

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Plants Committee  
Buenos Aires (Argentina), 17-21 March 2009

Regional reports

OCEANIA

The attached report for Oceania has been submitted by the regional representative Mr Greg Leach\*. As it was received by the Secretariat after the deadline for submission of documents, it is provided herewith in the language in which it was submitted.

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\* *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.*

## REGIONAL REPORT FOR OCEANIA

1. General Information

- a) Representative: Greg Leach (Australia)
- b) Alternate: Osia Gideon (Papua New Guinea)
- c) Number of Parties in the region: 8
- d) Parties responding to communications: Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea.
- e) Communications sent to all regional parties included the agenda for PC17 with background notes for items of concern to the region. There has been no regional meeting in the region since the meeting in Brisbane, May 2006 which was in association with a capacity building workshop. However, a further capacity building workshop is planned for 23-26 March 2009 in Brisbane and this will provide an opportunity for those Parties present to hold a regional meeting which is proposed for the 27 March.

2. Directory

A new Regional directory is attached as Annex to this report.

3. Activities carried out**Significant trade**

There are no species from the region in the current activities of the Plants Committee under the Significant Trade Review process.

**Review of the Appendices**

There are no species from the region in the current activities of the Plants Committee under the process of Review of taxa included in the Appendices.

4. Capacity building

With the financial support of the Australian Government, a Timber Officer (Mr Neil Ellis) was assigned to the CITES Secretariat for a period of 12 months from 1 Feb 2008 to 31 January 2009. The role of the officer was to assist with the implementation of Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties relating to timber/tree species. During 2008, the officer helped to establish a close cooperative relationship with key international bodies promoting sustainable international trade such as the FAO and the ITTO. The officer also helped Parties to build scientific and technical capacity by organising workshops, such those for *Prunus africana* and *Pericopsis elata*, and by participating in the development of projects under the joint ITTO-CITES timber programme.

Australia, with the support of the CITES Secretariat, will be hosting the 2009 Oceania Capacity Building Workshop. The theme of the workshop will be 'Enforcement'. The workshop will be held in Brisbane from 23-26 March 2009. The workshop implements CITES CoP14 Decision 14.14:

*The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *seek funding to convene an enforcement-focused capacity-building workshop and regional meeting for the Oceania region before the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee, in order to improve regional implementation of the Convention; and*

- b) subject to availability of funds, invite the Parties of the Oceania region, Party observers, non-party States and regional intergovernmental organizations as may be appropriate.*

Attendees include all regional Parties to CITES: Fiji, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Australia, some non-Parties namely the Federated States of Micronesia, the Cook Islands and Tonga. Non-government organisations including Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) are also invited. The workshop is expected to identify some of the key enforcement issues and challenges in the region as well as CITES enforcement related presentations.

#### **Contact with specialists and/or NGO's**

The major contact and extensive consultation during the period has been with TRAFFIC in regard to the Agarwood NDF process both leading up to the Cancun workshop and with the PC working groups on Agarwood and non-forest products.

#### **7. Difficulties of implementation encountered**

Timber issues and implementation of recent CITES timber listings has been highlighted as a concern for some Parties. The WG assessing the use of the 'R' code has highlighted yet again the issues and misunderstandings on use of this code in the region.

#### **8. Other topics**

The Regional Representative attended the International Expert Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings in Cancun Mexico, 17-22 November 2008 and co-chaired the Perennial Plants working group.

The International Merbau Workshop was held in Singapore from 17-18 November 2008. The meeting was organised by TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and funded by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, with approximately 30 attendees from various governments, non-governmental organisations, and industry groups. Over the two-day workshop, presentations were given on: the TRAFFIC report on Merbau; the policies and practices of various governments (producer and consumer countries); as well as industry perspectives. Oceania was represented at the meeting by the New Zealand CITES Management Authority (Department of Conservation) and by the Papua New Guinea Forestry Authority. A representative from the Australian timber importing industry also attended the meeting. New Zealand gave a presentation on consumption of and government policy on Merbau. Papua New Guinea presented on ecology, sustainable management, population, conservation and protection of Merbau. The Australian importing industry representative also gave a presentation on Merbau demand and consumption.

Under Fiji's Endangered Protected Species (EPS) listing, many of the native timber tree species listed are also on the CITES appendices. There is a need to review the EPS list as it is very outdated. The Herbarium in conjunction with the Department of Forestry and the Department of Environment is undertaking this review during 2009 to produce a new EPS listing. The review will collate data from the local logging operators with regard to harvesting quotas for each listed species. Data from the recent Fiji Forest tree inventory will also be used.

#### **9. Work to be done until next PC meeting**

The region supports the priority given by the Committee to timber issues and the work on medicinal plants.

Application of the 'R' code continues to cause confusion and the region watches the discussion on this in the hope that improved implementation and understanding can be obtained.

The region supports the work on improving clarity and effectiveness of various annotations.

Annex

REGIONAL DIRECTORY OF PLANT EXPERTS FOR OCEANIA

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