

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 17-21 May 2005

Regional reports

NORTH AMERICA

General Information

- a) Name of the Representatives: United States of America: Mr Robert R. Gabel (NA Representative) and Canada: Ms Carolina Caceres (Alternate Member); see Regional Directories for contact information.
- b) Number of Parties in the Region: 3
- c) Number of Parties responding to communications: 3
- d) Names of other institutions, NGOs contacted for CITES work during the period:
 - i) Canada: Provincial and territorial Management and Scientific Authorities, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Foreign Affairs Canada, Canada Border Services Agency, Canadian Forest Service, TRAFFIC, IWMC, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Inuvialuit Game Council, Species Survival Network (SSN), Humane Society of Canada.
 - ii) Mexico: Dirección General de Vida Silvestre, SEMARNAT (Management Authority); Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad, Conabio (Scientific Authority); Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente, SEMARNAT (Law Enforcement Authority); Instituto Nacional de Ecología, SEMARNAT; Dirección General de Gestión Forestal y de Suelos, Semarnat; Facultad de Estudios Superiores Iztacala, UNAM; Centro de Investigaciones en Ecosistemas (CIECO), UNAM; Instituto de Biología, UNAM; Instituto de Ecología, UNAM; TRAFFIC North America-México, PG7-Faunam.
 - iii) United States of America: White House Council on Environmental Quality, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Department of State, Smithsonian Institution, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Regional Associations of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies, State Natural Heritage Programs, State Agricultural Agencies, American Orchid Society, American Herbal Products Association, International Wood Products Association, West Virginia Woodland Owners Association, Wisconsin Ginseng Board and Wisconsin Congressional staff.

Activities since the 14th meeting of the Plants Committee

1. Regional Directories and Representatives

Revised directories for Canada, Mexico and the United States are contained in the Annex to this document.

Carolina Caceres has been appointed Head of the Scientific Authority section at Environment Canada, replacing Bertrand Von Arx who left the position in June 2003.

2. Criteria Review

CANADA: Canada strongly supported the adoption of the revisions to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP12) and would offer to assist in developing guidelines to assist in the application of the criteria to tree species.

MEXICO: Mexico actively participated in PC14. At that meeting the Plants Committee reviewed the results of the revision of the criteria and Mexico joined a working group that undertook to synthesize the work carried out by all the countries that had participated in this exercise. The Animals Committee later produced a consolidated document which was submitted at CoP13 (document CoP13 Doc. 57, Annex 3) and adopted by consensus, with the addition of the recommendations given in paragraph B of the 'Comments from the Secretariat' in that same document. This addition was also adopted by consensus.

3. Medicinal plant annotations

CANADA: Canada participated on the supervisory group steering the work of the IUCN SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group on annotations for medicinal plants. Comments from the group were incorporated into a final interim report from the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group presented to the Conference of Parties.

4. Species

MEXICO

Carnegieia gigantea: A meeting attended by the authorities dealing with the use and regulation of this species as well as a specialist in *C. gigantean* was organized to review and discuss the status of this species in Mexico, as well as to reach decisions regarding its management. Participants in this meeting decided that it was necessary to compile all available and up-to-date information from studies (research as well as management and harvest plans) and on exports, seizures, legislation and related regulations; to create maps; to establish lists of specialists and key-players dealing with this species; and to plan meetings or workshops, all of which activities are currently being undertaken. Depending on the preliminary results of this review, particularly of the available biological data, a field study may be carried out to determine the population status of this species in Mexico.

Euphorbia antisiphilitica: CONABIO has compiled information on the biology, conservation, management, utilization, legal and illegal trade, and relevant legislation pertaining to that species and the governmental institutions responsible for its management in Mexico are now in the process of revising and updating this information. Besides this revision, meetings are envisaged to determine whether it is necessary to take additional measures to control the management or export of *E. antisiphilitica* in order to address the concerns regarding its use and the sustainability of the trade therein. It is worth recalling that at PC14 Mexico provided information on the current protection measures, which seem to have allowed up to now the exploitation of this species at a sustainable level, as well as on an official regulation dealing specifically with the use of this species in Mexico. As for *Carnegieia gigantean*, CONABIO will consider allocating funding to conduct a study on this species if the review of the information shows there is such a need, but it may then require support from interested countries.

5. Implementation of listings

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mahogany: Bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) was listed in CITES Appendix II at CoP12. The listing became effective on 15 November 2003. As the Appendix-II listing of bigleaf mahogany includes plywood, a commodity not covered under the previous Appendix-III listing of the species, the United States prepared a proposed revision of CITES Resolution Conf. 10.13 (on timber) proposing that Parties recognize the World Customs Organization's definition of plywood to define mahogany plywood under CITES. This proposed revision was endorsed by the Plants Committee at PC14 and the United States then submitted it at CoP13. The Parties adopted this revision at CoP13.

In May 2004, the United States attended the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) workshop on mahogany implementation in Pucallpa, Peru. At this workshop, the major range countries, Bolivia, Brazil, and Peru, reported on their implementation of the Appendix-II listing of bigleaf mahogany.

During the reporting period, various United States agencies have been collaborating to identify potential mechanisms for providing capacity building, training, and other technical assistance to mahogany range countries. The USFWS remains in close contact with Peru regarding their implementation of the mahogany Appendix-II listing, and sent the Peruvian CITES Management and Scientific Authorities a letter in December 2004 asking for confirmation that Peru is making non-detriment findings on mahogany prior to its export from the country.

Also during the reporting period, the United States continued to review imports into the United States of bigleaf mahogany, with a view toward assessing implementation of the Appendix-II listing of the species.

Ramin: Ramin (*Gonystylus* spp.) was listed in CITES Appendix II at CoP13. The listing became effective on 12 January 2005. In the weeks leading up to the effective date, the USFWS provided outreach to the United States ramin industry. On 2 December 2004, the USFWS sent a letter to more than 60 United States ramin importers and re-exporters on the requirements of the Appendix-II listing of ramin; on 6 January 2005, the USFWS updated its Internet timber Web page with information on the ramin Appendix-II listing; and on 4 February 2005, the USFWS prepared and posted on the Web a news release providing information on the Appendix-II listing.

Additionally, on 21 December 2004, the USFWS sent a letter to the ramin range countries and the major ramin re-exporting countries informing them of the United States policy regarding acceptance of CITES ramin permits and certificates before, on, and after 12 January 2005, the effective Appendix-II listing date. The USFWS included along with this letter a report summarizing ramin trade to and from the United States during 2001-2003.

6. Revision of Resolutions

MEXICO: At PC14 and CoP13 Mexico participated actively in the revision and amendment of a number of Resolutions, which were finally adopted with important amendments at CoP13. Amongst those, the following Resolutions are particularly relevant to plant species and to the functioning of the Plants Committee:

- a) Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species;
- b) Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP13) Standard nomenclature and operation of the Nomenclature Committee;
- c) Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP13) Establishment of committees;
- d) Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP13) Regulation of trade in plants;
- e) Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP13) Guidelines for the registration of nurseries exporting artificially propagated specimens of Appendix-I species; and

f) Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP13) Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II.

7. Research

MEXICO:

Guaiacum: Mexico completed a study on the *Abundance, distribution and conservation status of Guaiacum sanctum L. in Mexico*, carried out by researchers from the *Centro de Investigaciones en Ecosistemas* (CIECO) of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (UNAM), with financial support from Germany, Mexico and the United States of America. The report shows the results of the first phase of the study which focused on the evaluation of the current distribution of the species in Mexico, the population status based on density and abundance surveys, the types of habitats where the species is found and the progress made with the second phase of the study.

Appendix-I Cactaceae: Mexico has continued reviewing the status of the populations of Mexican cacti included in Appendix I through field studies carried out by the Consultative Technical Subcommittee for the Conservation of Cactaceae in Mexico. This work will allow to assess whether they are listed in the correct Appendix. Up to now funding for this work has come from the *Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología de México* (CONACyT). However given the magnitude of the work and the numerous species it covers, the cooperation of interested Parties is requested in order to ensure its continuation.

So far a revision of herbals has been conducted and a database on all CITES-listed species created. The demographical surveys and descriptions of habitats are complete for the seven following species:

1. *Ariocarpus fissuratus*;
2. *Astrophytum asterias*;
3. *Aztekium ritteri*;
4. *Echinocereus schmolli*;
5. *Mammillaria pectinifera*;
6. *Obregonia denegrii*; and
7. *Turbinicarpus horripilus*.

Six further species will be covered in the first half of this year. The study of legal and illegal trade, as well as of seizures and destructive extractions will be completed in May 2005.

8. Enforcement

CANADA: The Wildlife Enforcement Branch conducted 1944 inspections and 821 investigations resulting in 25 prosecutions, 26 charges and 14 convictions in 2004. Special efforts were made on commercial shipments entering Canada.

MEXICO: Besides its usual inspection and monitoring activities, the *Autoridad de Aplicación de la Ley* (PROFEPA) conducted 13 special operations, such as inspecting various plant and flower markets to verify the legal origin of the specimens on sale. In the course of 2004, the PROFEPA seized about 2,000 plant specimens (not all being CITES listed).

9. Meetings and Workshops

CANADA, MEXICO, and the USA: The three countries of the region met in Querétaro, Mexico, on 7-9 September 2004 to discuss proposals and agenda items for the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The meeting, with excellent arrangements by Mexico, provided an excellent forum for the exchange of information among the three countries, and where possible, the three countries decided on a unified regional position for some agenda items and proposals. These meetings include representatives of both Management Authorities and Scientific Authorities, as well as representatives of fisheries agencies, foreign affairs agencies, law enforcement, and other governmental participants who have an interest in CITES matters. These meetings have become a regular occurrence prior to each CoP.

CANADA

Mahogany: In May 2004, Canada (K Farr) participated in the ITTO Workshop on Capacity Building for Implementation of CITES Appendix-II Listing of Mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). A presentation on Canada's experiences in implementing the Appendix-II listing of mahogany was provided. Canada participated in the working group examining the private sector's role in building capacity for sustainable mahogany management.

Taxus: In October 2004 and January 2005, Canada (K Farr) attended the Eastern Canada Ground Hemlock (*Taxus canadensis*) Working Group meeting. The Working Group is an open forum for parties interested and involved in the supply and processing of *T. canadensis* biomass for the global pharmaceutical industry. The Working Group includes federal and provincial authorities and researchers, private sector harvesting and primary processing companies, land owners associations, and nongovernmental organizations. Canada presented an overview on the Appendix-II listing of Asian *Taxus* species adopted at CITES CoP13. The final draft of "Principles and Corresponding Criteria and Indicators for the harvest of Wild Ground Hemlock Biomass" was unanimously adopted. The Working Group adopted a new name - the "Canada Yew Association". The new Association's roles will include setting harvesting standards, investigating third-party auditing systems, funding *T. canadensis* research and disseminating scientific information.

CITES-CBD Synergy: Ms. Caceres represented Canada at the Expert Workshop Promoting CITES-CBD Cooperation and Synergy, April 2004, Vilm, Germany, providing a case study on CITES-CBD linkages in Canada.

NAWEG: The Wildlife Enforcement Branch participated to regular North American Wildlife Enforcement Group meetings with the US and Mexico.

MEXICO

Bigleaf mahogany: Mexico was invited to the workshop that followed on the meetings of the CITES Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group and that was held in Managua, Nicaragua, on 23 and 24 November 2004. Mexico could not participate directly but sent an up-to-date national report on this species which provided information *inter alia* on: guidelines on the making of non-detriment findings, development of national and regional programmes for the sustainable use of this species, establishment of quotas, exchange of information and experiences in the management of this resource, capacity building and other aspects of implementation.

Forest timber species in international trade: Mexico was invited to and participated in the regional workshop on *Strategies for the sustainable use and management of timber tree species in international trade* organized by UNEP-WCMC in Managua, Nicaragua, from 16 to 19 February 2005. The objectives of the workshop were:

- a) To evaluate the available information on timber species;
- b) To assess what information needs to be collated and generated on those species; and
- c) To discuss and propose measures to obtain this information and to ensure the sustainable use of species in international trade.

Mexico presented its national report on the conservation, utilization, regulation, legislative and commercial status of various timber species in international trade and provided up-to-date biological information on the species found on its territory. The results of this report are currently under review. Some general recommendations were made with regard to the management and administration of, and compilation of information on the relevant species. Information was compiled on 16 timber species in international trade in the Meso-American region. These species had also been pre-selected by UNEP-WCMC. Twenty-two further species were added to this original list during the workshop and Parties were requested to send information on their distribution, the trade therein, relevant regulations, etc. This information is now being compiled by UNEP-WCMC with the help of participating Parties and will allow for a quick evaluation of their statuses and for their prioritization.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America was also a participant in the workshop in Managua, Nicaragua, on timber species in February 2005, as described above by Mexico.

10. Other

CANADA and UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IATA: Canada and the United States both provided editorial suggestions to reflect recent CoP13 decisions for consideration in the next edition of the IATA Perishable Cargo Manual. Suggestions focused on modifications to the existing table on more frequent CITES listed plants (Table 15.1.A of the current version) to reflect CoP13 decisions on trade in orchids, palms, and medicinal plants as well as editorial changes to reflect more accurately current live plant trade in some succulents and air plants.

CANADA

Training: In 2004, the Inspections and Training Unit of the Canadian Wildlife Service's Wildlife Enforcement Branch contributed to the development of the International version of the "Introduction to CITES for Customs" CD-ROM, in partnership with the Capacity Building Unit of the CITES Secretariat. This training tool has been distributed to the Management Authorities of all CITES countries. In addition, a preliminary suite of training modules targeted to build capacity of Provincial and Territorial Management and Scientific Authorities was tested in February 2005. Canada will continue to improve this training package and will aim to offer training sessions for all Provinces and Territories involved in CITES implementation.

Website: Canadian positions on species proposals (http://www.cites.ca/eng/sct6/sct6_9_e.cfm) and working documents (http://www.cites.ca/eng/sct6/sct6_10_e.cfm), developed through consultation with other government agencies and stakeholders, were posted in a CoP-dedicated section of the CITES Canada website (www.cites.ca), as well as outcomes from CoP13 including the Canadian final positions. The Canadian CITES Control List is now updated to reflect CoP13 decisions and available on the CITES Canada website.

MEXICO

CITES species sheets: In 2004 and for the second time Mexico invited tenders for work related to the biological knowledge of Mexican species included in the Mexican official regulation NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2001 or in CITES Appendices I and II. The objectives of this work were:

- a) To obtain up-to-date information, in the form of sheets, on Appendix-I and -II species found in Mexico;
- b) To apply the evaluation method of extinction risk [*Método de Evaluación de Riesgo de Extinción (MER)*] of the Mexican official regulation NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2001 in order to determine what risk category species protected in Mexico fall into; and to apply the criteria to amend Appendices I and II provided in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP13) and conduct a preliminary study in order to evaluate whether they are listed in the correct Appendix, should be transferred to another Appendix or should be deleted.
- c) To publish the information sheets on the website of the Scientific Authority (CONABIO) as soon as they become available, except for the data that need to be restricted to protect the species, and use it further as a support tool for authorities implementing CITES in Mexico.

Numerous projects have been received, most of which will be funded by CONABIO. Some already deal with the review of various species belonging to taxa included in the CITES Appendices, such as cacti, orchids, marine mammals, sharks, seahorses, etc.

Workshop for selecting priority species: CONABIO prepared a conceptual exercise to prioritize species and this was put in practice during a workshop on *Species in international trade that represent a conservation priority*. This workshop, organized by CONABIO, was attended by

governmental authorities, researchers and NGOs. Its objective was to identify priority species through a full analysis of the information on their conservation status, the risks they incur, the trade levels and the existence of illegal trade. The results of this exercise allowed to determine which species required more attention and needed to be the object of a population study in order to assess their current statuses and determine appropriate conservation and management measures or propose amendments to the CITES Appendices. This exercise will also be used to identify priorities in the promotion and creation of new programmes for species conservation and management and/or recovery, to improve and invest resources in programmes that already exist, and to organize workshops and meetings bringing together specialists and different sectors of the society that have an interest in those species.

CANADA

The Management and Scientific Authorities at the *Canadian Wildlife Service* (ENVIRONMENT CANADA) have the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Convention in Canada. There are also other Federal departments involved, such as:

- the *Fisheries and Oceans Canada*: marine species and fish;
- the *Canadian Forest Service*: trees / timber;
- the *Canadian Customs and Border Services Agency*;
- the *Canadian Food Inspection Agency*;
- the *Foreign Affairs Canada*.

Also 12 of the 13 Provinces or Territories have their own designated MAs and SAs.

In any case, CWS should be contacted at the numbers and addresses below under "*general information*" and CWS will forward messages to relevant authorities.

When sending email, please use: cites@ec.gc.ca

WILDLIFE TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL

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SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY (SA)

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ENFORCEMENT (ENF)

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UPDATED DIRECTORY OF THE CITES AUTHORITIES IN MEXICO

MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

<p>* MVZ Felipe Ramírez Ruíz de Velasco Director General de Vida Silvestre</p>	<p>Secretaría del Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT) Subsecretaría de Gestión para la Protección Ambiental Dirección General de Vida Silvestre</p>	<p>Av. Revolución No 1425, Nivel 1 Col. Tlacopac San Angel, 01040 México D.F. MÉXICO</p>	<p>Tel. (55) 5624-33-09 y 10 Fax (55) 5624-36-42 felipe.ramirez@semarnat.gob.mx</p>
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* Civil servants entitled to sign CITES permits and other official documents issued by the Mexican Management Authority.

SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY

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LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (USA)

For all issues pertaining to the Plants Committee, letters or documents should be sent (mail and/or e-mail) to the Scientific Authority; they will then be forwarded to the Management Authority.

MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY

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USDA/APHIS/PPQ = U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTH AMERICAN REGION IN THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

PLANTS COMMITTEE

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ANIMALS COMMITTEE

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