

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



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

Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

Report on progress in the implementation of the Review of Significant Trade

PROGRESS ON THE COUNTRY-BASED REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN MADAGASCAR

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Following recommendations from the Animals Committee adopted at its 17th meeting (Hanoi, July-August 2001) and the Plants Committee at its 11th meeting (Langkawi, September 2001), the first country-based Review of Significant Trade was initiated by the Secretariat, with Madagascar chosen to be the subject of the review (see documents AC17 Doc. 7.5 and PC11 Doc. 11.2.1).
3. Activities undertaken since the initiation of the review have been regularly reported by the Secretariat to the Animals and Plants Committees in 2002, 2003 and 2004 (see documents AC19 Doc. 8.4; AC20 Doc. 8.3; AC20 Inf. 10; AC20 Inf. 11; PC12 Doc. 11.2.1; PC13 Doc. 12.2.1; PC14 Doc. 9.2.1).
4. The country-based Review of Significant Trade in Madagascar concerns all Appendix-II animal and plant species in the country. It generally follows the same sequence of events as laid out in Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) on the Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species, i.e. a) consultation with Malagasy CITES authorities concerning the implementation of Article IV; b) compilation and review of information on the implementation of Article IV; c) formulation of recommendations; d) implementation of the recommendations; and e) monitoring and evaluation of that implementation.
5. The Animals and Plants Committees agreed to a CITES Action Plan for the reform of Madagascar's wildlife export by the end of 2003. Its development involved the Malagasy CITES Authorities, all local stakeholders, and the CITES Secretariat. Tasks a) to c) referred to in paragraph 4 above have therefore been completed. The Action Plan was generally commended by the scientific committees and the Malagasy Authorities congratulated. The committees were satisfied that their comments on earlier drafts had been taken into consideration, while the Plants Committee noted that the Action Plan could be used as a model for similar country-wide reviews in future.
6. Step d) mentioned in paragraph 4 above, consisting of putting the Action Plan into operation, was initiated early in 2004. As indicated in Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13), the CITES Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees, is to determine whether the Action Plan is implemented within agreed timeframes, and to report accordingly to the Standing Committee.

7. At their annual meetings in 2004, the Animals and Plants Committees identified appropriate deadlines ("milestones") for implementing the various elements of the Action Plan and agreed on reporting formats. These were communicated to the CITES Management Authority of Madagascar in April 2004. A number of short-term actions have to be completed by 31 July 2004, and progress on others reported prior to the 15th meeting of the Plants Committee and the 21st meetings of the Animals Committee in 2005. The Malagasy authorities should furthermore identify realistic timeframes for accomplishing the mid-term and long-term actions in the Action Plan, and communicate these to the CITES Secretariat prior to the meetings of the Plant and Animals Committees in 2005. The Committees expressed a wish to be kept informed about progress with the implementation of the Action Plan at each of their regular meetings, and encouraged Malagasy Authorities to attend these meetings for this purpose.
8. In their responses, the Management Authority of Madagascar agreed to the proposed deadlines and indicated that it would attempt to attend the meetings of the Plants and Animals Committees in 2005. It provided information on actions initiated during the first months of 2004 (incl. reform of the Scientific Authority, revision of the CITES legislation and new procedures for the establishment of quotas and the issuance of CITES export permits). The Management Authority also clarified that no international trade moratoria were in place and that since February 2004, all export permits concerning wild specimens of Madagascar's fauna and flora need to obtain the approval of the Scientific Authority before they can be signed and issued by the Management Authority.
9. The Secretariat expects that during the present meetings of the committees, the Management Authority of Madagascar will provide further information on the actions that it has taken to date in the context of the Action Plan.
10. The Secretariat has continued to monitor progress with the implementation of the Action Plan in 2004 and 2005, interacting with relevant stakeholders and decision makers for instance at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, October 2004), on the occasion of a workshop on scientific and legal capacity building for CITES Authorities in the West Indian Ocean sub-region (Antananarivo, December 2004) and during a conference on global biodiversity, science and governance (Paris, January 2005).
11. The Action Plan requires the Malagasy authorities to implement significant changes in the way the Convention operates in the country. This requires (a) continued and substantial external assistance; (b) ongoing collaboration amongst all Malagasy stakeholders and broad support for the Action Plan and; (c) dynamic local leadership. With regard to the first two issues, the donor community and expert NGOs in Madagascar confirmed their continued interest in financially and technically supporting the Action Plan, which fits well in their overall environmental funding priorities, while most of the key stakeholders remain favourable and supportive of the Plan. The Secretariat brought the last issue up with the responsible Minister in February 2005, calling *inter alia* for a full integration of the plan in the country's national environmental programme, strong political backup and senior responsibility for overseeing and implementing the plan. The Secretariat is hopeful that the Minister will act favourably upon these suggestions.