

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



Twenty-seventh meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 8 – 13 July 2024

Strategic matters

Capacity-building

CITES TREE SPECIES PROGRAMME

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 19.49 and 19.50 on *CITES Tree Species Programme* as follows:

Directed to the Parties

19.49 *Parties are invited to provide financial and in-kind support for a capacity-building programme that provides long-term support to Parties on their implementation of the Convention for CITES-listed tree species.*

Directed to the Secretariat, the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee

19.50 *The Secretariat shall bring to the attention of the Plants Committee relevant technical and scientific results of the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP) and, subject to external funding:*

- a) *develop and implement a capacity-building programme covering all relevant regions on the implementation of CITES for tree species included in the Appendices;*
- b) *seek advice and guidance from the Plants and Standing Committees to assess the potential for the CITES Tree Species Programme to be made a permanent programme;*
- c) *continue cooperation with organizations working on forest related matters, such as the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), and private economic actors to strengthen the support to Parties for implementing the Convention for listed tree species; and*
- d) *report on the implementation of this Decision at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Implementation of Decision 19.49

3. At CoP19, Parties were informed of the outcomes of the tree species component of the European Union (EU) project entitled *Supporting sustainable management of endangered tree species* (known as the CITES Tree Species Programme – CTSP) *and conservation of the African Elephant*, which ended in November 2022 (see document [CoP19 Doc. 20](#) and information document [CoP19 Inf.43](#)). The project also went through an extensive evaluation between November 2022 and March 2023, and the key findings and conclusions can be found in document [SC77 Doc.25](#).

4. As reported to the Plants Committee at its 26th meeting (PC26; Geneva, June 2023), the European Union provided a contribution of EUR 500,000 to the Secretariat, dedicated to undertake "bridging activities" for tree species while the search for additional funds continued.
5. Subsequently, in December 2023 the [International Climate Initiative \(IKI\)](#), a climate financing mechanism of the German government, confirmed its financial support of EUR 10 million under the project entitled *CITES Tree Species Project – Sustainable trade and forest governance*. This project aims to strengthen the linkages between sustainable forest management and the CITES provisions at the national level to assist Parties in better complying with the Convention's requirements for legal, sustainable trade in commercially significant tree species, and at the same time addressing other international obligations such as improving forest governance, contributing to reducing deforestation and addressing climate change. The Secretariat expresses its gratitude to the Management and Scientific Authorities of Germany for facilitating this new funding opportunity for CITES Parties through IKI.

Implementation of Decision 19.50

6. The extrabudgetary contribution of the two donors (the European Union and IKI) allows for continued capacity-building efforts, providing support to Parties for their implementation of tree species listings, including the new listings adopted at CoP19. This support will also allow further cooperation with organizations assisting Member States on tree-related matters, such as the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), as well as other economic actors, pursuant to Decision 19.50.
7. The Secretariat will continue to provide updates on the progress of the project through Notifications and information on the CITES website, as well as reports to the meetings of the Plants Committee, Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate, under the relevant agenda items (e.g. *Access to funding, Capacity-building*, and other agenda items related to tree species).
8. Regarding the implementation of Decision 19.50, paragraph b), further consideration is needed to assess whether the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP) could be made a permanent programme, considering that the IKI-funded project has only recently commenced. Capacity-building support for the implementation of CITES-listed tree species has so far relied entirely on extrabudgetary funding and would benefit from a structured programmatic approach.
9. With the implementation of Decision 19.32 on *CITES and forests* and Decision 19.41 on *Capacity-building* in progress, there is a possibility that future tree-related projects may serve as one of the funding mechanisms in support of CITES and forests¹, the capacity-building framework, or other programmatic approach or strategy. By aligning the activities of both EU and IKI projects with the CITES forest compendium from the design stage, the projects will have stronger coherence with CITES mandates and relevant global challenges, making significant progress from the previous CTSP phases. Continued monitoring will be crucial to determine if these may evolve into a viable funding model to address capacity-building needs for the implementation of the Convention for tree species in a more comprehensive manner.

Recommendations

10. The Plants Committee is invited to:
 - a) agree that Decisions 19.49 and 19.50, paragraphs a) and c), have been implemented on the basis of the report contained in this document;
 - b) agree that Decision 19.50, paragraph b), should be renewed as a new stand-alone Decision; and
 - c) request the Secretariat to convey the above recommendations in its report to the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

¹ see document SC77 Doc. 21, Annex 1, section 3.