

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



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Tel Aviv (Israel), 30 August-3 September 2015

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Proposals for possible consideration at CoP17

ASSESSMENT OF THREE BIRD SPECIES INCLUDED IN APPENDIX III
(*CRAX RUBRA*, *MELEAGRIS OCELLATA* AND *PENELOPE PURPURASCENS*)
BASED ON THE CRITERIA OF RESOLUTION CONF. 9.24 (REV. COP16)

1. This document has been submitted by Mexico.*

Background

2. The great curassow, (*Crax rubra*), ocellated turkey (*Meleagris ocellata*), and the crested guan (*Penelope purpurascens*) are listed in Appendix III of CITES (CITES, 2013) and on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List (IUCN, 2014) as follows:

Species	CITES	IUCN Red List
<i>C. rubra</i>	Appendix III <i>Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica</i>	Vulnerable (VU)
<i>M. ocellata</i>	Appendix III <i>Guatemala</i>	Near Threatened (NT)
<i>P. purpurascens</i>	Appendix III <i>Honduras</i>	Least Concern (LC)

3. In Mexico, the three species are listed in the Mexican Official Standard NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 (SEMARNAT, 2010) under the 'threatened' (A) category, meaning that exploitation of these species is regulated by the General Wildlife Act (SEMARNAT, 2000), which is implemented by the Wildlife Directorate of the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT). Once listed in the Standard, exploitation is exclusively permitted under the system of 'Management units for the conservation and exploitation of wildlife' (UMA).
4. During a study coordinated and financed by the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), Mexico's Scientific Authority) and carried out by TRAFFIC North America, entitled "Study to identify relevant Mexican species in international trade" (Mosig and Reuter, 2013), these three birds were identified as species that, as a result of the magnitude, record or trends in international trade of

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the species between 2005 and 2010 and their conservation status, could meet the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendix I or II.

5. In order to respond the recommendations of the abovementioned study and to update the state of knowledge of the conservation of these three species, CONABIO (Mexico's CITES Scientific Authority) organized a workshop of experts entitled "Evaluation of the conservation status and use, management and trade of *Crax rubra*, *Meleagris ocellata* and *Penelope purpurascens*" (20–21 May 2015, Mexico City). The workshop was attended by 34 experts, authorities and nongovernmental organizations and had the following objectives:
 - Asses the vulnerability of the three birds using the method established by Partners in Flight (Panjabi, Blancher, Dettmers, & Rosenberg, 2012);
 - Assess the three species using the "Method to evaluate the risk of extinction of wildlife in Mexico (MER)" of the Mexican Official Standard NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 (SEMARNAT, 2010);
 - Assess the three species using the criteria for inclusion in CITES Appendices I and II (Resolution Conf. 9.24 [Rev. CoP16], 2013); and
 - Based on the above, issue recommendations to improve the conservation, management and exploitation of the three birds.
6. To facilitate the achievements of the workshop's objectives, and based on previous contributions from the participants, CONABIO drafted the following background documents on the three species:
 - *C. rubra* (great curassow):
<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/Pdf/Anexo%206%20Documento%20base%20Crax%20rubra.pdf>
 - *M. ocellata* (ocellated turkey):
<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/Pdf/Anexo%207%20Documento%20base%20Meleagris%20ocellata.pdf>
 - *P. purpurascens* (crested guan):
<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/Pdf/Anexo%208%20Documento%20base%20Penelope%20purpurascens.pdf>
7. The report of the workshop is available at:
<http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/Pdf/InformeCONABIOTallerCracidos-20a121mayo2015.pdf>, and the main results, conclusions and recommendations are summarized in paragraphs 8 to 11 below.

Results and recommendations of the workshop

8. Evaluation using the Partners in Flight method:

8.1 The Partners in Flight method (Panjabi, Blancher, Dettmers, & Rosenberg, 2012) assigns an increasing vulnerability score (from 5 to 20), based on the combined results of evaluation of four general categories: a) population size (PS), b) breeding and non-breeding distribution (BD and ND), c) population trends (Pt) and d) threats to breeding and threats to non-breeding (TB and TN). The three species in question have already undergone an overall evaluation using this method, however, the assessment during the workshop refers specifically to the Mexican populations. The results are as follows:

Species/ Common name	PS	BD and ND	TB and TN	PT	Species vulnerability in Mexico (out of a máximo score of 20)
<i>C. rubra</i> great curassow	5	5	4	5	19/20
<i>M. ocellata</i> ocellated turkey	4	4	3	3	14/20
<i>P. purpurascens</i> crested guan	4	4	4	5	17/20

8.2 Analysis and justification of the results of the national evaluation using the Partners in Flight method:

- a) In the case of the great curassow, (*C. rubra*), the national Partners in Flight assessment (19/20) produced a greater score than the global assessment (17/20), and it was identified as a species with high vulnerability; conservation of the species is therefore a priority in Mexico. The estimated population density is 1 ind/km², with a population size of approximately 46,000 individuals. The potential species distribution is estimated at approximately 46,000 km² and the main threat (outside of protected natural areas) is subsistence hunting, followed by habitat loss (primary forest cover);
- b) In the case of the ocellated turkey (*M. ocellata*), the national assessment (14/20) was lower than the global assessment (18/20), making it a species of average vulnerability. The estimated population density is 2 ind/km², with an average population size of approximately 318,000 individuals; potential distribution is 159,000 km² (although this could be an overestimation); and contrary to what was expected, the species is benefiting from a change in land use to agricultural activities (which favours the species' access to food).
- c) In the case of the crested guan (*P. purpurascens*) the national Partners in Flight assessment (17/20) produced a slightly greater score than the global assessment (16/20), and similar to the great curassow, the crested guan was identified as a priority species for conservation as a result of its high vulnerability. The estimated population density is 1.5 ind/km², with a population size of approximately 180,000 individuals. Potential population distribution is 120,000 km² and, similar to the great curassow, subsistence hunting is its main threat.

9. Assessment using the Method to evaluate the risk of extinction of wildlife in Mexico (MER):

9.1 The Method to evaluate the risk of extinction of wildlife in Mexico (MER) of the Mexican Official Standard NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 (SEMARNAT, 2010) is based on four independent criteria: distribution range (**A**); habitat status with regard to the natural development of the taxon (**B**); intrinsic biological vulnerability of the taxon (**C**); and impact of human activity on the taxon (**D**). The sum of the numerical values obtained from the assessment of each of the four criteria determines the risk category, as follows:

9.2 In danger of extinction (**P**): species or population whose total score is between 12 and 14 points;

Threatened (**A**): Species or population whose total score is between 10 and 11 points.

Taking as a basis the results of the assessment using the Partners in Flight method, the results for the three species in question (plus one subspecies, *Craz rubra griscomi*) are summarized below:

Species and current category in NOM-059	MER Criteria				MER Total and corresponding category	
	A	B	C	D		
<i>C. rubra</i> (A)	4	3	3	4	14	<i>In danger of extinction (P)</i>
<i>C. rubra griscomi</i> (P)	4	3	3	4	14	<i>In danger of extinction (P)</i>
<i>P. purpurascens</i> (A)	3	2	2	4	11	<i>Threatened (A)</i>
<i>M. ocellata</i> (A)	3	2	2	4	11	<i>Threatened (A)</i>

9.3 According to the above, only the great curassow (*C. rubra*) merits a change in category under NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 (SEMARNAT, 2010): from 'threatened' (A), to 'in danger of extinction' (P). In the case of the other species, current national legislation adequately reflects their current conservation status.

10. Assessment using amendment criteria for CITES Appendices I and II

10.1 Resolution 9.24 of the Convention (Resolution Conf. 9.24 [Rev. CoP16], 2013) establishes the criteria to determine whether a certain species meets the characteristics to be listed in CITES Appendices I or II. These criteria can be summarized in two parts:

- a) Biological criteria: detailed in Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16);
- b) Trade criteria detailed in Annex 2^a and 2b of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16).

10.2 The assessment using biological criteria was based on the results of the Partners in Flight and MER assessments and the trade criteria were assessed based on information from the following sources: a) the CONABIO-TRAFFIC North America study; b) export data during the period 2010–2014 from the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre database; c) export authorization data (but not exports undertaken) for the period 2010–2014 provided by the Mexican Administrative Authority (Wildlife Directorate, SEMARNAT); d) actual export data for the same period provided by the law enforcement and compliance authority (State Attorney for the Protection of the Environment (PROFEPA), SEMARNAT). The results were as follows:

Species/ common name	Annual average of exported specimens registered*, authorized**, or carried out***			
	Mosig and Reuter (2013)*	UNEP- WCMC*	DGVS- SEMARNAT**	PROFEPA- SEMARNAT***
<i>C. rubra</i> Great curassow	123.6	70	52.2	31
<i>M. ocellata</i> Ocellated turkey	720	272	207.2	52.4
<i>P. purpurascens</i> Crested guan	70	37.6	24.2	15.6

10.3 Although the three species meet *some* of the *biological* criteria for listing in Appendix I [Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)]; the available trade data indicate that international trade does not represent a threat to the populations of any of the three species, meaning that they do not meet the trade criteria to be protected by CITES Appendices I or II [Annex 2a and 2b of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)].

11. Main conclusions and recommendations arising from the workshop

11.1 Information gaps: The main information gaps identified during the workshop for the three species are related to demographic aspects. As such, it was recognized that it is necessary to design and implement medium- and long-term standardized monitoring activities, which would enable the collection of data to compare wild populations with populations under management. The information generated will be of use to strengthen the establishment of sustainable exploitation rates.

11.2 National legal framework

- a) Based on the most recent assessment of the conservation status of these species using the Partners in Flight method (Panjabi, Blancher, Dettmers, & Rosenberg, 2012), it is possible to conclude that the NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 adequately reflects the conservation status of the ocellated turkey (*M. ocellata*) and the crested guan (*P. purpurascens*), which are currently listed in the 'threatened' (A) category. However, it is recommended that the great curassow is moved from the 'threatened' category (A) to 'in danger of extinction' (P).
- b) Moreover, given that the General Wildlife Act (SEMARNAT, 2000) establishes in Chapter I (exploitation) of Title VII (sustainable exploitation of wildlife) that populations in the A and P categories are subject to the same criteria and regulations, the proposed change in category would not involve changes in the management and exploitation practices for the great curassow. In addition, this change in category could raise the value of the resource in the sport hunting market, and generate more interest in the conservation of the species through the 'Management units for the conservation and exploitation of wildlife' (UMA) framework in Mexico.
- c) Furthermore, it is essential to accelerate the management process for these species through the UMA framework. It is also necessary to facilitate the exchange of experiences and information between relevant sectors (governmental, academic and productive).

11.3 International legal framework: based on the assessment using the criteria for inclusion in the CITES Appendices, international trade does not represent a threat for the survival of wild populations of these

species of birds. Subsequently, they do not meet the criteria for being listed in CITES Appendices I or II (Resolution Conf. 9.24 [Rev. CoP16], 2013). Therefore, it is essential that the national regulatory framework is adequately enforced and that the recommendations described above are implemented.

Recommendations to the Animals Committee

12. Take note of the results and conclusions of the workshop organized by CONABIO on the three bird species listed in Appendix III, particularly the fact that based on the amendment criteria for the CITES Appendices, none of the three species merits being listed in Appendix I or II (paragraph 10.3), since international trade does not represent a threat to the populations of any of these species; and
13. Encourage the Parties to identify relevant species in international trade and develop assessment initiatives similar to those described in this document.

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