

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



Twenty-sixth meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 5 – 9 June 2023

NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS

1. This document has been submitted by Germany in relation to agenda item 17 on *Non-detriment findings*.
2. Germany and TRAFFIC have been working together on the development of guidances for making science based NDFs for plants since 2012 and have updated the Plants Committee on progress on an on-going basis.
3. The principal idea of the guidances is to separate the rather complex question of determining non-detriment into distinct thematic units, to later consolidate these at the final step – the NDF (9-Step process). The guidances build on the outcomes of the First International Expert Workshop on CITES Non-Detriment Findings held in Cancun in 2008 and is in line with the requirements set out in Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17).
4. Two guidances have been produced as part of this collaboration, the first on Perennial Plants and a second on Timber. These have been refined over the years based on expert input as well as through their application and feedback during numerous training workshops held across five of the six CITES regions. The guidance has also been used during training on the CITES Master's course in Baeza three times with positive feedback from participants as well as valuable lessons learned for future revisions.
5. At the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee in 2021, development of a dedicated website on the 9-step process for making NDFs (<https://www.9steps-cites-ndf.org/>) was outlined. This website includes all information, documents and tools on the 9-Step process.

This consists of:

- e-learning courses which allow anyone to learn to apply the 9 Step guidances at their own convenience. Two courses are now available: timber and perennials. <https://www.9steps-cites-ndf.org/online-courses>
 - decision trees which are a user- friendly alternative to the Excel worksheets to record the NDF information, with a downloadable pdf document compiling the information at each stage. <https://www.9steps-cites-ndf.org/decision-trees>
 - Guidance documents, including translated versions where available. <https://www.9steps-cites-ndf.org/about-the-9-steps>
6. The current project focusses on updating the timber and perennial guidance documents based on feedback during workshops and from users of the e-learning courses. Discussions of gaps on materials and guidance for the making of NDFs available to the Parties as identified as part of the implementation of NDF-related Decisions will also feed into the updates. The resulting draft revisions have been shared with the Working Groups working on those Decisions on High Value Timber, and Plants. Of particular note in changes made to date is the major revision of Step 6 in the timber guidance, where the User evaluates the impacts of harvest. The updates will incorporate outcomes of the deliberations of the expert groups and International Expert Workshop in December and will be available in early 2024.

7. Once finalised, the resultant versions 4.0 of the timber and perennial guidance will be translated into French and Spanish.
8. E-learning courses and Decision trees will be updated in line with guidance revisions. Case studies will be provided to demonstrate the application of the 9-steps to real species examples. Decision trees will be revised to enhance functionality and utility as a format for recording NDFs.
9. The current project allows for a training workshop on Timbers to be held. This could be by engagement with individual countries or in the form of a multi- country regional workshop. We encourage any Parties interested in such training to contact Daniel Wolf (Daniel.wolf@bfn), Thomasina Oldfield (Thomasina@thomasina-oldfield.co.uk) or Paola Mosig Reidl (paola.mosig@traffic.org)
10. This work has been possible through support from BfN with financial assistance from the German Environment Ministry.
11. We also thank the numerous people who have contributed to the development of these guidances over the years, through expert meetings dedicated to developing guidance; to reviewers and participants in training workshop; to those who invited us to training courses including the UNIA CITES-Master's Course, to those who contributed to translations; and those who have assisted with the development of the e-courses and decisions trees. Final thanks go to Uwe Schippmann who, inspired by the outcomes of the Cancun workshop, initiated this important work.

Dedicated 9-Step NDF website can be found at

<https://www.9steps-cites-ndf.org/>