

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



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

PERIODIC REVIEW OF PLANT SPECIES INCLUDED IN THE CITES APPENDICES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. The Animals and Plants Committees should undertake a periodic review of animal and plant species included in the CITES Appendices by establishing a schedule for conducting the reviews, identifying problems, consulting Parties on the need to review specific species and seeking their assistance, and preparing and submitting amendment proposals resulting from the reviews, through the Depositary Government, for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties (see paragraph h) under the first RESOLVES in Annex 2 of Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP13) on Establishment of Committees).
3. Between the 12th and the 13th Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee developed and adopted comprehensive recommendations on the periodic reviews of the Appendices, and specifically on mechanisms to obtain greater involvement from range States and on steps to be taken to implement the conclusions of the Animals and Plants Committee once those reviews are finalized (see document SC51 Doc. 16 and Annex A to this document). The recommendations include practical guidelines to assist the Animals and Plants Committees in the selection of species to be reviewed and in conducting those reviews. These guidelines were developed by a joined working group of the scientific committees, through which *de facto* the Animals and Plants Committees shared their experience regarding the undertaking of periodic reviews of species included in the Appendices (including the financing of reviews, the process, the format and output) (cfr. Recommendation a) of the Standing Committee).
4. To initiate periodic reviews, the Animals and Plants Committees have to establish a schedule for the periodic review of the Appendices, listing the species they propose to review during the next two intersessional periods between meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Selection of species for periodic review

5. In support of the work of the committees, the Secretariat requested UNEP-WCMC for trade data for taxa to be considered for the periodic reviews. In accordance with the guidelines mentioned in paragraph 3 above, it asked UNEP-WCMC to consider higher taxon listings (i.e. genus, family, etc.) and to produce trade data outputs organized by family and genus, indicating that data on the following taxa should be excluded:
  - i) Species that were subject of proposals to amend the Appendices at the 12th and the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties CoP12 and CoP13, whether or not the specific proposals were adopted (60 proposals at CoP12; 50 at CoP13);

- ii) species that were effectively included in the Appendices at the 10th and 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as taxa to be considered for the reviews should have been listed prior to the adoption of Resolution Conf. 9.24 at the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 1994;
  - ii) species subject to other reviews such as those targeted by valid Decisions and Resolutions of the Parties (including African and Asian rhinoceros, elephants, leopards, markhor, Cetaceans, vicuna, Musk deer, Tibetan antelope, tortoises and freshwater turtles, Appendix-I Asian big cat species, sharks, sturgeons and paddlefish, great apes, Saiga antelope, marine turtles, medicinal plants included in Appendix II, Bigleaf mahogany and agarwood producing taxa); and
  - iii) species subject to ongoing Reviews of Significant Trade pursuant to Resolution Conf. 12.9 (Rev. CoP13), i.e. all Appendix II- listed plant and animal species occurring in Madagascar; the 26 species mentioned in Notification to the Parties No. 2004/028 of 30 April 2004 for which the Standing Committee recommends to all Parties to suspend imports from specific range States; and species for which significant trade reviews are in progress (26 taxa for fauna; 11 taxa for flora).
6. The Secretariat intended to present at AC21 and PC15 trade data outputs to facilitate the selection of species. The response of UNEP-WCMC to the Secretariat's request for these data is presented in Annex B. The Secretariat concurs with UNEP-WCMC in concluding that the guidelines fail to provide sufficient focus for conducting periodic reviews, and that no meaningful set of data can be collated for examination by the Animals and Plants Committee if the all-encompassing guidelines were to be followed to the letter.

### Recommendations

7. The Secretariat has the following suggestions concerning the current Guidelines for the periodic review of plant and animal taxa in the CITES Appendices:
- i) The part 'Selection of species for review' could include as one of the criteria the presence or absence of trade in specimens of wild origins over a certain period, for instance during the last 10 years, as indicated in the flow chart in annex 2 to the Guidelines.
  - ii) The part 'Process for future reviews' should clarify the role of the Secretariat. It might also be useful to explain more clearly that both individual species and higher taxa could go through the 'four-tiered process', and that the 'rapid assessment technique' should allow the Committees to group species under a higher taxon for priority setting and further review. To avoid any confusion, it may be worthwhile indicating in paragraph 1 of this part that UNEP-WCMC are expected to carry out step 1 a); IUCN and UNEP/WCMC step 1 b); and the Animals and Plants Committees steps 1 c) and 1 d). The Secretariat stresses that it has no budget to contribute financially towards these activities.
8. The Secretariat notes that trade data outputs by themselves are probably of limited utility to the committees because the 'rapid assessment technique' that is to be undertaken requires access not only to these data but also to the information mentioned in paragraph 1 b) under 'Process for future reviews'. It is however not clear by when the committees will need this information. In accordance with the recommendations of the Standing Committee, the committees should therefore decide on a schedule for the periodic review of the Appendices, indicating by when different steps in the four-tiered review process should be completed, and listing the species they propose for review during the next two intersessional periods between meetings of the Conference of the Parties. The committees are recommended to develop such schedules at their present meetings.
9. Given that this is the first time that the methodology outlined in document SC51 Doc. 16 will be used and not to lose too much time, the committees may consider requesting UNEP-WCMC to produce trade data for a limited number of taxonomic groups (e.g. Amphibia and Liliaceae) to test the new approach. Smaller outputs would not only be easier to handle by the committees, but would also give UNEP-WCMC and IUCN the opportunity to pre-analyze the data. Information for selected groups of taxa may be produced further on, allowing any improvements or refinements of the methodology to be introduced and tested. UNEP-WCMC could also be asked to compile a list of taxa and perhaps terms and origins that can be excluded from the periodic reviews (with justifications for their exclusion), and a table with available trade data on taxa for which there is little or no recorded international trade. The Secretariat recommends that the committees consult UNEP-WCMC about these options.

## PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES

Recommendations of the Standing Committee  
adopted at its 51st meeting (Bangkok, October 2004)

- a) The Animals and Plants Committees should share their experience regarding the undertaking of periodic reviews of species included in the Appendices (including the financing of reviews, the process, the format and output) and establish a schedule for the periodic review of the Appendices, listing the species they propose to review during the next two intersessional periods between meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
- b) The Secretariat should send a copy of this list to all Parties requesting that range States of the species send their comments on the need to review these species to the Secretariat, to relay to the members of the Animals or Plants Committee and of the Standing Committee.
- c) Taking these comments into account, the Animals and Plants Committees should in consultation with the Standing Committee finalize the selection of the species to be reviewed.
- d) The Animals and Plants Committees should conduct or organize the reviews, seeking information from the range States. A draft of each review (in an agreed format) should be provided by the Secretariat to the range States for comment within an agreed timeframe, and these comments should be taken into consideration before the review is considered final.
- e) Inter-governmental bodies having a function in relation to the management or conservation of, or trade in species selected for review should be provided with the relevant draft reviews for comment within an agreed timeframe, and these comments should be taken into consideration when finalizing the review.
- f) The regional representatives of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees should seek assistance from range States within their region to support the species reviews conducted by the Animals and Plants Committees.
- g) The Animals and Plants Committees are encouraged to follow the guidelines and rapid assessment technique in Annexes 1 and 2 of document SC51 Doc. 16 and their updates when selecting species and conducting the periodic review.
- h) In cases where a review indicates, and the technical Committee concerned agrees, that it would be appropriate to transfer a species from one Appendix to another, or to delete a species from Appendix II, the Animals or Plants Committee should, in consultation with the range States, prepare (or arrange the preparation of) a proposal to amend the Appendices and keep the Standing Committee informed.
- i) The Secretariat on behalf of the Standing Committee should provide copies of the proposal to the range States and request that one or more should submit the proposal for consideration at the following meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- j) If no range State is willing to submit the proposal, the Secretariat should request the Depository Government to submit it [as specified in Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12)] and to include the comments of the range States in the supporting statement.
- k) Proposals resulting from the periodic review of the Appendices must be submitted for decision by the Conference of the Parties.

## Guidelines for the periodic review of plant and animal taxa in the CITES Appendices

This document was prepared by the intersessional contact group of the Animals and Plants Committees on the review of the Appendices.

### Background

Annex 2, paragraph h) of Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12) on the Establishment of Committees directs the Animals and Plants Committees (AC and PC, respectively) to “undertake a periodic review of animal or plant species included in the CITES Appendices...”

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist in the selection of species for review, and to outline the process for conducting those reviews.

### Objective of the periodic review

The objective of the periodic review is to determine whether species are properly listed in Appendices I or II, and whether a proposal to transfer a species within the Appendices or to delete it therefrom should be recommended to the Conference of the Parties, based on the relevant Resolution on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II.

### Selection of species for review

1. The following taxa should be considered for review:
  - a) taxa listed prior to the adoption of Resolution Conf. 9.24 on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II;
  - b) higher taxon listings (i.e. genus, family, etc.).
2. Species subject to other reviews, such as those that are currently subject to the Review of Significant Trade pursuant to Resolution Conf. 12.8, or that have already been evaluated for listing in the CITES Appendices as proposals submitted for consideration at the last two meetings of the Conference of the Parties, should not be included in the periodic review.

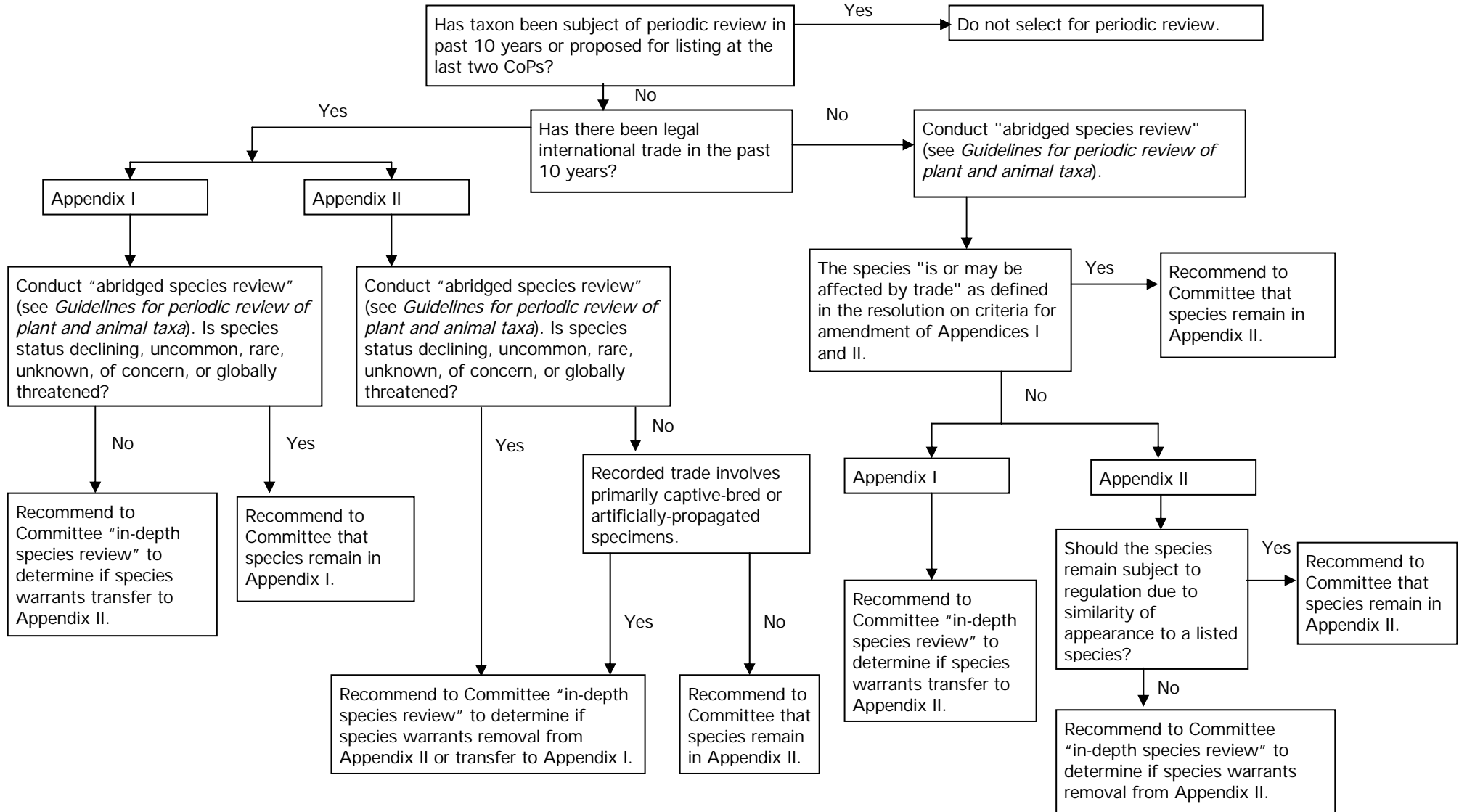
### Process for future reviews

1. Future reviews should be carried out as a four-tiered process as follows:
  - a) Production of trade data outputs (organized by family and genus) to identify potential species for review as per 'Selection of species for review' above and the rapid assessment technique presented in Annex 2.
  - b) Completion of an 'abridged species review' containing the following information:
    - i) rationale for initial inclusion in the Appendices (whenever available);
    - ii) summary of trade data since the initial inclusion in the Appendices;
    - iii) current conservation status (including IUCN categorization of the species, if available); and
    - iv) population trends.
  - c) Selection of taxa for 'in-depth species review' based on the rapid assessment technique (Annex 2). In general, based on the above status and trade information, the 'rapid assessment technique' assigns species under review to one of five categories. For Appendix-I taxa, the review may result in (1) retention of the species in Appendix I or (2) transfer of the species to Appendix II. In the case of Appendix-II taxa, the review may result in (3) retention of the species in Appendix II, (4) transfer of the species to Appendix I or (5) deletion of the species from the

Appendices. Each technical committee may wish to rank these five categories according to its priorities and budget.

- d) In cases when the 'abridged species review' is not sufficient for the AC or PC to determine whether the current CITES listing is warranted, an 'in-depth species review' should be conducted, which should be based on the information requirements for the submission of a proposal to amend the Appendices as outlined in the relevant Resolution on the Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II.
2. If the reviewing Party or regional representative obtains information identifying previously unknown or new threats to a species (for instance on illegal trade, sharp population declines, etc.) that goes beyond the issue of whether or not the species is listed in the correct Appendix, it is recommended that such information be submitted to the AC or PC for their consideration. If appropriate, the AC or PC may refer the issue to the CITES Secretariat or the Standing Committee.
  3. Reviewers must solicit input from the CITES Scientific and Management Authorities of range States, conduct a literature review, and seek information from relevant experts, scientists and conservation organizations. To assist in the gathering of information from range States and relevant experts, it is highly advisable to use questionnaires.
  4. To achieve greater involvement by range States in the reviews, the following is recommended:
    - a) Range States should be provided with a summary and full report of the species review for comment;
    - b) Contact should be made with the relevant Management Authority and Scientific Authority of the range State, both for seeking assistance with reviews and for reacting to results from a review;
    - c) In addition to being involved in seeking assistance with reviews from countries within their regions, the regional representatives on the Animals, Plants, and Standing Committees should follow up with countries affected by a review to encourage their response;
  5. While in all cases a Party or regional representative of the AC or PC should be responsible for submission of a species review, a Party may request that a non-governmental organization or individual scientist conduct the review. Reviews must be submitted back to the AC or PC for further processing in accordance with the recommendations of the Standing Committee, and cannot be withdrawn.

Rapid assessment technique for the periodic review of the Appendices



Response from UNEP-WCMC to the request of the CITES Secretariat for  
trade data outputs for conducting periodic reviews of the Appendices  
(22 March 2005)

“On the basis of document SC51 Doc. 16, the Secretariat has requested UNEP-WCMC to provide trade data outputs of all Appendix I and II taxa either listed prior to the adoption of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP13) or included in higher taxon listings (i.e. genus, family, etc.).

UNEP-WCMC has considered this request and believes it is not feasible to provide any meaningful output until the scope of the request is defined more closely. Although the annex to document SC51 Doc. 16 provides some guidelines, the type of output, e.g. comparative tabulation, gross or net trade, is unspecified. Furthermore, there are no limitations as to the type of specimen being traded, whether they are wild-collected, bred in captivity or artificially propagated, the units involved nor the source of that material. The CITES Trade Database contains 3.9 million trade records involving over 20,000 taxa that may meet these broad criteria and about 100 terms and 39 different units would also be involved. We would expect the number of trade records to be reduced to perhaps 3.5 million once the excepted taxa were removed, however a comparative tabulation of this number of records would result in an output file of approximately one million rows (noting that the current maximum length of an Excel file is just over 65,000 rows).

We therefore request the Secretariat, on advice from the Plants and Animals Committees, to provide clearer definitions of the size and format of outputs, and thus enable production of manageable datasets for analysis by the Committees.”