

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

SUMMARY RECORD

Opening remarks of the Secretary-General *No document*

The Secretary-General gave an opening address, noting that this meeting of the Plants Committee auspiciously opened on World Environment Day. The Secretary-General congratulated the Chair and the Vice-Chair on their election and gave an overview of the working programme, framing it within other initiatives at the international level, such as the Global Biodiversity Framework.

1. Confirmation of the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair *No document*

The Committee confirmed the election of its Chair, the representative for Africa (Ms. Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo) and Vice-Chair, the representative for Oceania (Mr. Damian Wrigley).

Opening remarks of the Chair *No document*

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Members of the Committee, Party Observers, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the meeting. The Chair expressed her condolences to families who lost loved ones and thinking in particular about family, friends and colleagues of Jean-Patrick Le Duc from France. The Chair expressed her satisfaction with the organization of this in-person meeting and asked the Committee to approach the week's meeting practically, hoping to get work done in manageable amounts.

2. Declaration of conflict of interest *No document*

The Secretariat informed the Committee that it had received standard disclosure forms for CITES declarations of interest from all Members and acting Members and that none had declared a financial interest that he or she considers calls into question his or her impartiality, objectivity or independence regarding any subject on the agenda for the meeting.

The Committee noted that no Member declared a financial interest that he or she considers calls into question his or her impartiality, objectivity or independence regarding any subject on the agenda for the meeting.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

3. Rules of Procedure PC26 Doc. 3

The Chair introduced the Rules of Procedure of the Committee in document PC26 Doc. 3, as amended at its 24th meeting (Geneva, July 2018) and indicated that these Rules of Procedure remain valid for this meeting.

The Committee noted that its Rules of Procedure, as amended at its 24th meeting (Geneva, July 2018) and set out in the Annex to document PC26 Doc. 3, remain valid for this meeting.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

4. Agenda..... PC26 Doc. 4

The PC Chair introduced the agenda for this meeting, presented in document PC26 Doc. 4.

The Committee adopted its agenda as set out in document PC26 Doc. 4.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

5. Working programme.....PC26 Doc. 5 (Rev. 2)

The Secretariat introduced the working programme as set out in document PC26 Doc. 5 (Rev. 2) and answered Mexico’s query about the revisions made to the working programme.

The Committee adopted its working programme as set out in document PC26 Doc. 5 (Rev. 2).

6. Admission of observers.....PC26 Doc. 6 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat introduced the list of observer organizations that had been invited to participate in the meeting, as presented in document PC26 Doc. 6 (Rev. 1) and drew the Committee’s attention to the Secretariat’s established practice to recommend to the Chairs of the Plants and Animals Committees that they approve the participation of any body or agency technically qualified in protection, conservation or management of wild fauna and flora, as well as any body or agency that has a legitimate and direct interest in CITES regulations, including representatives of industries such as fragrance, medicinal plants, cosmetics, timber and musical instrument organizations and other trade organizations.

The Committee noted the list of observer organizations that had been invited to participate in the meeting as set out in document PC26 Doc. 6 (Rev. 1).

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

7. Emerging operational matters of the committees.....PC26 Doc. 7 / AC32 Doc. 7

The Secretariat presented two different sets of exceptional circumstances (scenarios) that could prevent the establishment of quorum in person, i.e. scenario A – circumstances that are either global or at the location of the meeting preventing the organization of the meeting for a variety of reasons that could *inter alia* be political, or health- or security-related; and scenario B – circumstances that prevent representatives from several regions from being present in-person at the meeting – this would include *inter alia* geographically localized health crisis not affecting the location of the meeting but other regions of the world or disruptions to international travel. Based on these two scenarios, the Secretariat proposed possible solutions as outlined in the table below:

Scenario	AC/PC	SC
A (circumstances at the location)	Postpone meeting for a maximum of six months. If no alternative location is found within two months, the meeting to be organized fully online (possibly with an adapted agenda and working programme).	
B (circumstances in several regions)	Hybrid option for Members/acting Members only to ensure quorum	Hybrid option to be considered only in exceptional circumstances

The Secretariat also presented additional considerations related to the emerging operational issues, including a simplified intersessional decision-making process for certain issues.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) and Mexico were broadly supportive of the suggestions of the Secretariat, including the option of a simplified intersessional decision-making process. The representative for North America called for careful reflection on the use of new technologies for increased involvement of Parties and, echoed by the United States of America, expressed an interest in further intersessional engagement to provide advice to the Secretariat on these questions.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) expressed a strong preference for the organization of back-to-back meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees. Mexico expressed the same preference and further noted that separate meetings cause logistical and financial impediments for the participation of Party delegates, and also increased the carbon footprint of the participants.

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) and the acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave) agreed that face-to-face meetings were the preferred option but urged the Secretariat that, should meetings take place online, they should take place at alternative times of the day to accommodate different time zones.

Canada further called for the solutions proposed by the Secretariat to be captured formally, most likely as amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees*.

The Committee agreed to support the general way forward described in document PC26 Doc. 7 / AC232 Doc. 7. The Committee requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees through their Chairs, to prepare a document for the Standing Committee that would also propose a way to capture the guiding principles and other recommendations in document PC26 Doc. 7 / AC32 Doc. 7 in CITES official documentation, for instance in Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees*.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to organize meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees back-to-back and to ensure that the timing of any online or hybrid meeting be equitable for all regions.

8. Plants Committee strategic planning for 2023-2025 (CoP19-CoP20)

8.1 Resolutions and Decisions directed to the Plants Committee PC26 Doc. 8.1

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 8.1 and its two Annexes on Resolutions and Decisions directed to the Plants Committee. Annex 1 provided an overview of the Resolutions in effect containing instructions that are directed or relevant to the Plants Committee. Annex 2 provided a list of all Decisions in effect directed to the Plants Committee that might require its inputs or assistance.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 8.1.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

8.2 Plants Committee workplan..... PC26 Doc. 8.2 (Rev. 1)

The PC Chair introduced document PC26 Doc. 8.2 (Rev.1) that presents a list of instructions directed to the Plants Committee, or that may require that it be consulted or informed as articulated in the currently valid Resolutions (Annex 1) and Decisions (Annex 2). The document also identifies a lead or co-lead among the Members of the Plants Committee for each of the instructions.

The Committee noted the 2023-2025 workplan. The Chair indicated that the final list of leads and co-leads among the members of the Plants Committee will be presented at a later date after a final round of consultation with the members of the Plants Committee. The Committee agreed that, in the event of the Standing and Animals Committees establishing additional intersessional working groups, the lead or co-leads identified for the relevant Resolution or Decision in the current workplan would represent the Plants Committee on the working group concerned.

The Committee agreed the lead or co-leads identified for the relevant Resolution or Decision in the current workplan.

9. CITES Strategic VisionPC26 Doc. 9 / AC32 Doc. 9

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 9 / AC32 Doc. 9 that contains a mapping of the CITES Strategic Vision's objectives against the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its monitoring framework. The Secretariat highlighted the most relevant goals and targets of the GBF for CITES and invited feedback from the Committee on the mapping exercise and on possible indicators for objective 1.4 of the CITES Strategic Vision: "The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation status and needs of species."

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles), the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), Canada, Mexico and Zimbabwe supported the recommendations and the mapping exercise, with Canada and Mexico contributing specific suggestions on the mapping exercise. Mexico informed the Plants Committee that it will share its suggestions in writing with the Secretariat. The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) supported the potential indicators in paragraph 13 a) and 13 b) and advised that those in paragraphs 13 c) and 13 d) were not comprehensive enough. Mexico supported the potential indicator in paragraph 13 a) with some

amendments and expressed that the other indicators proposed by the Secretariat may constitute complementary information. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zimbabwe supported the development of indicators, with the United Kingdom highlighting the link to the agenda item on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and Zimbabwe highlighting the need to look at sustainable financing for practical action for species conservation.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in paragraph 18 as follows.

The Committee invited Members and Parties to submit any comments they may have on the mapping of the *CITES Strategic Vision* and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework as contained in the Annex to document PC26 Doc. 9 / AC32 Doc. 9 directly to the Secretariat that would consider them in its report to the Standing Committee.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to continue working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on SDG indicator 15.7.1 and to inform the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity of the outcome of this work.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to follow the work of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and any work related to the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; and to provide data from relevant Strategic Vision indicators (such as indicator 1.1.1 on the National Legislation Project) and possible indicators for objective 1.4 to the CBD Secretariat, if requested.

The Committee noted the comments made on the possible indicators for objective 1.4 of the Strategic Vision proposed in paragraph 13 of document PC26 Doc. 9 / AC32 Doc. 9 and invited Members and Parties to submit any further comments directly to the Secretariat that would consider them in its report to the Standing Committee.

The Committee agreed that the Chair of the Plants Committee will coordinate the Committee's input on the partnership strategy called for in Decision 19.20.

10. Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade..... PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10, noting that, despite the document's focus on zoonotic diseases, the Plants Committee had been directed by the Conference of the Parties to participate in this work. The Secretariat presented a summary of Parties' responses on the measures they implemented to prevent and mitigate the risk of pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated supply chains. Opportunities for practical collaboration taking into consideration the information provided by several organizations, including the World Organization for Animal Health, the Convention on Migratory Species and the United Nations Environment Programme are highlighted in the document. This information will be made available to Parties on a dedicated webpage on the CITES website. The Secretariat reflected on the consideration of a CITES advisory body and noted that institutional arrangements and structures at the national level that facilitate collaboration between relevant organizations and authorities seem to provide the platform needed to ensure a coherent response to address the risk of zoonotic disease emergence associated with international trade.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), Canada, Mexico and IWMC-World Conservation Trust agreed that the Plants Committee could contribute to the Standing Committee's work on this issue through two of its Members as recommended by the document. They further noted the existence of other platforms such as the One Health Initiative and cautioned against duplication of efforts. Canada and Mexico suggested that the establishment of a CITES advisory body on this issue would not be necessary. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity noted that the GBF acknowledged the interlinkages between biodiversity and health and informed the Committee that it was drafting a global action plan to mainstream biodiversity and health linkages.

The Committee agreed to nominate the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) and the representative for North America (Mr. Boles), to participate in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on the role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade, taking into account the comments made on paragraph 13 of document PC26 Doc. 10 / AC32 Doc. 10.

11. Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant ConservationPC26 Doc. 11

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) informed the Committee that, with the recently agreed Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, there is an agreed path within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to consider a revised Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC). However, since the revised GSPC has not been finalized yet, he proposed to postpone work on this issue. The CBD Secretariat indicated that a draft document will be open for peer review later in June for submission to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in October 2023.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) and Mexico agreed with the recommendations in the document. Zimbabwe queried as to whether there was any consultation between the CITES Secretariat and the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Secretariat clarified that the GEF is not a financing mechanism for CITES but expressed its willingness to help and encouraged Parties to reach out at the local level to their GEF focal points.

The Committee agreed to postpone consideration of a revision to Resolution Conf. 16.5 on *Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity* until its 27th meeting.

12. IPBES Report on the Assessment of the Sustainable Use of Wild Species PC26 Doc. 12 / AC32 Doc. 12

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document PC26 Doc. 12 / AC32 Doc. 12. Considering that the Animals and Plants Committees are directed by the Conference of the Parties to review the scientific aspects of the IPBES thematic Assessment of the Sustainable Use of Wild Species and consider their relevance to the implementation of the Convention, he proposed the Committees consider the Summary for Policymakers and the relevant sections in Chapter 3 (Status of and trends in the use of wild species and its implications for wild species, the environment and people) and Chapter 4 (The drivers of the sustainable use of wild species). Annex 1 to the document included a provisional list of scientific aspects addressed in Chapters 3 and 4 that could be relevant for CITES implementation and processes. Annex 2 contained a table of these scientific aspects and the current CITES Resolutions, Decisions, systems and processes that could address these aspects. Annex 3 contained the key findings in the Summary for Policymakers and the possible relevance to the mandates of the Animals and Plants Committees, as well as the Standing Committee. The Chair recommended that the Animals and Plants Committees establish a joint intersessional working group with the terms of reference contained in the document.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), the representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth), Mexico and the United States of America supported the establishment of a joint intersessional working group and proposed changes to the terms of reference to ensure timely reporting by the working group to the Animals and Plants Committees and to the Standing Committee. The representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth) further highlighted the links between the IPBES review and the GSPC and noted that Annex 3 was also relevant for the CITES discussions on *Boswellia* spp.

The Committee agreed to establish an intersessional working group jointly with the Animals Committee on the IPBES assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species that will work through electronic means to:

- a) review the scientific aspects of the thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) relevant to CITES implementation as highlighted in the Annexes to document PC26 Doc. 12 / AC32 Doc. 12 and other aspects as agreed by the two Committees and the members of the working group;
- b) identify aspects relevant to CITES implementation that are not adequately covered in existing Resolutions and Decisions and may require further consideration by the Animals and Plants Committees or the Standing Committee;
- c) prepare a draft report of the results of the review and possible recommendations for consideration by the joint sessions of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee scheduled to take place in 2024; and
- d) prepare a document for consideration of the Animals and Plants Committees containing the outcome of the review and recommendations to be submitted for consideration by the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: alternate representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Diaz);

Parties: Australia, Canada, China, European Union, Malaysia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGO: International Union for Conservation of Nature, International Wood Products Association, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, TRAFFIC, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

13. CITES and forests PC26 Doc. 13

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 13, containing in Annex 1 the outline of a 'CITES forest compendium' that summarizes existing Resolutions and Decisions and supportive provisions relevant to the implementation of the Convention relevant to forests, focusing on CITES-listed tree-species and in Annex 2 draft terms of reference of an interdisciplinary study to assist decision-making processes on the future of any initiative relating to CITES and forests.

The acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave), Mexico and the United States of America, echoed by the Species Survival Network, highlighted that the initiative needed to be coherent with the CITES mandate and focus on species and international trade. Mexico indicated that some Resolutions and Decisions were missing from the compendium and that any future work should look at how a species-focus could help an ecosystem approach. Canada and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland wished to propose amendments to the compendium and the terms of reference that they were willing to submit in an in-session working group as called for by the representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley). India raised issues related to nomenclature.

The Committee agreed to establish an in-session working group on CITES and forests with the mandate to:

- a) provide input to the Secretariat's report in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 13, in accordance with paragraph a) of Decision 19.33;
- b) in accordance with paragraph b) of Decision 19.33, advise the Secretariat on the draft terms of reference contained in Annex 2 to document PC26 Doc. 13, to ensure that any future initiative on CITES and forests is technically and scientifically coherent, and supportive of provisions relevant to the implementation of the Convention; and
- c) draft recommendations for the Plants Committee to consider in preparation of the Secretariats' report to the Standing Committee as per Decision 19.34.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: Committee Chair (Ms. Koumba Pambo);

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Balama), representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon), representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley);

Parties: Australia, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, European Union, Germany, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Portugal, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGO: Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC); International Tropical Timber Organization, Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, Center for International Environmental Law, Chambre Syndicale de la Factice Instrumentale,

Later in the meeting, the Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document PC26 Com. 8. The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) noted that Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings* were missing from the table in Annex 1 to the document. Canada proposed a new recommendation d) to replace the footnote in Annex 2 to the document. The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley), Mexico and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland supported this additional recommendation by Canada. Mexico proposed additional language to better align the recommendations and the Annexes with the terminology used in Decisions 19.32 to 19.34.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 8 amended as follows:

- a) The Committee agreed with the report on the 'CITES and forests compendium: CoP19-CoP20' as contained in Annex 1 to the present summary record.
- b) The Committee invited the Secretariat to use the revised draft terms of reference contained in Annex 2 to the present summary record in the process of commissioning the study called for in paragraph b) of Decision 19.32.
- c) The Committee invited the Secretariat to incorporate in its report to the Standing Committee the challenges and opportunities associated with any future initiative relating to CITES-listed forest species, with a particular focus on tree species, and to take into account the discussions at PC25, SC74, CoP19 and PC26.
- d) Concerning the scope of any new initiative on forests and the compendium on CITES and forests, the Committee agreed to continue focusing on CITES-listed tree species for this intersessional period recalling that during the CoP19, it was discussed that, although the scope could eventually necessitate consideration of all forest species, including both fauna and flora, the initial focus should be on tree species.

14. Country-wide Review of Significant Trade..... PC26 Doc. 14 / AC32 Doc. 13

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document PC26 Doc. 14 / AC32 Doc. 13 and proposed the establishment of a joint intersessional working group to enable the Animals and Plants Committees to, taking into account the progress made under the Compliance Assistance Programme and the development of a Capacity-Building Framework, consider whether the scientific and management issues identified in the country-wide Review of Significant Trade for Madagascar would be sufficiently addressed, or whether a new mechanism should be developed to provide targeted support to Parties at a national level.

The United States of America supported the establishment of a joint intersessional working group and proposed edits to the terms of reference to better align them with the terminology used in Decision 19.47.

The Committee established a joint intersessional working group on country-wide Review of Significant Trade with a mandate to:

- a) review the progress updates on the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) in document SC74 Doc. 29, document CoP19 Doc. 30 and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*; and capacity-building activities in documents SC74 Doc. 22, document CoP19 Doc. 16 and Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building*;
- b) consider whether scientific and management issues identified in the country-wide Review of Significant Trade for Madagascar and outlined in document AC30 Doc. 12.3/PC24 Doc. 13.3 are sufficiently addressed through existing mechanisms or, if appropriate, propose amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) or other existing resolutions, develop a new resolution, or propose a new mechanism to undertake such reviews; and
- c) present its findings and recommendations to the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committee in 2024.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth);

Parties: Canada, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Germany, Madagascar, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, ForestBased Solutions, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

15. CITES Tree Species Programme PC26 Doc. 15

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 15 and drew the Committee's attention to the numerous outputs prepared by the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP) that were available on the CITES website. The Secretariat noted that the European Union had committed bridging funding that could enable the CTSP to continue, provided additional funding could be raised.

The representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon) acknowledged the CTSP as one of the most successful actions of CITES bringing real support to developing countries in the implementation of CITES with respect to tree-species, such as support for the development of non-detriment findings. The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) further called for the programme to be expanded to all six CITES regions.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia and Malaysia explained how they had benefitted from the CTSP and, echoed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, called for the CTSP to become a permanent part of CITES. Indonesia furthermore called for the CTSP to be extended and expanded from a national project approach to a species-based regional approach. The World Wide Fund for Nature, speaking also on behalf of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and TRAFFIC, expressed a similar sentiment and highlighted further its importance with the additional tree species that were included in the Appendices at CoP19 and noted that one donor was not enough for the long-term sustainability of the programme.

The United States of America supported the scientific results of the CTSP and recommendations in the document and drew the Committee's attention to the funding it was providing to support the role of the International Tropical Timber Organization's expertise with CITES-listed tree species in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat. IPCI France Europe expressed its willingness to share its experience with replanting projects for timber used for bows.

The Committee noted the scientific results produced under the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP) and their contribution to relevant processes of the Convention.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to bring to the attention of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) the CITES Non-Detriment Finding's Project the outputs produced under the CTSP, and their linkages and contributions to the project's relevant workstreams.

The Committee requested the in-session working group on CITES and forests to consider the information provided in document PC26 Doc. 15 when it advises the Secretariat on the draft terms of reference contained in Annex 2 to document PC26 Doc. 13.

The Committee agreed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo would participate in the in-session working group on CITES and forests.

16. Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

16.1 Overview of the Review of Significant Trade PC26 Doc. 16.1

The Secretariat introduced the overview document on the Review of Significant Trade and informed the Committee of the latest developments on the Review of Significant Trade (RST) Tracking and Management database.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) indicated that this agenda item provided a good opportunity to more fully explore the functionality and content of the new RST Tracking and Management system and proposed that additional input be sought following the meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees, perhaps through a second Notification, so that Parties having now used the database to prepare for the meetings can provide more insightful comments.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 16.1.

16.2 Ongoing cases selected between CoP11 and CoP17 PC26 Doc. 16.2

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 16.2 that provides updates on three cases for which the Secretariat would like to seek feedback from the Plants Committee, ahead of its reporting to the Standing Committee at SC77. The three cases concerned the Democratic Republic of the Congo / *Pericopsis elata*, Democratic Republic of the Congo / *Prunus africana* and Panama / *Dalbergia retusa*.

The representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon) expressed its satisfaction with Panama's progress towards a non-detriment finding and approved of the voluntary zero export quota in wild specimens of *Dalbergia retusa* established by Panama. Panama provided an update on its implementation of the Committee's recommendations to improve their management of *Dalbergia retusa* and on its efforts to fight against illegal trade in the species. Mexico also acknowledged the efforts made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and by Panama in the three cases concerned. The Democratic Republic of the Congo highlighted that it had been able to achieve progress in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in part thanks to the CITES Tree Species Programme (as further discussed under agenda item 16.5 below).

16.3 Implementation of the recommendations of the Plants Committee by Madagascar on *Prunus africana* PC26 Doc. 16.3

Madagascar informed the Committee that it had previously been part of the Review of Significant Trade for *Prunus africana* and that it had requested the Secretariat to publish a zero export quota for that species since 2009. Since then, Madagascar had made progress towards a non-detriment finding and asked the Committee for its approval for a limited quota to test out its management system for the species.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth) expressed some concerns about the data presented and noted that it did not constitute a full stock-take of the species on Madagascar. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United States of America and Zimbabwe acknowledged the significant advances made by Madagascar thanks in part to the CITES Tree Species Programme. While noting the limited scope of the report, this showed nevertheless progress on *Prunus africana* that could be useful for other range States and highlighted the Review of Significant Trade as an important tool for the implementation of the Convention.

16.4 Ongoing cases of species selected following CoP18 (*Pterocarpus erinaceus* as an exceptional case)..... PC26 Doc. 16.4

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 16.4 that provides some background and updates on the exceptional selection of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in the RST process. The Secretariat drew the Committee's attention to paragraphs 11 and 13 highlighting the simultaneous Article XIII and RST procedures relevant to African rosewood. The Secretariat asked the Committee to focus its consideration on the cases listed in the table under paragraph 13.

Mali introduced its non-detriment finding (NDF) in Annex 3 to document PC26 Doc. 16.4, noting that it had followed the advice from the 2008 Cancun workshop in the preparation of its NDF. Based on this NDF, Mali proposes an export quota of 55,384.8 m³.

The United States of America acknowledged the advances made by the range States and called for the organization of a regional workshop for range States of the species so that they can address challenges together.

and

16.5 Selection of new species/country combinations for review following CoP19 PC26 Doc. 16.5

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 16.5 that contained a summary from the CITES Trade Database of annual report statistics showing the recorded level of direct exports for Appendix-II species over the five most recent years (Annex 1), and an extended analysis of trade to inform the preliminary selection of species/country combinations (Annex 2). The extended analysis outlined the process used to identify candidate taxa for inclusion in the Review of Significant Trade based on the guidance contained in Annex 2 to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) and presented a list of possible candidate species/country combinations thus identified.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) drew attention to the fact that the data included in the extended analysis should cover trade data for all distribution statuses except for species-exporter combinations where the species had been introduced (and was not native to the country) and noted Parties where the species had been introduced had not been excluded from the analysis. Mexico, Malaysia and Thailand provided updates on the trade data for the species/country combinations that concerned them.

The Committee established an in-session working group on the Review of Significant Trade with the mandate to:

- a) regarding document PC26 Doc. 16.2, support the Secretariat in monitoring and facilitating the implementation of the RST recommendations for the three species/country combinations covered in document PC26 Doc. 16.2, by providing specific inputs on the progress achieved thus far, and draft any additional recommendations for the Secretariat to consider in preparation for its reporting to the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC77);
- b) consider document PC26 Doc. 16.3 and make recommendations for consideration of the Plants Committee;
- c) regarding document PC26 Doc. 16.4:
 - i) provide feedback and advice to assist range States in the timely and effective implementation of the RST recommendations in Annex 1;
 - ii) support the Secretariat in monitoring and facilitating the implementation of the RST recommendations by relevant *Pterocarpus erinaceus* range States by drafting specific inputs on the progress achieved thus far; and
 - iii) draft any additional recommendations in support of the Secretariat's reporting on this matter to the Standing Committee at SC77.
- d) regarding document PC26 Doc. 16.5, select a limited number of species/country combinations of greatest concern for inclusion in Stage 2 of the Review of Significant Trade;
- e) draft recommendations for the Plants Committee to consider in preparation for the Secretariat's report on these matters to SC77.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley);

Members: alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon), representatives for Europe (Ms. Smyth and Ms. Moser), acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave);

Parties: Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Georgia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Panama, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America,

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, American Herbal Products Association, Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, Center for International Environmental Law, Chambre Syndicale de la Façture Instrumentale, ICPI France Europe, TRAFFIC, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature

Later, the Committee agreed that Togo and the International Union for Conservation of Nature would participate in the in-session working group on the Review of Significant Trade.

Following the meeting of the in-session working group, the representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) introduced document PC26 Com. 6 and provided an update on the membership of the working group. He highlighted that discrepancies in source codes between importer data and exporter data should be resolved before the analysis is submitted to the Committee for its consideration. He proposed deletion of the paragraph on *Cyathea* spp. and amendments to the paragraph on *Mammillaria* spp.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), the representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon), the acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave), the alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malaysia and Singapore expressed the following concerns with the data presented: some Parties were incorrectly included as range States, for instance Guatemala for *Aquilaria malaccensis*; the data didn't identify trade that was re-exports; and the fact that trade that was indicated as artificially propagated (source code 'A') by the exporting Party that was subsequently reported as wild (source code 'W') by the importing Party, and the importer data is used in the gross analysis. They stated that since the data was incorrect, countries that had been incorrectly selected should not be included in stage 1 of the RST process.

Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America argued for including these species/country combinations, noting that it was during stage 1 that countries could provide evidence proving that the data was incorrect.

The Secretariat clarified the RST process and explained that, within 30 days after the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee, it would request range States to provide the scientific basis by which it is established that exports from their country are not detrimental to the survival of the species concerned and are compliant with Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) of the Convention. Range States would be given 60 days to respond. After provision of these answers, the Secretariat would prepare a report for the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee recommending removal of specific species/country combinations from the RST process where it has been established that the recorded trade doesn't warrant inclusion in RST because the export is from a non-range State; because there are data discrepancies; because the trade recorded was in fact a re-export or because the wrong source codes were used.

The United States of America, echoed by the United Kingdom, highlighted that removal from the RST process should take place at the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and not prior.

On agenda item 16.2, the representative for Africa (Mr. Balama), the acting representative for Africa (Mr. Lagarde), the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali stated that two additional recommendations recommending the removal of the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the RST process for *Pericopsis elata* and *Prunus africana* had been omitted from the working group report. Belgium indicated that the 2021 non-detriment finding of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for *Pericopsis elata* available on the CITES website was not the final one and that it was thus premature to decide on the withdrawal of the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the RST process for this species.

Panama supported the recommendations related to Panama/*Dalbergia retusa* and informed the Committee that it did not intend to resume trade in *Dalbergia retusa* in the short or medium term. Panama was in fact considering closing trade in *Dalbergia retusa*.

Georgia informed the Committee that it had prepared a detailed PowerPoint Presentation on the RST process and would be happy to share it with interested participants.

The Committee noted that the alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong), Australia, Cameroon, Ireland, Peru, Singapore, Switzerland and Togo had participated in the working group on the Review of Significant Trade and that the representative for Europe (Ms. Moser) participated in the working group as Switzerland.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 6 amended as follows:

Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Pericopsis elata* (selected following CoP11)

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat takes into account the positive feedback received on the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Pericopsis elata*, in its reporting to SC77.

The Committee further recommended for the Secretariat to, in consultation with the Chair of the Plants Committee, publish the quota proposed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Committee further recommended that the Secretariat consider the withdrawal of Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Pericopsis elata* from the Review of Significant Trade in its reporting to SC77 based on the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Prunus africana* (selected following CoP16)

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat take into account the positive feedback received on the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Prunus africana*, in its reporting to SC77.

The Committee further recommended that the Secretariat consider the withdrawal of Democratic Republic of the Congo/*Prunus africana* from the Review of Significant Trade in its reporting to SC77 due to the progress made by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

Panama/*Dalbergia retusa* (selected following CoP17)

The Committee recommended for the Secretariat to consider recommending the removal of Panama/*D. retusa* in its reporting to SC77. This is in light of the progress achieved in the implementation of the RST recommendations and Panama's intention to retain the zero export quota until export quotas higher than zero are deemed sustainable. Panama would need to submit their NDF to the Plants Committee for consideration prior to the resumption of trade.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Plants Committee by Madagascar on *Prunus africana*

The Committee acknowledged and commended the work and progress of Madagascar in meeting the recommendations of the PC. The Committee invited the Secretariat to publish the requested quota for 2024 (for the region Sofia II in Madagascar).

Benin/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Benin in implementing the short-term recommendation (paragraph a) and recommended that the remaining recommendations be addressed as a case study at the NDF workshop.

Burkina Faso/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Burkina Faso in implementing the short-term recommendation (paragraph a) and recommended the retention of the long-term recommendations.

Gambia (the)/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee noted that no progress has been made by the Gambia in the implementation of the recommendations contained in Annex 1 and recommended that the Secretariat reports to SC77 that the recommendations (short-term and long-term) have not been implemented. The Committee further noted that a recommendation to suspend trade is already in place under Article XIII.

Ghana/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Ghana in implementing the short-term recommendation (paragraph a) and recommended the retention of the long-term recommendations.

Guinea Bissau/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee noted that no progress has been made by Guinea Bissau in the implementation of the recommendations contained in Annex 1 and recommended that the Secretariat reports to SC77 that the recommendations (short-term and long-term) have not been implemented. The Committee further noted that a recommendation to suspend trade is already in place under Article XIII.

Mali/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the significant progress made by Mali in implementing the long-term recommendations and accepted that the NDF presented by Mali supports the quota requested. The Committee further noted that a recommendation to suspend trade is already in place under Article XIII and that trade can only resume once this suspension is lifted. The Committee further recommended that the Secretariat publish any potential future quota proposed by Mali in round wood equivalent.

Nigeria/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Nigeria in implementing the short-term recommendation (paragraph a) and recommended the retention of the long-term recommendations. The Committee further noted that a recommendation to suspend trade is already in place under Article XIII.

Sierra Leone/ *Pterocarpus erinaceus*

The Committee acknowledged the progress made by Sierra Leone in implementing the short-term recommendation (paragraph a) and the significant progress made in delivering the long-term recommendations.

Selection of new species/country combinations for review following CoP19

In accordance with paragraph 1 b) of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18), the Committee recommended the following species/country combinations for inclusion in Stage 2 of the Review of Significant Trade. Cases where Parties are confirmed as non-range States and where discrepancies in the trade data is explained will be removed and reported to PC27.

Species	Country selected	Justification
<i>Euphorbia poissonii</i>	Ghana (GH)	Sharp increase (global); Sharp increase (Ghana)
<i>Dalbergia melanoxylon</i>	Mozambique (MZ); United Republic of Tanzania (TZ); Uganda (UG); Kenya (KE)	High volume (Globally Threatened); Sharp increase (Kenya)
<i>Dalbergia tucurensis</i>	Nicaragua (NI)	Endangered species; High volume (Globally Threatened)
<i>Guibourtia tessmannii</i>	Equatorial Guinea (GQ), Gabon (GA), Cameroon (CM)	Endangered species; High volume (Globally Threatened)
<i>Osyris lanceolata</i>	All Range States plus South Sudan*	High volume; Sharp increase (United Republic of Tanzania)
<i>Aquilaria crassna</i>	Viet Nam (VN), Thailand (TH), Malaysia (MY)*	Endangered species; Sharp increase (Viet Nam)

<i>Aquilaria malaccensis</i>	Indonesia (ID), Malaysia (MY), Singapore (SG), Thailand (TH), India (IN)	Endangered species; High volume (Globally Threatened)
<i>Gyrinops</i> spp.	Indonesia (ID), Papua New Guinea (PG)	Sharp increase (global); Sharp increase (Indonesia)

* An asterisk denotes a non-range State.

Echinocactus grusonii (endemic to Mexico)

The Committee noted exports of this species from several non-range States, including the Netherlands, Iran and Thailand. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat follow up with these Parties on the origin of the parental stock and the use of source codes and report any issues arising to the Standing Committee.

Mammillaria laui (endemic to Mexico)

The Committee noted exports of this species from the Netherlands, which is not a range State. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat follow up with the Netherlands on the origin of the parental stock and the use of source codes and report any issues arising to the Standing Committee.

Mammillaria spp.

The Committee noted exports of *Mammillaria* spp., which is native to America, from China, Iran and the Netherlands. The Committee recommended that the Secretariat follows up with these Parties on their use of source codes, confirm whether or not they are range States for species within this genus, on the origin of the parental stock and whether they are reported at the genus or species level and report any issues arising to the Standing Committee.

The Committee also noted concerns on the data presented in the tables found in the Annexes to document PC26 Doc. 16.5, specifically concerning re-exports and trade that was indicated as artificially propagated (source code 'A') by the exporting Party that was subsequently reported as wild (source code 'W') by the importing Party, and the importer data is used in the gross analysis. The Committee recommended inviting the Secretariat to liaise with UNEP-WCMC to see if there is a way that such errors could be addressed at an earlier stage in the RST process in future analyses.

17. Non-detriment findings PC26 Doc. 17 / AC32 Doc. 16

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 17 / AC32 Doc. 16 summarizing ongoing work in the CITES non-detriment finding (NDF) project. The Secretariat noted that the United Nations Campus (UNON) in Gigiri, Nairobi (Kenya) had been identified as the venue for the NDF workshop scheduled from 4 to 8 December 2023.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 17 / AC32 Doc. 16.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

18. Sustainability criteria for timber non-detriment findings PC26 Doc. 18

The European Union introduced document PC26 Doc. 18 and noted that, as a big consumer of timber, it sought to ensure that timber trade should be as sustainable as possible. The document highlighted two considerations: there was a need for permanent forest management to ensure sustainability and the regeneration capacity of tree species was a key indicator for sustainability. The European Union wished to inform the Committee of its approach and invited comments on the document as well as suggested improvements.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) suggested that the Committee should not take note of the document. This refusal to note the document was echoed by the representative for Africa (Mr. Balama), Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Togo and Zimbabwe.

The alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong) encouraged range State to provide feedback to the European Union about their practices, while the representative for North America (Mr. Boles), Indonesia and

Zimbabwe suggested that the upcoming December workshop on non-detriment finding would be a suitable forum for consideration of this document.

The representative for Africa (Mr. Balama) expressed its lack of support for the document and, echoed by Cameroon and Indonesia, noted that timber can come from non-forest domains. He noted that African range States and African experts had not been consulted about this matter and encouraged African Parties to provide feedback on the approach to the EU. Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Togo and Zimbabwe echoed the position of their regional representative, noting the economic impacts of such an approach and further questioned the scientific basis of the document with Cameroon drawing the Committee's attention to its position paper in information document PC26 Inf. 5. The Democratic Republic of the Congo qualified the European Union's approach of scientifically uncertain, economically dangerous, politically explosive and legally unfounded and asked for its intervention to be included in the summary record. This can be found in Annex 3 of this summary record.

Mexico noted that, while CITES allows for stricter domestic measures, export permits are based on non-detriment findings and further noted that "areas not under permanent forest management" is not a terminology recognized by CITES.

The Committee noted the concerns raised regarding document PC26 Doc. 18 and invited the Secretariat to publish a Notification to the Parties to refer any feedback on document PC26 Doc. 18 to the European Union.

19. Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species PC26 Doc. 19 / AC32 Doc. 19.1

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 19 / AC32 Doc. 19.1 and noted that Decision 19.142 directs the Animals and Plant Committee to establish a joint working group to review selected identification materials and to assess the need for revision and improvement, taking into account materials that have been developed by Parties, and materials requested in Decisions and Resolutions. To support this work, the Secretariat had prepared a list of references to species identification in Resolutions, contained in Annex 1 and to Decisions, contained in Annex 2.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) supported the terms of reference of the proposed intersessional working group and proposed some amendments as reflected below [see additional recommendations b) and c)]. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland supported the amendments proposed by the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) and drew the Committee's attention to information documents PC26 Inf. 3 and PC26 Inf. 7. Germany announced that it had launched an updated version of the CITES wood ID app and drew the Committee's attention to information document PC26 Inf. 8.

The Committee established a joint intersessional working group on materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species with a mandate to:

- a) review selected identification materials and assess the need for their revision and improvement, taking into account the materials that are being developed or have already been developed by Parties and materials requested in Decisions or Resolutions as well as materials received in response to the Notification to the Parties No. 2023/051, and other relevant information, such as that compiled during previous discussions of joint intersessional working groups established since CoP16 (Thailand, 2013);
- b) take into consideration other items on the agendas of the Animals and Plants Committees related to the development of identification material to support coordination and avoid duplication of effort;
- c) when assessing gaps in identification materials, take into account those taxa that have been included in the Appendices at higher taxon levels solely due to look-alike issues, as well as the need for frontline and forensic identification tools;
- d) consider ways to improve the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species, including considerations and implications of linking identification materials directly in the *Checklist of CITES Species* (checklist.cites.org/#/en); and
- e) report on the progress with these activities to the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong);

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Balama);

Parties: Canada, China, European Union, India, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, American Herbal Products Association, Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, ForestBased Solutions, International Wood Products Association, Species Survival Network.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

20. Identification of timber and other wood products..... PC26 Doc. 20

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 20 providing an update on a series of activities relating to the improvement and review of the online timber repository. The Secretariat presented draft terms of reference for improving the timber online repository.

The representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave), the representative for Europe (Ms. Moser) and the representative for North America (Mr. Boles), echoed by Canada, India, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, highlighted the importance of this work, in particular for customs officers who need to identify tree species, and agreed that further work would be necessary with the establishment of an intersessional working group. The representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave) called for the organization of workshops for customs officials. India suggested that the development of identification materials for *Dalbergia* species should be a priority in order to help them differentiate *Dalbergia sisoo* from other *Dalbergia* species. The Republic of Korea highlighted the need for simplified technology for customs officers and drew the attention of the Committee to the potential of artificial intelligence for timber identification purposes.

The Committee agreed the draft terms of reference for the maintenance and expansion of the repository on timber identification contained in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 20 as amended by Canada and the Republic of Korea as follows:

Output 3: Assessment of techniques and tools relevant to the identification of timber and other wood products to inform the Plants Committee related to its implementation of Decision 19.147

3.1 Undertake a desk review of available techniques and tools, including cutting-edge technology such as artificial intelligence, and evaluate their standards and usefulness to species-specific identification and enforcement for CITES-listed tree species and their look-alikes.

The Committee established an intersessional working group on timber identification with the mandate to discuss and agree on a way forward for the implementation of paragraphs a) to h) of Decision 19.147, including consideration of Annex 2 to document PC26 Doc. 20 and report back to the Plants Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: Canada;

Members: alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Chong), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon), representative for North America (Mr. Boles);

Parties: Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Germany, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America;

IGOs and NGOs: International Tropical Timber Organization, Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux, ForestBased Solutions, International Wood Products Association, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature.

21. Transport of live specimens PC26 Doc. 21 / AC32 Doc. 20

The United States of America introduced document PC26 Doc. 21 / AC32 Doc. 20 that proposed a way forward for the organization of a workshop to share best practices related to live animal and plant transport.

The Committee requested the representative for Europe (Ms. Moser) and the representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley), in collaboration with the Secretariat, to develop the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the virtual workshop to share best practices related to live animal and plant transport and submit the ToR for consideration by the Standing Committee. The Committee furthermore requested the Secretariat to publish a Notification to the Parties to welcome feedback about the workshop content and to request expressions of interest from Parties and relevant experts in serving as workshop instructors.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

22. Specimens produced through biotechnology PC26 Doc. 22 / AC32 Doc. 22

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 22 / AC32 Doc. 22 since Cuba, the author of the document and Chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology, was not present at the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee. The document provided an update on the work of the Standing Committee's working group and invited the Animals and Plants Committees to nominate representatives for that working group. The Secretariat noted that it had not secured the necessary funding estimated at USD 80,000 to organize a meeting and develop guidance on the implementation of the amendment to Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives*.

The United States of America supported the recommendations in the document.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 22 / AC32 Doc. 22 and agreed to nominate the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) to participate in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology.

23. Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source..... PC26 Doc. 23 / AC32 Doc. 25.1

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document PC26 Doc. 23 / AC32 Doc. 25.1 proposing the establishment of a joint intersessional working group to support the implementation of Decision 19.180.

Canada, as co-Chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on trade in specimens not of wild source, provided an update on the working group's activities and drew the Committee's attention to information document PC26 Inf. 2 that provided a draft road map for a review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source. Canada would welcome comments on the draft roadmap. Canada further encouraged the Animals and Plants Committees to focus on paragraphs C, D and E of the draft terms of reference in the Annex to the document.

Mexico, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America concurred with Canada about the scope of terms of reference of the joint intersessional working group and pondered the best way forward for that working group in order to avoid duplication with the work of the Standing Committee and to ensure that inputs for both fauna and flora be submitted to the Standing Committee's working group.

The Committee established a joint intersessional working group on trade in specimens not of wild source that will work separately and jointly with the mandate to:

- a) consider the key elements in the current implementation of Article VII paragraphs 4 and 5 for animals and plants, respectively, in the current applicable Resolutions;
- b) determine if there is a need to implement Article VII paragraphs 4 and 5 differently for either animal specimens from species bred in captivity or plant specimens that are artificially propagated than what

is outlined in existing Resolutions, and provide their recommendations to the Standing Committee in time for its 78th meeting;

- c) provide any other scientific advice and guidance on CITES provisions concerning trade in non-wild specimens of CITES-listed animal and plant species to the Standing Committee upon request and as appropriate; and
- d) report on progress to the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley);

Parties: Australia, Canada, European Union, Germany, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Euromed, TRAFFIC.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

The Committee agreed to nominate the Chair for PC of the joint intersessional working group to participate in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group and invited the co-Chairs of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group to work closely with the AC/PC joint intersessional working group in implementing their mandates.

24. Guidance on the term 'artificially propagated' PC26 Doc. 24

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 24 and informed the Committee that the *Preliminary guidance on terms related to the artificial propagation of CITES regulated plants* was published on the CITES website in February 2022. Thanks to partial funding for this work, the Secretariat would revise and amend this preliminary guidance and submit it for approval by the Plants Committee.

Canada informed the Committee that work was being undertaken by Mexico, the United States of America and Canada under the trilateral Commission for Environmental Cooperation to develop guidance on CITES source code Y implementation and conducting non-detriment findings for tree species. With respect to the guidance document under revision, Canada suggested that the guidance should clarify explicitly that, because source code Y specimens do not meet the definition of "artificially propagated", they do not qualify for the exemptions and other special provisions under Article VII, paragraphs 4 or 5. With respect to the review of the document *A guide to the application of CITES source codes*, Canada supported the addition of text that would incorporate information about the new source code Y and noted some errors in the source code dichotomous key at the bottom of page 7 and in Box 28 on page 17, where the respective schematics suggest that source code D in plants would only apply to cases where the specimen has been propagated at a CITES-registered nursery. The guide also incorrectly suggests use of source code A for Appendix-I plants grown for commercial purposes.

Mexico drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 4 c) of Resolution Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Regulation of trade in plants*, which recommends that, for populations of Appendix-I listed species, an exception may be granted and specimens deemed to be artificially propagated for operations propagating Appendix-I species for commercial purposes under such conditions they are registered with the CITES Secretariat in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of nurseries that artificially propagate specimens of Appendix-I plant species for export purposes*. Mexico further recalled that the legal origin of the parental stock of these nurseries should be verified.

The Committee noted the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decision 19.182 and requested the Secretariat to take into account the comments made in plenary when it prepares a revised version of the *Preliminary guidance on terms related to the artificial propagation of CITES regulated plants* and *A Guide to the application of CITES source codes*.

25. Assessment of Appendix-I listed species PC26 Doc. 25 / AC32 Doc. 26

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 25 / AC32 Doc. 26 and presented the result of a rapid assessment of conservation status of, and legal and illegal in trade in species include in Appendix I. The Secretariat selected a list of ten species for detailed assessments, which includes two flora species. The Secretariat was working on detailed assessments of these ten species to provide examples of Appendix-I species across different categories of conservation status, threats and level of legal and illegal trade, to identify actions that could be taken under CITES to improve the status of the species and provide information to refine the methodology for an assessment of Appendix-I species. A brief summary of the detailed assessments was provided in the Annex to the document.

The Committee established a joint intersessional working group on Appendix-I species to:

- a) review the results of the rapid assessment in information document AC31 Inf. 6/ PC25 Inf. 8 on Rapid assessment of Appendix-I taxa that could potentially benefit from further CITES action, the suggestions in document AC31/PC25 Com. 1 (Rev. by Sec.), the Annex to the present document, the case studies and responses from range States on the 10 species selected for detailed assessments;
- b) refine the methodology and its criteria for carrying out an assessment of species listed in Appendix I that might benefit from measures adopted by the Conference of the Parties; and
- c) formulate draft recommendations for consideration at the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Members: representative for North America (Mr. Boles);

Parties: European Union, Germany, Madagascar, Mexico, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nation Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, International Union for Conservation of Nature, ForestBased Solutions, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

26. Identifying species at risk of extinction affected by international trade..... PC26 Doc. 26 / AC32 Doc. 27

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document PC26 Doc. 26 / AC32 Doc. 27 focusing on a possible process or mechanism under Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building* to provide Parties with information to be considered in the preparation of listing proposals when Parties request such information. A few options for sharing information are contained in paragraph 8 of the document and capacity-building options are contained in paragraph 9. The Chair of the Animals Committee proposed the establishment of a joint intersessional working group to move forward on this work.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on the issue, provided an update on its work: it had shared a tentative timeline with members of the working group indicating that the working group discussions depend on the timing of recommendations coming from the Animals and Plants Committees and that there will be a short window for the working group to develop its recommendations to the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee following the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee to conclude its work.

The Committee established a joint intersessional working group on species at risk of extinction with the mandate to develop draft recommendations on:

- a) a possible process or mechanism under Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building* to provide Parties with information to be considered in the preparation of listing proposals when Parties request information such as:
 - i) relevant studies, analyses or other sources of information on the identification of species at risk of extinction that are not yet regulated under CITES and may be affected by international trade, or
 - ii) relevant studies, analyses or other sources of information on the identification of species that may receive insufficient CITES regulation and may be affected by international trade;
- b) possible processes/mechanisms for providing support or guidance to Parties in the development of listing proposals in addition to the process or mechanism referred to under a) above;
- c) coordination with the CITES Secretariat, CITES Parties, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC, FAO, regional competent authorities, and relevant experts, as appropriate as part of a possible process/es or mechanism/s to provide Parties with information to be considered in the preparation of listing proposals when Parties request information; and
- d) report back with its recommendations to the joint session of the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and 27th meeting of the Plants Committees.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: representative for North America (Mr. Boles);

Members: Chair of the Plants Committee (representative for Africa, Ms. Koumba Pambo) and the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Parties: Canada, European Union, Mexico, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

The Committee agreed to nominate its Chair (representative for Africa, Ms. Koumba Pambo), the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), the representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth) and the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) to participate in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on species at risk of extinction.

27. Agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.) PC26 Doc. 27

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document PC26 Doc. 27 summarizing work made on the development of potential revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.10 on *Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa* and on the *Agarwood glossary* and the *Agarwood NDF guidance*.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), Malaysia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America supported the establishment of an in-session working group to further refine the recommendations proposed in the document. The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) drew the Committee's attention to the study *Expensive, Exploited and Endangered – A review of the agarwood-producing genera Aquilaria and Gyrinops: CITES considerations, trade patterns, conservation, and management* in the Annex to the document as a good example of cooperation between CITES and ITTO in the context of the CITES Tree Species Programme, funded by the European Union.

The Committee established an in-session working group on agarwood with the mandate to review document CoP19 Doc. 62.2 and information documents CoP19 Inf. 5 (Rev. 1), CoP19 Inf. 12 and CoP19 Inf. 15 and to:

- a) in accordance with paragraph a) of Decision 19.239, consider potential revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.10 on *Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa*, taking into account

other relevant resolutions, including Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for tree species*, and Resolution Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Regulation of trade in plants*, as appropriate;

- b) in accordance with paragraph b) of Decision 19.239, draft any appropriate recommendations regarding the Agarwood glossary and the Agarwood NDF guidance; and
- c) draft recommendations for the Committee to consider and submit to the Standing Committee and/or the Conference of the Parties.

The membership was decided as follows:

Co-Chairs: representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) and alternate representative for Asia (Ms. Tongdonae);

Parties: Austria, China, European Union, France, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Oman, Republic of Korea, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: International Tropical Timber Organization, World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) introduced document PC26 Com. 2 and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America supported the terms of reference of the intersessional working group outlined in the document.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 2 as follows:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) include the agarwood discussions in the context of the upcoming NDF workshop and revise the guidance in the light of workshop outcomes;
- b) note that available information suggests that little is known about wild agarwood populations and inventory data and more monitoring is needed;
- c) note that NDFs should be developed for specimens taken from the wild or originating from assisted production;
- d) note that further work is needed on agarwood taxonomy, as discussed in the working group on nomenclature matters; and
- e) note that Indonesia and the United States of America have some updates and observations on the Agarwood glossary, and that the workshop held in Kuala Lumpur in 2022 proposed some amendments to the glossary.

The Committee established an intersessional working group on agarwood with the mandate to, taking into account document PC26 Doc. 27 and its Annex:

- a) in accordance with paragraph b) of Decision 19.239, formulate recommendations regarding the Agarwood glossary, taking into account relevant information;
- b) in accordance with paragraph a) of Decision 19.239, consider potential revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.10 on *Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa*; taking into account other relevant resolutions, including Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for tree species*, and Resolution Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Regulation of trade in plants*, as appropriate;
- c) additionally consider consequential recommendations with respect to paragraph 3(b)iv of Resolution Conf. 13.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Control of trade in personal and household effects*; as appropriate; and
- d) report its recommendations to PC27.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Parties: Austria, China, European Union, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, International Tropical Timber Organization, World Wide Fund for Nature.

28. Boswellia trees (*Boswellia* spp.)

28.1 Report of the Secretariat..... PC26 Doc. 28.1

and

28.2 Conservation status, trade and threats to the genus *Boswellia* (Frankincense) PC26 Doc. 28.2

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 28.1 summarizing the conclusion of the report on *Boswellia species in international trade: Identification, supply chains and practical management*, contained in the Annex to the document. The document further provided suggestions for meetings or other venues that might provide opportunities to collaborate or share information regarding harvest and management of *Boswellia* species.

Switzerland introduced document PC26 Doc. 28.2 which called for the organization of a meeting of the range States for *Boswellia* species, possibly in the framework of the next frankincense symposium to be held in Salalah/Oman. Switzerland also called for the establishment of an intersessional working group.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles), the representative for Oceania (Mr Wrigley), Oman and the United States of America supported the establishment of an intersessional working group. India recalled its position at CoP19 that it was against a genus level listing and that work should focus on the identification of species in trade that are endangered. The United States of America agreed that the International Federation of Essential Oils and Aroma Trades was the right venue for this work and disagreed with the conclusion contained in paragraph 4 d) of document PC26 Doc. 28.1 that the inclusion of *Boswellia* species in the CITES Appendices could contribute to illegal trade.

The Committee established an intersessional working group on *Boswellia* with the mandate to:

- a) in accordance with Decision 19.242, paragraph a), and considering the information in document PC26 Doc. 28.2, identify meetings or other venues that might provide opportunities to collaborate or share information regarding harvest and management of *Boswellia* species, and consider to propose draft decisions regarding a possible range State meeting to be organized by the Secretariat, subject to available funding;
- b) in accordance with Decision 19.242, paragraph b), review document PC26 Doc. 28.1 and its Annexes and make recommendations to inform possible listing proposals for *Boswellia* species, including consideration of appropriate annotations consistent with the guidance in Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP19) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*; and
- c) report its recommendations to the Committee at its 27th meeting.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth);

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Balama), representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Parties: China, European Union, Germany, India, Oman, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, United States of America;

IGOs and NGO: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, American Herbal Products Association, Industria Derivati Naturali, Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

29. Rosewood tree species PC26 Doc. 29

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 29 presenting draft terms of reference for a study on the conservation and trade in rosewood tree species, contained in Annex 1 to the document. The Secretariat noted that the draft terms of reference anticipated reporting preliminary findings and recommendations at the international expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDF), and specifically to workstream 9 of the NDF project on high-value timber tree species.

The representative for Africa (Mr. Balama) requested more time for range States to provide comments on the draft terms of reference. The representative for North America (Mr. Boles), echoed by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland, highlighted that the broad study called for in document PC26 Doc. 29 had greater potential to generate relevant information than the study called for in document PC26 Doc. 37 on annotation #15. To avoid duplication of effort, the rosewood tree species study should seek to include elements of the annotation #15 study, or, at the very least, be undertaken with the goals of that study in mind. The United Kingdom further queried the timeline for the study and suggested that output 1, in particular activities 1.3 c) and d), should be prioritized.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to consider the following comments as it finalizes the terms of reference contained in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 29. This study on the conservation and trade of rosewood tree species should:

- a) ideally be done before the study called for in Decision 18.321 (Rev. CoP19) is initiated because the scope is broader and has the potential to generate information that could inform the study under Decision 18.321 (CoP19);
- b) include relevant elements of the study called for in Decision 18.321 (Rev. CoP19), as appropriate;
- c) allow for enough time for range States to provide comments; and
- d) prioritize output 1, especially activity 1.3 c) and d), so that these elements are available for consideration and discussion at the international Non-Detriment Finding workshop scheduled to take place in December 2023.

30. Products containing specimens of Appendix II orchids (Orchidaceae spp.) PC26 Doc. 30

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 30 that included a study entitled *A Review of the Edible Orchid Trade* and its supplementary material. The study listed orchid species known to be edible; compiled information on international trade in food products that contain orchid specimens; analysed whether this trade appears to be registered in the CITES Trade Database; and reviewed available information on the conservation impacts of such trade. The Secretariat drew the Committee's attention to the unregulated international trade in tuberous orchid products and invited the Committee to comment on draft terms of reference for the study referred to in Decision 19.246 paragraph b).

The United States of America commended the considerable work undertaken so far on this issue and provided specific comments on the draft terms of reference as outlined below.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to consider the following comments as it finalizes the terms of reference for the study referred to in Decision 19.246 paragraph b). The terms of reference should:

- a) clarify what would constitute a "potential concern based on the analysis of the trade data"; and
- b) take into account prior work and information on products containing specimens of Appendix-II orchids, notably by Switzerland.

The Committee established an in-session working group on orchids with the mandate to:

- a) review document PC26 Doc. 30 and its Annexes;

- b) in accordance with Decision 19.247, draft recommendations on how to improve CITES compliance for Appendix-II listed orchids for the Plants Committee to consider and submit to the Standing Committee or the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate; and
- c) report its recommendations to the Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth);

Members: representative for Europe (Ms. Moser) and representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Parties: China, European Union, France, Germany, India, Slovakia, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGO: TRAFFIC.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth) introduced document PC26 Com. 4; the United States of America proposed some grammatical edits to the document.

The Committee noted that the alternate for Europe (Mr. De Boer) had also attended the in-session working group and agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 4 amended by the United States of America as follows:

The Committee recommended to:

- a) develop identification manuals as all tuberous orchids are currently listed in CITES Appendices. The main challenge is to distinguish tubers, as a group, from other specimens.
- b) address needs for additional support for ongoing red list assessments for tuberous orchids; and
- c) understand the regional differences in trade of tuberous orchids and how they translate into actions to strengthen CITES compliance, considering in particular any livelihood elements of this trade.

The Committee recommended that the Standing Committee:

- a) emphasize the need for identification manuals and training;
- b) urge Parties and other donors to support red list assessments for tuberous orchid taxa in international trade;
- c) urge Parties to regulate the trade in tuberous orchids as is currently required under the Convention;
- d) request the Secretariat to issue a Notification to Parties inviting them to provide information on:
 - i) trade volumes;
 - ii) manuals and regulations relating to trade in tuberous orchid, including domestic trade;
 - iii) enforcement challenges; and
 - iv) other relevant information related to trade in tuberous orchids, including any capacity-building needs.
- e) consider the study on edible orchids and responses to the Notification to prioritize issues relating to trade in tuberous orchids to be addressed, and to propose recommendations to CoP20, including any draft decisions, as appropriate.

31. Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*)..... PC26 Doc. 31

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 31 including draft terms of reference of a study to assess and monitor the implications of the amendment to annotation #10 on the conservation and international trade of Brazil wood.

The representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon), speaking on behalf of Brazil, indicated that activity 1.1 in the terms of reference should also include unfinished products (bow blanks) and the stocks of discarded materials as part of the production process during the manufacture of bows. The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) noted that engagement with the musical sector on these issues had contributed positively to the implementation of the Convention for *Paubrasilia echinata*.

The International Tropical Timber Organization, the International Society of Violin and Bow Makers, speaking also on behalf of the musical instrument industry, and the Species Survival Network highlighted the importance of the work on traceability systems and expressed their readiness to support Brazil and CITES for this work. Drawing attention to information document PC26 Inf. 4, the International Society of Violin and Bow Makers, speaking also on behalf of the musical instrument industry, highlighted its work on explaining CITES regulations to musicians and instrument makers and suggested that activities 1.1 and 2.2 should include consultations with stakeholders.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to consider the following comments as it finalizes the terms of reference contained in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 31. Specifically, Activity 1.1 of this study on improved implementation of the Appendix-II listing of *Paubrasilia echinata* should also consider a traceability system that would also include unfinished products (bow blanks) and the stocks of discarded materials as part of the production process during the manufacture of bows.

32. African tree species PC26 Doc. 32

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 32 which contained an updated overview of African tree species listed in the CITES Appendices in Annex 1 and a compilation of recommendations and discussions on the sustainable management of *Prunus africana* in Annexes 2 and 3.

The Committee established an in-session working group on African tree species with the mandate to:

- a) review and, as appropriate, revise the list of African tree species and associated CITES processes contained in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 32;
- b) based on Annexes 2 and 3 to document PC26 Doc. 32, and other relevant information, establish priorities to strengthen the implementation of the Convention for African tree species, including priorities and recommendations for the sustainable management and future work on *Prunus africana*, including linkages with the CITES Tree species programme, as per paragraph 7 of document PC26 Doc. 32; and
- c) report its recommendations to the Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Co-Chairs: representative for Africa (Mr. Balama) and alternate representative for Africa (Mr. Lagarde);

Parties: Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Germany, Madagascar, Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGOs: International Tropical Timber Organization, Center for International Environmental Law, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Africa (Mr. Balama) introduced document PC26 Com. 1 and the United States suggested adding a reference to the organization of a regional workshop on *Pterocarpus erinaceus*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 1 amended by the United States of America as follows:

The Committee recommended to:

- a) prioritize *Azalia* spp. for non-detriment findings (NDFS);
- b) prioritize *Prunus africana* and *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and other *Pterocarpus* species; and
- c) prioritize *Khaya* spp. for aspects not affected by ongoing nomenclature work.

The Committee noted that, with legal and illegal sandalwood trade from Africa increasing, this calls for capacity building for appropriate monitoring technologies across different entities. Capacity-building for newly listed species, including sharing data across countries for NDFS, is needed for species identified as priorities.

Regarding the preliminary overview of African tree species listed in the Appendix II, the Committee noted and agreed the table with minor amendments to be implemented by the Secretariat after the Committee meetings:

- amend *Pterocarpus* spp. row: Nigeria is subject to recommendation to suspend trade for *P. erinaceus*;
- add the Notification numbers on trade suspensions; and
- give more information about contributions of CTSP, specifically when NDFS were done.

Regarding *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, a regional workshop might be considered to promote open dialogue among Management Authorities and Scientific Authorities to share experiences, management information and improve regional coordination with the aim to improve overall management concerning the international trade in the species.

Regarding the recommendations on the sustainable management of *Prunus africana*: The main issues are monitoring (resource assessment and trade), and governance. Some parts of the recommendations in Annex 2 of the document are extremely prescriptive, but specifics may vary between and within countries. Those specifics need to be determined at national or local level. The Committee recommended inviting a case study on *Prunus africana* for the NDF workshop to discuss NDF methodologies.

33. Neotropical tree species..... PC26 Doc. 33

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 33 containing a list of neotropical tree species and associated CITES processes, included in the Annex to the document. The Secretariat invited the Committee to establish priorities for strengthening the implementation of the Convention for the neotropical tree species concerned, including linkages with the CITES Tree species programme.

The Committee established an in-session working group on neotropical tree species with the mandate to:

- a) review and, as appropriate, revise the list of neotropical tree species and associated CITES processes contained in the Annex to document PC26 Doc. 33;
- b) establish priorities for strengthening the implementation of the Convention for the neotropical tree species concerned, including linkages with the CITES Tree species programme, as per paragraph 6 of document PC26 Doc. 33;
- c) identify avenues to cooperate with Parties in making progress with the priorities identified; and
- d) draft recommendations for the Plants Committee to consider and submit to the Standing Committee and/or the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The membership was decided as follows:

Co-Chairs: representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon) and acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave);

Parties: Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: International Tropical Timber Organization, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, World Resources Institute and World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon) introduced document PC26 Com. 7 and, echoed by Colombia, Portugal and the Species Survival Network, proposed the establishment of an intersessional working group on neotropical tree species that would include all range States. Peru provided an update on the activities it had undertaken to implement the CoP19 Decisions related to neotropical tree species.

The Committee noted that the European Union and IPCI France Europe had participated in the working group.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 7 as follows:

The Committee established an intersessional working group on neotropical tree species open to the range States of neotropical tree species with the mandate to consider the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 7 and to draft recommendations for the Plants Committee at its 27th meeting.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Belteton Chacon);

Parties: Belgium, Chile, Colombia, European Union, France, Germany, Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Portugal, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: International Tropical Timber Organization, Center for International Environmental Law, International Society of Violin and Bow Makers, IPCI France Europe, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to publish a Notification to invite Parties to express an interest in joining the intersessional working group, noting that all range States of neotropical tree species are invited to be members of the working group. The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties.

The Committee agreed to exclude from the prioritization process the species *Araucaria araucana*, *Fitzroya cupressoides*, *Pilgerodendron uviferum* and *Abies guatemalensis*, *Podocarpus parlatorei*, *Balmea stormiae*; and noted that these recommendations to establish priorities may be applied to other CITES-listed neotropical species that are priority species for Parties who are range States.

The Committee recommended that projects be designed and promoted for the targeted species in order to build capacities, including: research on population studies, management plans, identification of species and timber, non-detriment findings, legal acquisition findings, and traceability in the trade of the species concerned.

The Committee recommended that mechanisms for cooperation with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions be established in order to obtain funding to enable implementation of prioritized activities, for which purpose, the Secretariat's support will be required.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to publish a Notification to the Parties requesting range States of neotropical tree species to:

- a) consider whether or not to confirm the prioritized list prepared by the working group at the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee; and
- b) invite Parties to submit information on priorities for strengthening implementation of the Convention with regard to neotropical tree species, based on the notification.

The Committee noted that implementation of projects funded by donors, and cooperation efforts involving other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, which already include species listed in the Annex to document PC26 Doc. 33, will continue. Further fundraising efforts will be geared towards new projects, based on the priorities established by the relevant Parties that are range States, in accordance with the results of the aforementioned Notification to the Parties.

34. Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41
PC26 Doc. 34 Add.

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41 containing draft terms of reference for an analysis of e-commerce supply chains in products of CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plant species as well as draft terms of references for an intersessional working group. The Secretariat also introduced addendum PC26 Doc. 34 Add. that compiled and analysed responses to Notification No. 2023/045, in which Parties had shared experiences of using the Medicinal Plant Names Services (MPNS) database and their views on using it in CITES routine work. The Secretariat proposed the establishment of an in-session working group.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) informed the Committee that its region had comments on the draft terms of reference of the study, the draft terms of reference of the intersessional working group and on paragraph 6 of the document that it would present in the proposed in-session working group.

The Committee established an in-session working group on medicinal and aromatic plants with the mandate to:

- a) consider the draft terms of reference for the study referred to in Decision 19.261 paragraph c) contained in Annex 1 of document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41 and propose amendments, as appropriate;
- b) consider the responses to Notification No. 2023/045 as presented in the Addendum to document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41 and advise on the options provided by the Secretariat in paragraph 8;
- c) in accordance with Decision 19.263 paragraph b), taking into consideration the information in document PC25 Doc. 30 and its addendum, information document CoP18 Inf. 11, document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41, and other relevant information, initiate the process to inform recommendations for a revised Resolution on traditional medicines or a new Resolution on medicinal and aromatic plant products;
- d) consider the establishment of an intersessional working group with representation of the Animals Committee, as appropriate, taking into consideration the potential terms of reference contained in Annex 2 to document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41; and
- e) based on the above, draft recommendations for the Plants Committee to consider and submit to the Standing Committee or the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate and report its recommendations to the Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Europe (Ms. Moser);

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Balama), representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), representative for North America (Mr. Boles);

Parties: Austria, China, European Union, Germany, India, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; and

IGOs and NGO: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, American Herbal Products Association, Industria Derivati Naturali, TRAFFIC.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Europe (Ms. Moser) introduced document PC26 Com. 5 and the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) proposed a small edit.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 5 as amended by the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) with the deletion of “(in orange)” in Annex 2 as follows:

The Committee agreed to make the following comments on the terms of reference of the analysis of e-commerce supply chains in products of CITES-listed medicinal and aromatic plant species:

- a) clarify the timescale of the analysis for activity 2;

- b) clarify the languages of the analysis for activity 3;
- c) select a subset of medicinal plants for activities 3 and 4 (such as those in demand, those endangered, those in compliance processes, or other criteria); and
- d) consider additional comments contained in Annex 1 to document PC26 Com. 5.

The Committee agreed to implement a cross-reference from CITES databases to the MPNS database with appropriate guidance, including a disclaimer that the MPNS database should be considered indicative for the need to verify CITES listing status of specimens in trade using appropriate CITES standard nomenclature references and identification materials [option b) in paragraph 8) of addendum PC26 Doc. 34 Add.]

The Committee requested the Secretariat to consider concerns voiced by Parties regarding a disclaimer to be published alongside the reference to the Medicinal Plant Names Service (MPNS) database.

The Committee noted that the Resolution on traditional medicines is on traditional medicines, but MAP materials are traded in quite different products (cosmetics, pharmaceutical products, aromatic products, etc.).

The Committee noted that there is preference for a new Resolution to be developed in an intersessional working group.

The Committee established an intersessional working group with the mandate to:

- a) in accordance with Decision 19.263 paragraph b), take into consideration the information in document PC25 Doc. 30 and its addendum, information document CoP18 Inf. 11; document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41, and other relevant information;
- b) consider paragraph 6 of document PC26 Doc. 34 / AC32 Doc. 41, the comments on those contained in Annex 2 of document PC26 Com. 5, and any report of the Secretariat as per Decision 19.261, that may become available to further inform the review;
- c) draft a new Resolution on medicinal and aromatic plant products; and
- d) report its findings to the Plants Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: representative for Europe (Ms. Moser);

Members: representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), representative for North America (Mr. Boles);

Parties: Austria, Canada, China, European Union, Germany, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, International Union for Conservation of Nature, American Herbal Products Association, TRAFFIC, World Wide Fund for Nature.

The Committee agreed to submit the draft of the new Resolution, or draft decisions for the consideration of CoP20 to continue this work during the next intersessional cycle, as needed, to the Standing Committee.

35. Periodic review of species included in Appendices I and II..... PC26 Doc. 35 / AC32 Doc. 42

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 35 / AC32 Doc. 42 and reported that it had not been able to secure funding to undertake the assessment required under paragraph 3 b) i) of Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II*. Should the required funding become available in time to undertake the assessment, the outputs could be presented for the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee, respectively.

The acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave), Mexico and the United States of America highlighted the Periodic Review's role as one of the pillars of the Convention to

ensure that species are included in the correct Appendices and expressed concern about the lack of funding for this process. They encouraged the Secretariat to seek funding for this work and find alternative ways to undertake the assessment by the next meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees. The United States informed the Committee that it would attempt to seek funding for the Periodic Review by the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 35 / AC32 Doc. 42.

36. Annotations..... PC26 Doc. 36 / AC32 Doc. 43

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland introduced document PC26 Doc. 36 / AC32 Doc. 43 and presented the progress achieved so far by the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on annotations.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) supported the increased involvement of the Animals and Plants Committee in the Standing Committee's working group and suggested some priorities for that working group as reflected below.

The Committee agreed to nominate the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) and the alternate representative for Europe (Mr. de Boer) to participate in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on annotations.

The Committee noted the tasks included in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group terms of reference as presented in paragraph 2 of document PC26 Doc. 36 / AC32 Doc. 43, and in particular, paragraphs a) and c) and invited the working group to consider as a priority completion of its tasks under paragraphs a) and c) of its mandate, with a particular focus on the review of annotation #14.

37. Annotation #15..... PC26 Doc. 37

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 37 containing draft terms of reference for a study to assess the conservation implications of the exemptions of annotation #15 for rosewoods of *Dalbergia* and *Guibourtia* included in the Appendices.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles), echoed by Canada, Mexico and the United States of America, noted the overlap or duplication of this study with the study discussed under agenda item 29 and suggested that the broader rosewood tree species study should seek to include elements of the annotation #15 study, or, at the very least, be undertaken with the goals of that study in mind. He further suggested that Activity 1 of the terms of reference was sufficient and that Activity 2 was not needed.

Canada, Mexico and the United States of America provided specific comments on the draft terms of reference of the study as reflected below. Those comments were supported by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the World Resources Institute and the League of American Orchestras that suggested that Activity 1 should also include consultation with Management Authorities. ITTO highlighted the difficulty of studies such as the one described in the document due to the difficulty in finding data on exempted specimens. ITTO and the League of American Orchestras, also speaking on behalf of musical instrument stakeholders, expressed their willingness to support this work, while the World Resources Institute noted that Activity 2 would be very hard to research.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to consider the following comments as it finalizes the terms of reference included in Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 37. The Secretariat could:

- a) include the relevant elements of the terms of reference of this study in the terms of reference of the broader study on the conservation and trade of rosewood tree species discussed under agenda item 29 or implement this study after the broader study on the conservation and trade of rosewood tree species;
- b) consider postponing the study since it is taking place too soon after the adoption of the revisions to annotation #15 at CoP18 and after the COVID-19 pandemic;
- c) consider a step-wise approach by completing Activity 1 before starting Activity 2, as Activity 2 might not be necessary;

- d) include an evaluation to assess if annotation #15 meets the guidance and principles contained in Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP19) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*; and
- e) include consultation with the CITES Management Authorities under Activity 1.

The Committee invited Mexico to provide any comments it may have on the terms of reference in writing to the Secretariat.

38. Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species PC26 Doc. 38

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 38 providing an update on the implementation of a feasibility study for developing an information system for the purpose of processing trade data associated with transactions in specimens of CITES-listed tree species authorized under the provisions of the Convention, noting that funding had not been secured for this study.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) and the representative for North America (Mr. Boles) supported the recommendations in the document; expressed concerns about the scope of the study and suggested that all Committee Members should be consulted on the Secretariat’s document prior to its submission at SC77.

The Committee noted the information provided by the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 19.265; and requested its Chair (Ms. Koumba Pambo, Africa) and Vice-Chair (Mr. Wrigley, Oceania) to coordinate the inputs of the Plants Committee on the Secretariat’s draft terms of reference of a study exploring the feasibility and requirements for developing an information system prior to their submission to the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting.

39. Informal review mechanism for existing and proposed annotations..... PC26 Doc. 39 / AC32 Doc. 44

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 39 / AC32 Doc. 44 providing an update on proposal on the feasibility and requirements for an informal review mechanism for existing and proposed annotations, noting that funding had been secured for this activity.

The Committee noted the Secretariat’s report on progress in the implementation of Decisions 19.266 and 19.267.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

40. Orchid specimens exempted through annotation #4 PC26 Doc. 40

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 40 and noted that the exemption for finished products derived from artificial propagation, packaged and ready for retail trade of cosmetics containing parts and derivatives of *Bletilla striata*, *Cycnoches cooperi*, *Gastrodia elata*, *Phalaenopsis amabilis* or *Phalaenopsis lobbii* entered into effect on 23 February 2023. To allow Parties sufficient time to implement paragraph 4 g) of annotation #4, the Secretariat intended to issue a Notification within the first quarter of 2024 and would compile any responses to the Notification called for under Decision 19.268 in time for consideration by the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and 78th meeting of the Standing Committee in 2024.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 40 and the proposed timeframe for the publication of the Notification as per Decision 19.268.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

41. Annotation of Cape aloe (*Aloe ferox*)..... PC26 Doc. 41

The Secretariat introduced document PC26 Doc. 41 compiling and summarizing responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/021, which aimed to review whether the amended annotation #4 that exempts finished *Aloe ferox* products ready for retail trade from CITES regulations, had impacted trade or the population status of the species. The Secretariat noted that trade was partially interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which confounds any effects caused since the exemption came into effect in 2019.

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley), Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America indicated that there was not enough trade data to assess

the impact of the exemption and that a new Notification and consultation with experts would be necessary to allow the Plants Committee to reach a conclusion.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 41.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to undertake the following activities, to the extent that it did not require external funding to do so:

- a) analyze updated trade data (including CITES annual report and illegal trade report data for 2022),
- b) issue another Notification to the Parties in early 2024,
- c) consult with Cactus and Succulent Plant Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and other relevant experts to assess the impact of the exemption on the conservation of the species; and
- d) prepare an updated report for the Plants Committee for its 27th meeting.

42. Botanical and zoological nomenclature

42.2 Higher taxon listings in the Appendices PC26 Doc. 42.2 / AC32 Doc. 45.2

The nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper) introduced document PC26 Doc. 42.2 / AC32 Doc. 45.2 highlighting a number of cases of higher taxon listings that created complex situations and emphasizing the need to consider the impacts of existing and future higher taxon listings. The nomenclature specialist invited the Committee to review the scientific implications and impacts of higher taxon listings in the Appendices and to consider whether the difference between a higher taxon listing and a list of all individual species in that higher taxon is sufficiently substantive to require a formal proposal to change a listing in the Appendices. The nomenclature specialist proposed the establishment of an intersessional working group.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), Canada and the United States of America supported the establishment of an intersessional working group. The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) suggested that a possible way forward could be to add a nomenclature reference column to the Appendices, while Canada and the United States of America cautioned against the working group having a mandate to propose revisions to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) on *Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II*.

and

42.1 Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings PC26 Doc. 42.1 / AC32 Doc. 45.1

The nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper) introduced document PC26 Doc. 42.1 / AC32 Doc. 45.1 proposing that, should nomenclature changes be proposed for Appendix-III listing, the Animals or Plants Committees be consulted to determine if the change would alter the scope of protection for fauna and flora under the Convention. If the proposed nomenclature changes would lead to inclusion or deletion of species or populations in the Appendices, the Secretariat could consult the listing Party and other affected range States, and the Appendix III-listing could be amended based on feedback from the Parties. Alternatively, the Secretariat could inform the listing Party about the nomenclature change and its implications and invite the Party to consult with affected range States and submit a request to amend the Appendix-III listing. The nomenclature specialist proposed the establishment of an intersessional working group.

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), Canada and IWMC-World Conservation Trust supported the establishment of an intersessional working group. The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng), echoed by IWMC-World Conservation Trust, recalled that an Appendix-III listing is a unilateral decision by a Party. The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) and Canada agreed that the proposed way forward in paragraph 22 of the document would be a good starting point. Canada further suggested that some of the recommendations could be incorporated as amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature* and to Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of the Convention for species in Appendix III*, with paragraphs 10 to 21 of the document that could be incorporated as guidance in an Annex.

The Committee established a joint intersessional nomenclature working group with a mandate to:

- a) review the scientific implications and impacts of existing and future higher taxon listings in the Appendices, taking into consideration the aspects raised in document PC26 Doc. 42.2 / AC32 Doc. 45.2; and
- b) review and revise document PC26 Doc. 42.1 / AC32 Doc. 45.1; and
- c) develop draft recommendations and guidance for consideration at the joint session of the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee scheduled to take place in 2024.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair for PC: the nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper);

Members: representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng);

Parties: Canada, European Union, France, Georgia, Germany, India, Madagascar, Mexico, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Species Survival Network.

The Committee noted that the final membership of the joint intersessional working group would be published in a Notification to the Parties after the meeting of the Animals Committee.

42.3 Development of a standardized global checklist of species..... PC26 Doc. 42.3 / AC32 Doc. 45.3

The nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper) introduced document PC26 Doc. 42.3 / AC32 Doc. 45.3 elaborating on the involvement of the two nomenclature specialists in ongoing global initiatives aimed at producing global consensus classifications for plants and animals and highlighted the potential benefits for CITES.

The United States of America noted that the development of a standardized global checklist of species was still in its infancy and cautioned about the utility of this database within the context of issuing permits.

The Committee noted document PC26 Doc. 42.3 / AC32 Doc. 45.3.

43. Report of the specialist on botanical nomenclature

43.1 Overview of flora nomenclature matters for the period CoP19-CoP20 PC26 Doc. 43.1

43.2 Nomenclature for aloes (*Aloe* spp.)..... PC26 Doc. 43.2

43.3 Cactaceae Checklist and its Supplement PC26 Doc. 43.3

43.4 Nomenclature for ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.) (populations of Madagascar)..... PC26 Doc. 43.4

43.5 Standard nomenclature for cumarus (*Dipteryx* spp.)..... PC26 Doc. 43.5

43.6 Standard nomenclature for African mahoganies (*Khaya* spp.) PC26 Doc. 43.6

43.7 Nomenclature for pachypodiums (*Pachypodium* spp.)..... PC26 Doc. 43.7

43.8 Standard nomenclature for roseroots (*Rhodiola* spp.)..... PC26 Doc. 43.8

and

43.9 Nomenclature for yews (*Taxus* spp.)..... PC26 Doc. 43.9

The nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper) introduced all nine documents under agenda item 43. The overview document PC26 Doc. 43.1 highlighted the updates to standard nomenclature references; Decisions relevant to nomenclature for flora; and the workplan of the Plants Committee in matters related to nomenclature. The flora nomenclature Decisions covered several aspects relevant to checklists and standard references of several taxa. Updates on the implementation of Decisions relating to rosewoods and orchids were reported on in document PC26 Doc. 43.1. While progress on the implementation of Decisions on aloes, ebonies, cumarus, African mahoganies, pachypodiums, roseroots, yews, and cacti were reported on in documents PC26 Docs 43.2 to Doc. 43.9.

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles), Canada, Mexico and the Republic of Korea provided comments on several terms of reference for the compilation of checklists and suggested some corrections to scientific names. The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) further highlighted that there was no need for checklists to contain non-taxonomic information and that the inclusion of such information could have significant cost implications.

The Committee noted the sets of Decisions on nomenclature matters for flora as contained in the Annex to document PC26 Doc. 43.1, as well as the progress in the implementation of Decisions 18.307 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.308 (Rev. CoP19) on *Production of a CITES Checklist for rosewoods (Dalbergia spp.)* and Decisions 19.285 and 19.286 on *Nomenclature of Appendix-II listed orchids (Orchidaceae spp.)*.

The Committee established an in-session working group on nomenclature to:

- a) review documents PC26 Doc. 43.1 to 43.9, and
 - i) develop recommendations for additional nomenclature matters outlined in paragraphs 17 to 19 of document PC26 Doc. 43.1 on *Overview of flora nomenclature matters for the period CoP19-CoP20*;
 - ii) consider and evaluate the nomenclatural issues and identify suitable, if any, nomenclatural references for amendment of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature for*:
 - A. *Dipteryx* spp., as outlined in document PC26 Doc. 43.5 on *Standard nomenclature for cumarus (Dipteryx spp.)* and its Annex;
 - B. *Khaya* spp., as outlined in document PC26 Doc. 43.6 on *Standard nomenclature for African mahoganies (Khaya spp.)* and its Annex; and
 - C. *Rhodiola* spp., as outlined in document PC26 Doc. 43.8 on *Standard nomenclature for roseroots (Rhodiola spp.)* and its Annex;
 - iii) review the utility of the CITES Cactaceae Checklist (3rd edition) and its Supplement (2018) with regard to issues that arise as Parties apply these lists, including feedback to improve it in the light of relevant updates of cacti taxonomy contained in document PC26 Doc. 43.3 on *Cactaceae checklist and its supplement* and its Annexes;
 - iv) provide input into the draft terms of reference contained in:
 - A. Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 43.2 on *Nomenclature for aloes (Aloe spp.)*;
 - B. Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 43.4 on *Nomenclature for ebonies (Diospyros spp.) (populations of Madagascar)*;
 - C. Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 43.7 on *Nomenclature for pachypodiums (Pachypodium spp.)*; and
 - D. Annex 1 to document PC26 Doc. 43.9 on *Nomenclature for yews (Taxus spp.)*; and
- b) report its recommendations to the Committee.

The membership was decided as follows:

Chair: the nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper);

Parties: China, European Union, France, Germany, Madagascar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

IGOs and NGOs: United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Later in the meeting, the nomenclature specialist (Ms. Klopper) introduced document PC26 Com. 3 and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland suggested deleting reference to *Aetoxylon* in the document and adding a time-stamped extract of the Plants of the World Online database as temporary nomenclature reference for *Aquilaria* and *Gyrinops*.

The Committee agreed the recommendations in document PC26 Com. 3 amended by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as follows:

Concerning the correct name for *Dipteryx oleifera*: Use the older name *Dipteryx oleifera* in accordance with the rules of the *International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants* following rejection of the name conservation proposal for the name *Dipteryx panamensis* by the Nomenclature Committee for Vascular Plants of the International Association for Plant Taxonomy; and remove this item from the nomenclature work programme of the Plants Committee.

Concerning the correct name for *Bulnesia sarmientoi*: Include both *Gonopterodendron sarmientoi* and *Plectrocarpa sarmientoi* as synonyms, while keeping *Bulnesia sarmientoi* as the accepted name; and update the Species+ database accordingly. The Secretariat should consult the four range States on which names are used by them, and the nomenclature specialist will provide an update regarding the responses at PC27.

Concerning the correct treatment and placement of *Turbinicarpus ×roseiflorus* on the Appendices: Note that the genus *Turbinicarpus* is listed as a higher taxon listing under Appendix I; and include the natural hybrid in Appendix I as well.

Concerning the possibility of updating the standard nomenclature reference for the bulb genus *Cyclamen*: Update the CITES bulb checklist for all three genera, considering options to develop separate checklists for each genus; and consider the option of using time-stamped database extracts. The nomenclature specialist will propose draft decisions at PC27.

Concerning the problems caused by homonym names and how best to deal with them on Species+, using *Dracaena marginata* as an example: Add a note in the CITES Checklist and Species+ for *Dracaena marginata* Aiton, to alert users about the homonym name (*Dracaena marginata* Lam.) relating to a non-listed species. The wording of the note should be clear to end-users of the database, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will consult with its enforcement unit to assist in suggesting appropriate wording. A simple form of identification material should be developed to distinguish the two species. The United Kingdom agreed to share some materials already developed to that end.

Concerning the possibility of producing a standard nomenclature reference for the agarwood-producing genera *Aquilaria* and *Gyrinops*: Support the development of a checklist for *Aquilaria* and *Gyrinops*. A phylogenetic study might be ideal, but could have huge funding implications. Therefore, get a time-stamped database extract of the *Plants of the World Online* database as an immediate measure, and consider future decisions to produce an updated checklist that includes a phylogenetic study. These will be presented in the nomenclature report at PC27.

Concerning the Standard nomenclature for *cumarus* (*Dipteryx spp.*): Download a time-stamped extract from the *Plants of the World Online* database.

Concerning the Standard nomenclature for African mahoganies (*Khaya spp.*): Retain the existing time-stamped download for the time being while updates to the taxonomy of *Khaya* is ongoing. The issue should be reviewed at PC27.

Concerning the *Standard nomenclature for roseroots (Rhodiola spp.)*: Obtain a time-stamped download from *Plants of the World Online* and do a comparison to ensure that species listed in proposal CoP19 Prop. 45 are included in the extract. If needed, consult with the POWO editors whether any species not included can be included additionally.

Concerning the *Cactaceae checklist and its supplement*: Support the suggestions by Mexico, additional clarifications of names/taxa as proposed by the United Kingdom, and the proposed format as a fully electronic and machine-readable document; but hesitate to include additional information as proposed by the United Kingdom. The nomenclature specialist will present draft decisions at PC27.

Concerning Section 2 of Activity 2 of the draft terms of reference for the development of updated standard nomenclature references for aloes, Malagasy ebonies, pachypodiums, and yews: Add authorities in the lists of scientific names; include infraspecific taxa, natural hybrids, and species names that were previously accepted, but that are now regarded as insufficiently known and unplaced, where they exist.

Concerning Section 3 of Activity 2 of the draft terms of reference: Recommendation for the Secretariat: include instruction in the Notification on the *Dalbergia* checklist to invite feedback on the utility to end-users, specifically regarding the extended checklist format used in the *Dalbergia* checklist. Unless this extended format is supported by end-users, revert to a simplified checklist format, and retain from Section 3 only: Valid taxon name, synonyms, common names, range States, and CITES listing status. If the more extensive scope of Section 3 of Activity 2 is maintained: specify that only published Red List assessments be included; and be explicit about the source of the trade data. Have the species lists in a machine-readable format that can be imported into a database in addition to the pdf format.

Concerning the *Nomenclature of aloes*: Note that the information in paragraph 5 of Annex 3 to document PC26 Doc. 43.2 needs to be checked for correctness by the nomenclature specialist, as there might be a homonym issue and a wrong name indicated for removal.

Concerning the *Nomenclature for Malagasy ebonies (Diospyros spp.)*: Accept the scope of the standard reference to include the 88 large tree species that were defined in recent taxonomic work in Madagascar. Produce a full checklist rather than a time-stamped database extract, in line with CoP Decisions. Eliminate range States section from Section 3 of Activity 2 of the draft terms of reference (Distribution), since all species except one are endemic to Madagascar; and include a note for the single species that also occurs on the Comoros Islands.

Concerning the *Nomenclature for pachypodiums*: The nomenclature specialist will contact the World Flora Online Taxonomic Expert Network for Apocynaceae to find guidance on who could lead the development of the checklist.

Concerning the *Nomenclature for yews (Taxus spp.)*: Ensure that the checklist encompass the entire genus, even though only some species are listed. Bear in mind that the number of listed species may increase since taxa previously considered subspecies are now accepted species. The working group notes that the United States of America and China have previously indicated they might collaborate on this checklist. China voiced its continued commitment to collaborate on the checklist. Delegates from the United States will consult with their colleagues and inform the nomenclature specialist and the Secretariat about any intentions to support the production of the checklist. The World Flora Online Taxonomic Expert Network for Conifers at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh should be considered a suitable contact to be involved in this work.

Regional matters

44. Regional reports

44.1 Africa..... *No document*

The representative for Africa (Mr. Balama) presented an oral report on the activities of his region.

44.2 Asia..... *No document*

The representative for Asia (Ms. Zeng) presented an oral report on the activities of her region.

44.3 Central and South America and the Caribbean PC26 Doc. 44.3

The acting representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Olave) introduced document PC26 Doc. 44.3.

44.4 Europe..... PC26 Doc. 44.4

The representative for Europe (Ms. Smyth) introduced document PC26 Doc. 44.4.

44.5 North America PC26 Doc. 44.5

The representative for North America (Mr. Boles) introduced document PC26 Doc. 44.5.

44.6 Oceania..... PC26 Doc. 44.6

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Wrigley) introduced document PC26 Doc. 44.6.

The Committee noted the oral reports and documents PC26 Doc. 44.3 to PC26 Doc. 44.6.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

Concluding items

45. Any other business *No document*

The Committee agreed that the Plants Committee, through its Chair, should be consulted if the Animals Committee agrees any changes to the terms of reference of the joint intersessional working groups established by the Plants Committee at its 26th meeting.

46. Time and venue of the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee..... *No document*

The Committee noted that the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee should take place in Geneva from 8 to 19 July 2024.

47. Closing remarks..... *No document*

The Secretary-General and the Chair thanked the Committee Members, in particular those that chaired in-session working groups, as well as Party observers, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, the interpreters, the operators and the Secretariat; and the Chair closed the meeting.

THE 'CITES FOREST COMPENDIUM: COP19-COP20'
REPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH A) OF DECISION 19.32

Introduction

Decisions 19.32 and 19.33 request that any new initiative on CITES and forests focuses on or prioritizes CITES-listed tree species. In congruence, the compendium is focused at this stage on CITES provisions relevant to tree-species.

The compendium is structured in three sections, as follows:

- Section 1: Resolutions that may provide a technical (operational and scientific) or strategic policy framework for any new initiative on *CITES and forests* with a focus on tree-species.
- Section 2: Decisions relevant to tree-species with potential for implementation via a programmatic approach for any new initiative on *CITES and forests*.
- Section 3: Examples of cross-cutting processes of the Convention that contribute to global forest relevant mandates and forest policies and initiatives under a *CITES and forests* programmatic approach and a list of projects for the period between CoP19 (2022) and CoP20 (2025)

Section 1: Resolutions that may provide a technical (operational and scientific) or strategic policy framework for any new initiative on *CITES and forests* with a focus on tree-species

The approach for this section is adapted from the rationale contained in the Annex 1 to document [PC25 Doc. 12](#), and updated on the basis of the Resolutions in effect following CoP19.

Resolution	Title	Technical (operational and scientific) and/or strategic
Resolution Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP15)	Registration of nurseries that artificially propagate specimens of Appendix-I plant species for export purposes	Technical Guidance on the process and requirements to register nurseries including the role of the commercial nursery, the Management Authority and the Secretariat.
Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18)	Implementation of the Convention for tree species	Technical Guidance on consultation with international organizations on amendment proposals; definitions to be applied with respect to annotations relating to tree species and 'artificially propagated'; the establishment of export quotas; identification and forensics for tree species; and improving public understanding of the role of the Convention in the conservation of tree species.
Resolution Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18)	Regulation of trade in plants	Technical Guidance on the definition of 'artificially propagated'; grafted plants; hybrids; cultivars; flaked seedlings of Appendix-I orchids; the definition of 'plant obtained through assisted production'; plant

		specimens in international trade under exemptions; enforcement for plants; trade in salvaged plant specimens; and education about plant conservation through CITES.
Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19)	Standard nomenclature	<p>Technical</p> <p>Guidance on nomenclature matters including a list of standard references adopted by the Conference of the Parties. A common understanding of the scientific names of species is important to ensure a common body of knowledge is shared across CITES authorities to inform non-detriment findings, permitting processes and enforcement for CITES-listed tree species. Note that CITES standard references or checklists do not aim to keep pace with every new study or taxonomic treatment, except where it may impact CITES implementation.</p>
Resolution Conf. 14.4	Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber	<p>Strategic</p> <p>Guidance on consultation with ITTO on amendment proposals; and other matters relating to cooperation with ITTO related to tropical timber species threatened by international trade and sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests.</p>
Resolution Conf. 16.10	Implementation of the Convention for agarwood-producing taxa	<p>Technical</p> <p>Guidance on artificially propagated specimens for agar-wood producing taxa, non-detriment findings and management and trade controls.</p>
Resolution Conf. 16.4	Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions	<p>Strategic</p> <p>Guidance on strengthening the cooperation, coordination and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions at all relevant levels.</p>
Resolution Conf. 16.5	Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity	<p>Strategic</p> <p>Guidance on the potential contribution of CITES to the objectives and targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020 through activities and products listed in an Annex to the Resolution.</p>
Resolution Conf. 16.6 (Rev. CoP18)	CITES and livelihoods	<p>Technical and/or strategic</p> <p>Guidance on livelihood issues, including empowerment of rural communities; enabling policies; engagement of rural communities in combatting illegal trade in wildlife; and potential shift from <i>in situ</i> to <i>ex situ</i> production due to the inclusion of species in the CITES Appendices.</p>

Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17)	Non-detriment findings	Technical The Resolution includes guidance relating to the concepts and non-binding principles to be taken into account by Scientific Authorities in considering whether trade would be detrimental to the survival of a species.
Resolution Conf. 18.3	CITES Strategic Vision : 2021-2030	Strategic The Resolution sets out the CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030, including the vision statement, purpose, the five strategic goals and objectives agreed under each goal.
Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19)	Legal acquisition findings	Technical The Resolution includes Guiding principles to be used by Parties for verifying the legal acquisition of specimens to be exported.
Resolution Conf. 19.4	Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species	Technical The Resolution provides for the development of identification materials and the regular review and analysis of materials to ensure the needs of Parties in this regard are addressed. The ability of CITES Inspection officers and Customs officials to identify CITES-listed species and commodities in trade is critical to the implementation and enforcement of the protections afforded to CITES-listed species.

Section 2: Decisions relevant to tree-species with potential for implementation via a programmatic approach for any new initiative on *CITES and forests*

In addition to focusing the table below on CITES-listed tree species, special consideration was given to Decisions that call for the implementation of relevant projects or studies that are dependent on the availability of external financial resources. This is intended to give an idea of how any future CITES programme on forests could be tailored, and how future flagship initiatives under a *CITES and forests* 'label' could take shape.

Below are decisions directed to the Plants Committee that will inform work to improve implementation of CITES for regulated tree species. This breadth of activities demonstrates the wide-ranging role of the CITES Plants Committee in coordination with the Secretariat to provide technical expertise to improve sustainable use and conservation of CITES-listed tree species. The Plants Committee prioritizes efforts to address decisions as part of their workplan (PC26 Doc. 8.2 / PC26 SR) which is agreed following each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Decision No.	Title	Baseline for implementation via a programmatic framework on <i>CITES and forests</i> (relevant documents including studies and projects)
Strategic matters		
19.32 to 19.34	CITES and forests	PC26 Doc. 13 PC26 SR
<i>Capacity-building</i>		
19.49 and 19.50	CITES Tree Species Programme	PC26 Doc. 15 (see also section 3 of the Annex) PC26 SR
Compliance		
19.71 to 19.73	Malagasy palisanders and rosewoods (<i>Dalbergia</i> spp.) and ebonies (<i>Diospyros</i> spp.)	To be discussed by the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting (SC77).
Regulation of trade		
19.145 to 19.148	Identification of timber and other wood products	PC26 Doc. 20 (see also section 3 of the Annex) PC26 SR
<i>Exemptions and special trade provisions</i>		
19.182 to 19.183	Guidance on the term 'artificially propagated'	PC26 Doc. 24 PC26 SR
Species conservation and trade		
<i>Flora</i>		
19.239 to 19.240	Agarwood-producing taxa (<i>Aquilaria</i> spp. and <i>Gyrinops</i> spp.)	PC26 Doc. 27 PC26 SR
19.241 and 19.242	Boswellia trees (<i>Boswellia</i> spp.)	PC26 Doc. 28.1 PC26 Doc. 28.2 PC26 SR
19.243 to 19.245	Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]	PC26 Doc. 29 (see also section 3 of the Annex) PC26 SR
19.246 to 19.248	Products containing specimens of Appendix II orchids (Orchidaceae spp.)	PC26 Doc. 30 PC26 SR
19.249 to 19.253	Brazil wood (<i>Paubrasilia echinata</i>)	PC26 Doc. 31 PC26 SR
19.254 to 19.256	African tree species	PC26 Doc. 32 PC26 SR
19.257 to 19.260	Neotropical tree species	PC26 Doc. 33 PC26 SR
19.261 to 19.264	Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species	PC26 Doc. 34 PC26 SR
Appendices of the Convention		
<i>Annotations</i>		
18.321 (Rev. CoP19) to 18.322 (Rev. CoP19)	Annotation #15	PC26 Doc. 37 PC26 SR

18.317 (Rev. CoP19) and 19.265	Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species	PC26 Doc. 38 PC26 SR
<i>Nomenclature matters</i>		
18.307 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.308 (Rev. CoP19)	Production of a CITES Checklist for rosewoods (<i>Dalbergia</i> spp.)	PC26 Doc. 43.1 PC26 SR
19.281 and 19.282	Nomenclature for ebonies (<i>Diospyros</i> spp.) (populations of Madagascar)	PC26 Doc. Doc. 43.4 PC26 SR
19.290 and 19.291	Nomenclature for yews (<i>Taxus</i> spp.)	PC26 Doc. 43.9 PC26 SR

Section 3: Examples of cross-cutting processes of the Convention that contribute to global forest-relevant mandates and forest policies and initiatives under a potential *CITES and forests* programmatic approach and a list of projects for the period between CoP19 and CoP20

This section of the compendium is devoted to a list of projects relevant for tree species, including projects that relate to the implementation of cross-cutting provisions and processes of the Convention.

3.1. Article XIII and resolutions Res. Conf. 14.3 on *CITES compliance procedures* and Res. Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*

- a) Support in the implementation of applicable recommendations for *Pterocarpus erinaceus*/range States subject to a recommendation to suspend trade on the basis of compliance and enforcement (Article XIII) (see also <https://cites.org/eng/resources/ref/suspend.php>). This could include development of case studies on legal acquisition findings for *P. erinaceus* for range States subject to compliance recommendations under the Article XIII process (see [Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045](#)).
- b) Support in the implementation of applicable recommendations for *Dalbergia* spp. for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as a follow up to the relevant outputs of the [CITES-FAO project on improved forest governance in the Lower Mekong Region](#).

3.2. Article IV and Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix II species* (RST)

- a) Support in the implementation of outstanding RST recommendations for selected current cases of tree species/country combinations (see document PC26 Doc. 16.2)
- b) Support in the implementation of recommendations of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*/country combinations selected as an exceptional case in stage 2 of the RST process (see also document PC26 Doc. 16.4).

3.3. Article IV and Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* (NDF)

- a) Implementation of Decisions 19.243 to 19.245 on *Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]* (see PC26 Doc. 29).
- b) Implementation of the CITES NDF project's workstream on high-value timbers, including any progress in the testing of any new NDF guidance in the field (see document PC26 Doc. 17).

3.4. Article XII and Resolution Conf. 19.4 on *Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species*

Implementation of Decisions 19.145 to 19.148 on *Identification of timber and other wood products* (see also document PC26 Doc. 20)

3.5. Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building*

Implementation of projects and programmes relevant to CITES-listed tree species, such as the *CITES tree species programme* (CTSP; Decisions 19.49 and 19.50), the [CITES-FAO project on improved forest governance in the Lower Mekong Region](#), and other upcoming capacity-building projects on tree species managed by the Secretariat during the period CoP19 to CoP20.

REVISED DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY ON CITES AND FORESTS

Outcome 1: Interdisciplinary study

Activity 1*

*Baseline: documents [PC25 Doc. 12](#) and its [Addendum](#); [SC74 Doc. 15](#); [CoP19 Doc. 19](#); the webpage on [CITES and forests](#); document PC26 Doc. 13 and its report in Annex 1; the outcomes of PC26; and any other relevant information.

- 1.1. Map the intersections and complementarities between the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* (Resolution Conf. 18.3) and that of the global forest commitments and develop recommendations to enhance the timely and effective implementation of the CITES forest compendium. As a starting point to this exercise, special consideration shall be given to the preamble to the background and global framework on forests described in the draft resolution contained in Annex 3 to document PC26 Doc 13, and in particular the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the *United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030*, the *United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)* and relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).
- 1.2. Assess the contribution of the Convention in the conservation and sustainable use of forests, with particular focus on tree species during the period from CoP16 to CoP20. In doing so, special consideration shall be given to:
 - a) Evaluating outcomes of the implementation of processes of the Convention such as non-detriment findings [Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17)], the Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species [Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18)], and CITES compliance procedures [Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP19)] as examples of the potential positive outcomes for CITES listed tree species.
 - b) The contributions of the inclusion of tree species in the Appendices to the conservation of forest ecosystems and livelihoods.
 - c) Materials and guidance developed to support the implementation of the Convention as it relates to forests, and in particular tree species.
 - d) Trade in forest species listed in the Appendices (changes in levels and trends in trade – select species to be included in consultation with the PC), with a particular focus on tree species.
 - e) Task Force processes and other enforcement related matters.
 - f) Resource mobilization for implementation of Decisions and Resolutions as well as support to Parties to implement the Convention where it relates to tree species.
 - g) Reports and documents of previous Plants Committee Working Groups on CITES Tree species implementation and specimen production systems.
- 1.3. Assess the contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of forests by projects managed by the Secretariat, using as a starting point a representative selection of projects under the *CITES Tree Species Programme*, and any available findings and outcomes of its external evaluation (see also document PC26 Doc. 15), and the [CITES-FAO project on improved forest governance in the Lower Mekong Region](#).

Outcome 2: Report on the scope of a new initiative on CITES and forests

Activity 2

- 2.1. Define the potential scope of an initiative on CITES and forests that will enhance the implementation of the Convention as it relates to forests (tree species) while contributing to the achievement of other international commitments.

2.2. In undertaking the above, give special consideration to:

- a) a possible programme on *CITES and forests* devoted to ensuring the timely implementation of current and future iterations of the 'CITES forest compendium', and to raising visibility to the outcomes of past current and future flagship initiatives on forests;
- b) a strategic approach to continue or expand partnerships with like-minded organizations in benefit of the implementation of the 'CITES forest compendium', including but not limited to member organizations of the [Collaborative Partnership on Forests](#) (CPF);
- c) enhancing resource mobilization strategies to secure the resources needed for the timely and effective implementation of the 'CITES forest compendium' to be published in the webpage on [CITES and forests](#);
- d) take into account the discussions at PC25, CoP19 and PC26 on the role of CITES in tree-species conservation; and
- e) the pertinence of the adoption of a resolution on CITES and forests, using as a starting point the text contained in Annex 3 to document PC26 Doc. 13.

Outcome 3: Consolidated report for consideration of CITES Committees in preparation for CoP20
Activity 3

Develop an executive summary and extended report on the findings of Outcomes 1 and 2. This shall be written with a view to serve as a basis for the Secretariat's reporting to the Plants and Standing Committees, in accordance with Decisions 19.33 and 19.34.

Intervention by the Democratic Republic of the Congo on agenda item 18 for the record

Madam Chair of the Plants Committee,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

I make this statement on behalf of the Democratic Republic of the Congo regarding document PC26Doc.18 prepared by the European Union, and request that it be included in the record of the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee.

First, I congratulate the European Union for taking the time to prepare the document under consideration. As a major partner of the countries of the Congo Basin in general and of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular, committed to the sustainable management of the forests and protected areas of the subregion, it mobilizes many financial, technical and logistical resources through multiple programmes such as the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP), the CITES Tree Species Programme and soon the Compliance Assistance Programme, as well as many others funded by the European Development Fund (EDF), of which the Democratic Republic of the Congo has several times been a beneficiary. For this, I express my deepest gratitude to the European Union.

However, as the Head of the Delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is the steward of the second largest forest in the world, considered the most important 'lung' of the planet for having the highest carbon sequestration rate, I take the liberty to express some concerns about the proposal of the European Union presented in document PC26Doc.18 under consideration, as it is scientifically unsound, economically dangerous, politically explosive and legally devoid of credibility.

1. Scientifically unsound proposal

The European Union considers that “ultimately, only forests demonstrating full regeneration and recovery capacity, e.g., a Recovery Index of 100% are the only option for a CITES-listed species in forestry management to be considered entirely sustainable.” It also invites the Plants Committee to “note the approach of the European Union relating to international trade in timber from “non permanent forest domains” and EU considerations of a Recovery Index threshold of 100% with respect to sustainability criteria for timber non-detriment findings.

There is no scientific basis for this proposal by the European Union which, in fact, does not specify whether the Recovery Index of 100% applies to the forest or to the tree species. No credible and solid scientific basis supports the proposal of the European Union proving that the recovery rate is an effective tool to assess the sustainability of tree species and uniformly apply it to all tree species listed in CITES Appendix II, without considering specific forest dynamics. Moreover, no scientific studies conducted by the European Union clearly explain that the 50% recovery rate currently used in the countries of the Congo Basin fails to guarantee the sustainable management of tree species such as *Pericopsis elata* from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whose non-detriment finding has been approved by the Plants Committee.

The absence of scientific basis of the proposal leads to another problem with side effects, namely that of creating confusion about the interpretation of what should be called *taux de reconstitution* in forest management, designated with the term *taux de régénération* in the proposal under consideration [**Translator's note: both terms refer to “recovery rate”; the distinction only applies to the French version of the document**]. In fact, in the forest management that has been implemented for over 30 years, the recovery rate makes it possible to calculate the “renewal of forest resources”, that is, the proportion of the volume of a given tree species that can be harvested in a rotation period of about twenty-five years. However, the recovery rate does not give any indication on the regeneration of a species in its area of distribution or in a concession. As an example, it is worth mentioning *Pericopsis elata* (Afrormosia) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whose recovery rate is set at a minimum of 50%, according to the terms defined in the non-detriment finding for this species (NDF, 4th edition 2021), which also complies with the forestry legislation in force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and was accepted by the European Union in August 2022 in Kuala Lumpur. It should be noted that the 4th edition of the non-detriment finding for *Pericopsis elata* was funded by the European Union under the CITES Tree Species Programme (CITES-TREES). How can the European Union question the results of studies that it funded and the

management plans it supported and propose changes in the sustainability index to prevent States from benefiting from the sustainable management of their forests?

2. Economically dangerous proposal

Setting the threshold of the Recovery Index at 100% as proposed by the European Union or even lowering it to 75% would be economically dangerous as it would simply lead to a halt of forestry activities in relation to the annual allowable cuts of forest concessions, with consequences that would exceed the forestry sector itself and the survival of the timber species, affecting local communities, the State and its authorities. Indeed, should the proposal of the European Union be adopted or the Recovery Index be lowered to 75%, there would be serious consequences for the industrial forestry sector, for the communities neighbouring the forest concessions and for the timber species themselves.

2.1. Consequences for the industrial forestry sector

The upward revision of the recovery rate would force industrial operators to prematurely modify their current management plans by updating the related management parameters, in particular the minimum cutting diameter and the harvest rate. Given that the possibilities of getting value from tree species would be reduced, there would be a decrease in investments and economic operators in the forestry sector would fall into a situation of precarity and instability and thus dismiss their employees. In fact, the managed forestry sector in the Democratic Republic of the Congo contributes to the economic and social development of about one and a half million people, not counting the artisanal forestry sector, which is not negligible. As a reminder, the forestry sector was composed of over a hundred companies fifteen years ago but today only includes fewer than ten, which have invested in sustainable management. Should drastic measures be taken to destroy their investments?

2.2. Consequences for the communities neighbouring the forest concessions

According to available socioeconomic studies, about 2% of the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo lives around managed forest concessions. This is more than sufficient evidence of the importance of the forestry sector for the survival of local communities living in these areas. It is indeed thanks to the formal forestry sector that they can currently expect to develop in the isolated forest areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In fact, industrial forestry companies sign and execute contractual agreements with the neighbouring communities that make it possible to finance the construction of social infrastructures such as schools, dispensaries, roads, etc. and local development projects for those communities. By raising the recovery rate, development funds aimed at these communities would be reduced or even eliminated and social achievements would decrease. Will the European Union propose alternative solutions to the communities neighbouring the forest concessions and compensate the forest concession holders for the consequences of the measures it recommends?

2.3. Consequences for the timber species themselves

Should the proposal of the European Union be adopted, the tree species would be left at the mercy of illegal loggers because of the abrupt halt in forestry activities and CITES would have no effective mechanism to control harvested volumes or monitor exports.

3. Politically explosive proposal

The proposal of the European Union would be politically explosive, given that halting industrial and even artisanal forest exploitation by increasing the Recovery Index to 100% could lead to uprisings of local communities against public authorities and create new hotbeds of tension.

4. Proposal legally devoid of credibility

There is no international legal instrument that the European Union is using as a basis to propose a Sustainability Index amounting to a 100% recovery rate. Moreover, it is not fair to oblige States to modify their national legislation to adopt a Sustainability Index that is not justified. This proposal even deviates from the objectives of CITES, as it is simply aimed at halting international trade in tree species listed in the CITES Appendices and could push many forest countries in the world to massively reconsider their commitments to CITES, which we do not wish at this time.

Therefore, the Democratic Republic of the Congo rejects the proposal of the European Union included in document PC26Doc.18 and asks the members of the Plants Committee not to consider it for the reasons

explained above. Non-detriment findings such as that made for *Pericopsis elata*, complemented by those made for *Prunus africana* and *Guibourtia demeusei*, financed by the European Union, have already determined acceptable sustainability indices in accordance with the provisions of the CITES Convention and should be gradually improved to be extended to other tree species recently included in the CITES Appendices.

Otherwise, what would be the use of all the efforts already made by the European Union and the countries of the Congo Basin in general and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular for the sustainable management of forests?

Instead of submitting this proposal, I would have suggested to the European Union, a privileged partner of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the sustainable management of forests and protected areas, to which I reiterate my expressions of appreciation, to organize a dialogue with the countries of the Congo Basin and other forest regions of the planet to discuss the different strengths and weaknesses of the current sustainability criteria and propose reforms to such criteria considering the forest dynamics of each region and country.

This is the end of my statement. Thank you.