule-I of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in the near future. When found in any forest area notified under Central or State Forest legislations, the species will qualify as 'forest produce' and its removal will be regulated by that legislation.

7.2 International

Currently, there are no known international legal instruments protecting this species.

8. Species management

8.1 Management measures

There are no management measures in place for this species.

8.2 Population monitoring

Surveys indicate that the population of the species may be declining at a fast rate. In the Galikonda and Aaraku valleys, Andhra Pradesh, the population spotted by a team of researchers from IISc in 2012 (Ishan Agarwal, V. Deepak, A. Khandekar and P. Raj, *pers. comm.* 27 May 2022) was revisited by a team of scientists and research scholars of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in 2021, which resulted in no observation during the same month in October (Mohapatra (*in prep.*)). Similarly, Paderu hill, where this species was found in good numbers (6 individuals) during a survey conducted by the IISc team during 2013 was revisited by the ZSI team in October 2021 and only one individual was observed.

8.3 Control measures

8.3.1 International

There are no international control measures in place for this species.

8.3.2 Domestic

The collection or obtaining of the species for research, commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by foreign citizens, foreign corporate bodies, foreign associations, or non-resident Indians, or the transfer of the species to such persons requires permission of the National Biodiversity Authority under Sections 3, 19 and 20 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. The collection of the species for commercial utilization, bio-survey or bio-utilization by an Indian citizen (apart from communities) requires prior intimation of the relevant State Biodiversity Board under Section 7 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.

8.4 Captive breeding and artificial propagation

There is no available information about the captive breeding of this species.

8.5 Habitat conservation

The distribution range of the species does not fall in any Protected Areas under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, making it more vulnerable to threats such as habitat loss and poaching for the pet trade.

8.6 Safeguards

Not applicable.

9. Information on similar species

This species is morphologically distinct from its congeners, having diagnostic morphological characters such as body covered with uniform juxtaposed large squarish or hexagonal flat scales. This species is distinctive and is unlikely to be confused with any other species.

10. Consultations

The species is endemic to India and there are no other range States for the species.

11. Additional remarks

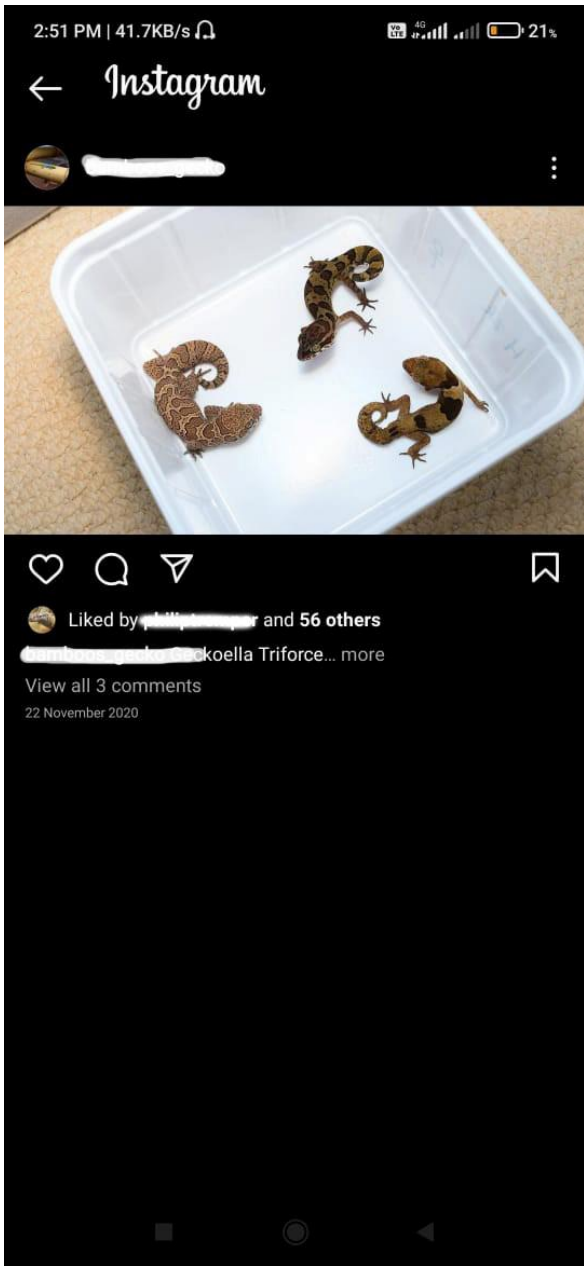
Nil.

12. References

- Agarwal, I., Datta-Roy, A., Bauer, A.M. and Giri, V.B. 2012. Rediscovery of *Geckoella jeyporensis* (Squamata: Gekkonidae), with notes on morphology, coloration and habitat. *Hamadryad* 36(1): 17-24.
- Broom, F. 2017. Resurrected Jeypore Ground Gecko Faces Second Death Sentence, Mongabay, available at <https://news.mongabay.com/2017/02/resurrected-jeypore-ground-gecko-faces-second-death-sentence/>
- Mohapatra, P. 2021. *Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2021: e.T194100A123311720. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2021-2.RLTS.T194100A123311720.en>.
- Mohapatra, P.P. (in prep.). Reptilia, in: Fauna of Eastern Ghats, India, Director, Zoological Survey of India (Ed.).

Annex I – Social Media Advertisements for *Cyrtodactylus jeyporensis*

(Usernames have been redacted)



URL: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CH5SP0IMMgD/?igshid=MDJmNzVzMjY=>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Unknown



URL: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CEhpb5AssP/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Unknown

2:52 PM | 280KB/s | 4G | 21%
← [redacted] - Geckoella jeyporensis rea...



KB
30 August 2020 at 19:15 · 🌐

Geckoella jeyporensis really impressive species.



7 shares



[redacted]
Lucu yah punya ginian Adji Zajie
2 yrs Report



URL: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CU4-N2gBnnb/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Unknown



URL:

<https://m.facebook.com/121286554633567/photos/a.121419667953589/3884689564959895/?type=3&source=48>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Czech Republic

← Tweet



エキゾチックサプライ

@exotic_supply

【eu便】

来ました激レアヤモリ !

Geckoella jeyporensis
ジャイプルインディアンゲッコー

1ペアのみ !!

[Translate Tweet](#)



1:32 pm · 07 Apr 20 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

74 Retweets 16 Quote Tweets 602 Likes



Tweet your reply



URL:

<https://mobile.twitter.com/supplymiki/status/1247434525098958849?lang=gl>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Unknown (outside India)



KB
30 August 2020 at 19:15 ·

Geckoella jeyporensis really impressive species.



7 shares



Firdaus Maulana
Lucu yah punya ginian Adji Zajie
2 yrs Report



URL: <https://m.facebook.com/167310823892819/posts/geckoella-jeyporensis-really-impressive-species/658581988099031/>

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Unknown



URL: https://www.instagram.com/p/CJMPS6_Myeb/?igshid=MDJmNzVkMjY=

Assessed on: 30.05.2022

Location: Canada