

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

Appendices of the Convention

Annotations

INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED TREE SPECIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City 2022), the Conference of the Parties revised Decision 18.317 and adopted Decision 19.265 on *Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* as follows:

Directed to the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Plants Committee

18.317 (Rev. CoP19) *The Standing Committee, in consultation with the Plants Committee, shall explore the feasibility and requirements for developing an information system, subject to agreed terms of reference, for the purpose of processing trade data associated with transactions in specimens of CITES-listed tree species authorized under the provisions of the Convention and submit any relevant recommendations to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to the Secretariat

19.265 *Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall commission a study exploring the feasibility and requirements for developing an information system as proposed and provide its findings and recommendations to the Standing Committee.*

3. The Secretariat reported progress on the implementation of Decision 19.265 to the Plants Committee at its 26th meeting (PC26; Geneva, June 2023) in document [PC26 Doc.38](#).
4. The Secretariat recalled that, in document [SC74 Doc. 82](#), it had presented initial considerations for developing an information system for the purpose of processing data on the regulated international trade in CITES-listed tree species. The Secretariat noted that, while such an information system could provide very valuable data on trends in trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, such an in-depth analysis would require the collection of additional data, pricing information (monetary or financial values) of the trade transactions authorized under CITES, and socioeconomic information. Yet, large-scale temporal and spatial patterns in trade in CITES-listed tree species are poorly known, especially at the global level. Whilst analyses of legal CITES trade in tree species may exist, they primarily focus on individual species and individual taxonomic groups. A comprehensive analysis of the entire trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species is lacking. Additionally, some of the data to collect may concern specimens of CITES-listed tree species that are not covered by the Convention, *i.e.* that are excluded from the species listing owing to relevant annotations.
5. As reflected in the [PC26 summary record](#), taking into account the views and concerns expressed by its Members, the Plants 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 (ToRs) 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 (SC77; Geneva, November 2023).

6. At SC77, the Secretariat reported on the implementation of Decision 19.265 in document [SC77 Doc. 72](#). Following PC26, the Secretariat developed draft ToRs for a study on the feasibility and requirements for an information system on trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species. The draft ToRs were shared with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee who provided comments. The draft was further circulated to the Members of the Plants Committee. Comments were received from Members from Africa, Europe, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and North America. In addition to comments from Members, further inputs were received from the International Tropical Timber Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre, and other experts on the topic of annotations.
7. As reflected in the [SC77 summary record](#), the North American region supported the information system in principle but expressed concerns about the complexity and cost of developing such a system, as well as the need for additional resources for any in-depth analysis of trade in trees as this will require additional data beyond CITES trade reports. The North American region, echoed by China, encouraged the Secretariat to continue to consult the Plants Committee and Parties on progress and challenges in the development of the information system.
8. The Secretariat estimates the cost of the feasibility study mentioned in Decision 19.265 at USD 40,000. As reported at PC26 and SC77, the Secretariat expresses its appreciation to Switzerland for pledging an initial amount of USD 10,000 for this study.
9. The Committee noted the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decision 19.265 and invited the Secretariat to report to the Plants Committee at its 27th meeting, in accordance with Decision 18.317 (Rev. CoP19).
10. Since SC77, comments received from the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee have been compiled by the Secretariat, and the draft ToRs for the study have been revised accordingly.
11. Further, the Secretariat has identified additional funds to support the development of the study exploring the feasibility and requirements for developing an information system pursuant to Decision 19.265. The Secretariat will report progress to the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

Recommendations

12. The Plants Committee is invited to take note of the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decision 19.265.