

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



Seventy-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6–10 November 2023

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XIII IN BANGLADESH

1. This document has been submitted by Bangladesh in relation to agenda item 33.3*.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

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

Seventy-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6–10 November 2023

Information Document in response to document SC77 Doc 33.3: Application of Article XIII in Bangladesh

Summary Statement:

Bangladesh appreciates the technical mission report SC77 Doc 33.3 and agrees with the resulting recommendations. As evidenced in our previous responses to requests for information, and as acknowledged in this report, the Government of Bangladesh is committed to improve compliance with CITES requirements.

Through annual national CITES seminars with senior representatives from all relevant ministries and government agencies, the CITES Management Authority is strengthening awareness, political will, and collaborations across government sectors for combatting illegal wildlife trade. These efforts have resulted in four Non-Detriment Findings and a National Plan of Action for sharks and rays, amendments to national wildlife and fisheries laws, and well over 500 law enforcement officers and representatives from the judiciary and media trained for improved monitoring and enforcement of CITES compliant wildlife trade.

We understand that a lot remains to be done for achieving full compliance in Bangladesh. As a young nation with a large population highly dependent on our natural resources, we are challenged with having to adapt to changing climatic, societal, and political conditions. We are making strong progress towards SDG goals and under our CBD commitments. However, sustainable resource management and wildlife or protected area conservation management is still widely perceived as an impediment to economic growth. As the guardians of Bangladesh's natural heritage, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Forest Department, as our CITES Management Authority, are often perceived as obstructors rather than progressive protectors.

We accept the recommendations from the technical mission report with preliminary responses provided in this Information Document submitted for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting in Geneva. We note that the time was insufficient for enabling the preparation and submission of an information document adequately responding to each point. Bangladesh will provide the CITES Secretariat with a progress report within the coming six months detailing efforts and advances made in addressing the recommendations.

To continue and strengthen our efforts towards CITES compliance, we request continued support from our government and non-government partners that are enabling our progress with their technical expertise and financial means. Bangladesh requests the continued guidance and technical support from the CITES Secretariat and its legal wing for ensuring that the most recent CITES directives are addressed appropriately.

Response to results and recommendations presented in SC77 Doc 33.3:

▪ **Clarification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 10 & 42**


Following the Article VI, paragraph 2 and 4 (“The export of any specimen of a species included in Appendix II shall require the prior grant and presentation of an export permit”) and Article V, paragraph 2 and 3, Bangladesh started issuing no-objection certificates (NOCs) instead of standard CITES permits for the import of CITES Appendix II and III listed birds in 2020, coinciding with the enactment of the Pet Bird Rearing Rules, 2020.

Bangladesh would like to clarify that, at present, the import NOC includes information on the purpose of the transactions (Figure 1).


We note that all export permits are verified by the CITES MA via email communications with the country of export.

Paper-based NOCs including information on the source and purpose of the transactions were initially issued manually (See attached zip file: [\Shareable folder with evidence and photographs\2021-03-10-12-43-NOC copy Manual system.pdf](#) & [\Shareable folder with evidence and photographs\CITES NOC for Import issued through digital system.jpg](#)). From November 2022, the CITES MA of Bangladesh issued NOCs digitally via the national electronic filing system ‘e-nothi’. Since 2023, NOCs are issued through the national digital filing system ‘d-nothi’, including the required information on source, ring number, valid export permit presented in tabular form. During the transition and upgrading from a manual paper-based to a digital permit system, technical errors occurred.

The CITES MA and SA is working in consultation with relevant authorities and experts to resolve these issues and revise the NOC format following Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19). The proposed format will be shared with the CITES Secretariat Legal Unit for feedback before official adoption and implementation.



Current procedures of CITES permitting process (in brief)





The permit system: Paper-based
Appendix - I Management Authority and Scientific Authority

- Export **permit** (Sample-Research purpose)
- Import **permit** (Exhibit purpose: Zoo – fauna)

The permit system: Digital & Paper-based
Appendix - II & III Management Authority

- Export **permit** (Artificial propagated plants; Sample-Research purpose)
- Re-export **Permit** (Not issued yet)
- Import **NOC with QR Code** (Commercial purpose: Cagebirds; Exhibit purpose: Zoo – fauna)



নথী নং: ১৯৮৩/১৯৮৩
 নথী
 ১৯৮৩/১৯৮৩

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 Office of the Chief Conservator of Forests
 Bangladesh Forest Department
 Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.

১.Original NOC No.
 BD: ০৫/২০২১
 ২.Valid Until: ০৭/০৫/২০২১

Memo No. ২২.০১.০০০১.১০১.২৩.০০৪.২০২১. ৯৫৩
 Date: ০৪/০৩/২০২১

Sub: **No Objection Certificate (NOC) for importing CITES listed birds.**

With reference to the above mentioned subject, the undersigned is pleased to issue No Objection Certificate (NOC) for importing following CITES listed birds for trade purpose.

Name and address of the importer: **M/S. Raju Traders (Pvt.) Ltd. ৯/১০, Inandipur, Savar, Dhaka-1340.**

Name and address of the Exporter/Exporter: **Parsons SA, 208 Wynnton St, Pomona, County South Africa.**

Sl. No.	Common Name	Scientific Name	Appendix	Country of origin	Quantity	Permit No. and Date
1.	Blue & Gold Macaw	<i>Ara ararauna</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	10 (Ten) heads	253918 Date: 09/10/2020
2.	Green winged Macaw	<i>Ara chloroceros</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	10 (Ten) heads	253918 Date: 09/10/2020
3.	Blue Fronted Amazon	<i>Amazona aestiva</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	20 (Twenty) heads	253956 Date: 06/10/2020
4.	Elegant Parrot	<i>Eolocopus corollae</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	10 (Ten) heads	253950 Date: 06/10/2020
5.	Sun Conure	<i>Aratinga solstitialis</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	20 (Twenty) heads	253916 Date: 09/10/2020
6.	White fronted Amazon	<i>Amazona albifrons</i>	CITES-II 'C'	South Africa	10 (Ten) heads	253822 Date: 20/10/2020

Conditions:
 1. The above mentioned cage birds will have to import through Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.
 2. Imported birds must be kept in cages, so that they could not come in contact with any other animals.
 3. Imported cage birds cannot be released in nature.
 4. Dead birds must be buried deep in the ground.
 5. After import, rings must be worn on the legs of imported birds.
 6. Importer will have to collect Quarantine Certificate from Livestock Quarantine Station, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.
 7. This Permit is non-transferable and import of wild bird is strictly prohibited.

Chief Conservator, CC&BF

নথী নং: ১৯৮৩/১৯৮৩

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 Office of the Chief Conservator of Forests
 Bangladesh Forest Department
 Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka.

১.Original NOC No.
 BD: ০৫/২০২১
 ২.Valid Until: ০৭/০৫/২০২১

Memo No. ২২.০১.০০০১.১০১.২৩.০০৪.২০২১. ৯৫৩
 Date: ০৪/০৩/২০২১

Sub: **No Objection Certificate (NOC) for importing CITES listed birds.**

With reference to the above mentioned subject, the undersigned is pleased to issue No Objection Certificate (NOC) for importing following CITES listed birds for trade purpose.

Name and address of the importer: **M/S. Raju Traders (Pvt.) Ltd. ৯/১০, Inandipur, Savar, Dhaka-1340.**

Name and address of the Exporter/Exporter: **Parsons SA, 208 Wynnton St, Pomona, County South Africa.**

Sl. No.	Common Name/Scientific Name	CITES Appendix No. and Source	Quantity	Country of export	Permit No. and Date
1.	Blue and Gold Macaw <i>Ara ararauna</i>	CITES-II 'C'	10 (Ten) heads	South Africa	253918 Date: 09/10/2020
2.	Green winged Macaw <i>Ara chloroceros</i>	CITES-II 'C'	10 (Ten) heads	South Africa	253918 Date: 09/10/2020
3.	Blue Fronted Amazon <i>Amazona aestiva</i>	CITES-II 'C'	20 (Twenty) heads	South Africa	253956 Date: 06/10/2020
4.	Elegant Parrot <i>Eolocopus corollae</i>	CITES-II 'C'	10 (Ten) heads	South Africa	253950 Date: 06/10/2020
5.	Sun Conure <i>Aratinga solstitialis</i>	CITES-II 'C'	20 (Twenty) heads	South Africa	253916 Date: 09/10/2020
6.	White fronted Amazon <i>Amazona albifrons</i>	CITES-II 'C'	10 (Ten) heads	South Africa	253822 Date: 20/10/2020

Conditions:
 1. The above mentioned cage birds will have to import through Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.
 2. Imported birds must be kept in cages, so that they could not come in contact with any other animals.
 3. Imported cage birds cannot be released in nature.
 4. Dead birds must be buried deep in the ground.
 5. After import, rings must be worn on the legs of imported birds.
 6. Importer will have to collect Quarantine Certificate from Livestock Quarantine Station, Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.
 7. This Permit is non-transferable and import of wild bird is strictly prohibited.

Figure 1. Overview of NOC process (top) with current NOC format for importing CITES listed birds with source and purpose of the transactions from d-nothi system (left) and manual (Paper-based) NOC (right).

▪ **Updated information regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 12 -**

Bangladesh would like to share that it's important to note that, we already submitted the CITES Annual Legal & Illegal Trade Report for the year 2022 on October 30, 2023.

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 13 -**

Bangladesh would like to clarify that since 2020, due to non-compliance accusation, the import license of one company has been suspended for six months and for three companies for one year, and five companies were banned from importing birds after the completion of inspection and verification by inspecting officers assigned by the MA of Bangladesh. (Table 1). The suspension will be removed only if the inspection report to the CITES MA is satisfactory.

Name of the registered bird companies	Status	Starting Date of Suspension or Ban	Duration
Osprey International	Suspended	10.1. 2023	6 months
Shahjalal Pets and farming	Suspended	9.01.2023	1 Year
Sara Agro Farm	Suspended	9.01.2023	1 Year
3T International	Suspended	14.6.2023	1 Year
Ajmeri Trading	Banned	12.9.2021	Effective until
Hamim Export and Import	Banned	29.8.2022	Effective until

Arpiha Traders	Banned	28.9.2022	Effective until
Arshad Import and Exports	Banned	8.10.2023	Effective until
Kashvi Enterprise	Banned	23.10.2023	Effective until

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 18 -**

Bangladesh appreciates the suggestion to increase bird import fees to generate revenue to be reinvested into an improved permission management and processing system. The CITES MA would appreciate guidance from the Secretariat on international standards or appropriate rates for import fees, as well as support in explaining the positive effects and benefits of such financial mechanisms to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the Ministry of Finance.

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 29 -**

Bangladesh would like to clarify that the responsible importer company is a fine of 7.2 million taka (at the current rate ~65,340 USD) was levied against the importer -3T International, according to the Customs Act 1969 as the crime detected under the custom's jurisdiction and the license of the importer has also been suspended for a year according to the "Pet Bird rearing rules, 2020".

Clause 40 of the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 specifies the punishment for non-compliance with wildlife export and import regulations as up to 1 year imprisonment or a fine of up to 50 thousand taka (at the current rate ~450 USD) or both, and for repeat offenders imprisonment up to 2 years or a fine up to 1 lakh taka (at the current rate ~910 USD) or both. The Pet Bird Rearing Rules, 2020, enables punishment of non-compliance with the suspension or ban of trade licence and registration. Due to the absence of definitions for the schedules in the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012, prosecution of perpetrators under this law is difficult. The CITES MA is in the process of amending the Wildlife Act to address this and other lackings.

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 30 & 31-**

Bangladesh would like to clarify that the NOC No. BD/IMP/32-2023 was issued for 190 non-CITES listed bird specimens. In the shipment seized at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka there were another 79 bird specimens not included in the NOC (CITES listed 3 Lear's macaws and 8 White-throated toucans, non-CITES 2 Crimson-rumped toucanets (*Aulacorhynchus haematopygus*), 6 eagles, 10 Hartlaub's ducks (*Pteronetta hartlaubii*), and 50 peach-faced lovebird (*Agapornis roseicollis*).

The CITES MA received and responded to communications with Brazil, the country of origin, via WhatsApp. From 17 July 2023 to October 2023, the CITES MA communicated via email with the CITES MA of the exporting country, Belgium, providing all relevant documents, such as invoice, photographs before and after the death of the macaws, and autopsy reports.

Once the Lear's macaws and other seized birds were handed over to the Forest Department by Customs, they were sent to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park in Gazipur for primary treatment and quarantine under the observation of government registered veterinary surgeons. The Lear's macaws appeared weak when seized and perished in quarantine.

Bangladesh requests guidance and assistance from the CITES Secretariat on ways to improve the rescue, handling and disposal mechanism as well as staff capacity for CITES compliance. Bangladesh also requests that the exporter be investigated, and that Parties be informed about the violations. A list of perpetrators/non-compliant traders should be posted on the CITES website, so that Parties can flag these in their permit issuance and checking processes.

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 33 –**

Bangladesh would like to share that due to the lack of skilled persons, knowledge, and capacity necessary to successfully breed CITES Appendix II listed bird species in Bangladesh, the CITES MA is not currently permitting the re-export of imported birds.

On 25 July 2023, the Forest Department organized a day-long workshop on “Pet Bird Farm Management” for representatives from all registered bird farms, including importers and enthusiastic breeders (Figure 2). The aim of the workshop was to understand their views on bird breeding and re-exporting, capacities and challenges, and the pet-bird market scenario.



Figure 2. Representatives from registered bird farms and bird importers attended an information sharing workshop organized by the Bangladesh Forest Department.

▪ **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 43 -**

Bangladesh would like to share that in October 2023, the Bangladesh Forest Department successfully completed the 5th national CITES seminar with senior representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock; representatives from eight law-enforcing agencies; and the members of the Scientific Committee with the assistance of WCS Bangladesh. Current progress has been recognized, and most importantly, the next steps (regarding exchange of intelligence, inclusion of monitoring of illegal wildlife trade as one of the mandates in the duty registrar of the law enforcing agencies, collaborative capacity-building programs, wildlife crime investigations, financial investigations linked to alleged illegal wildlife trade, harmonize

interpretation of applicable provisions in relevant laws, plan of regular meetings and guidance, etc.) are prioritized for strengthening CITES compliance and combating illegal wildlife trade in the seminar.



Figure 3. 5th national CITES seminar

- **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 46 (a) -**

Bangladesh would like to share that Bangladesh Forest Department has already taken the initiative to amend the existing Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 emphasizing the provision of penalties including fines, trade controls including arresting powers and addressing the loopholes. The proposed draft amendment of the act will be sent to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change after the consultation with the expert groups, scientific authority, relevant stakeholders including NGOs.

- **Justification regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 46 (b) -**

Bangladesh would like to share that it would be great if the CITES Secretariat could send an official letter to the Ministry of Home Affairs, through a diplomatic channel regarding updating the respective mandates and clear entry of the assigned Forest Department officials to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and the fight against transnational organized wildlife crime of the law enforcing agencies as well as Bangladesh Customs authorities in speeding up the process along with the future initiatives of MA of Bangladesh.

- **Proposal regarding Agenda No. 33.3, Paragraph No. 47 (1) (a) -**

Bangladesh highly appreciates the recommendations mentioned in the document SC77 Doc 33.3.

Regarding the paragraph no. 47 {1(a)} of the SC77 Doc 33.3, Bangladesh would like to propose 6 months suspension of commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds from or to Bangladesh until we are in a position to properly regulate and monitor trade in CITES-listed birds.

Major actions taken to date for improving trade controls and compliance with CITES requirements after the completion of Technical Mission and recent activities that are ongoing:

→ Improving capacity for NOC processing:

Digitalization of whole process of NOC or import certificate and export permit from submitting application to issuance of a permit or certificate through a newly developed apps titled “CITES/NOC permit system” application;

→ Addressing the legislative gaps:

Bangladesh Forest Department has already taken the initiative to amend the existing Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 emphasizing the provision of penalties including fines, trade controls including arresting powers and addressing the loopholes. The proposed draft amendment of the act will be sent to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change after the consultation with the expert groups, scientific authority, relevant stakeholders including NGOs.

→ Regarding shark and ray trade compliance:

In accordance with Notification to the Parties No. 2023/027 pursuant to Decision 19.222 (CoP19) and in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18), Bangladesh has already submitted a report mentioning significant achievements on national management measures to enable improved management of shark and ray fisheries and trade, including prohibiting commercial take or trade of globally threatened species/species groups/genera.

These include most notably four Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs), strengthened capacity and tools for improved identification and monitoring of CITES-listed shark and ray products in trade, and a National Conservation Strategy and Plan of Action for Sharks and Rays in Bangladesh (2023-2032) developed through enhanced collaborations between fisheries, wildlife, and law enforcement agencies.

→ Strengthening collaboration and information sharing mechanism with relevant law enforcing agencies and minimizing the intra-communication gap:

In order to establish a national platform and reporting system for enforcement cooperation and coordination between relevant authorities and MA of Bangladesh, an app titled “Wildlife Offence Reporting Tool (WORT) application” was launched on 28 March 2023 through a national workshop with 37 high officials from three ministries- including the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Ministry of Shipping; five Law enforcement agencies including Bangladesh Police, Coast Guard, Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate, Department of Fisheries, and Bangladesh Forest Department and officials from USAID, US Department of Justice, UNODC, IUCN Bangladesh, and Chemonics International (USAID’s Protibesh Project).

This app was developed through four workshops with the active collaboration of Bangladesh Forest Department and WCS Bangladesh.



Figure 4. National workshop on “Wildlife Offence Reporting Tool (WORT) application”