

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

Non-detriment findings

MEDICINAL PLANTS

1. This document has been submitted by Germany, the chair of the intersessional working group on non-detriment findings for medicinal plants (PC17 WG6)*.

Background

2. At the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP14, The Hague, 2007), the Parties adopted Decision 14.135, directed to the Plants Committee on *Timber species and medicinal plants: non-detriment findings* (NDFs), as follows:

The Plants Committee shall:

- a) *develop principles, criteria and indicators for the making of non-detriment findings for wild specimens of high-priority taxa such as timber species, Prunus africana and other medicinal plants; and*
 - b) *before the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, support the organization of a workshop on non-detriment findings for tree species.*
3. At the 17th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC17, Geneva, 2008), a working group (WG6) was convened with the mandate to develop principles, criteria and indicators for the making of NDFs for wild specimens of medicinal plants. The group was asked to liaise with the Chairs of the timber and agarwood NDF WG in order to maintain consistency on key issues – in particular the definitions of principles, criteria and indicators.
 4. During the meeting the WG6 agreed (Doc. PC17 WG6) to work with documents and guidance resulting from discussions in the four plant working groups at the NDF Workshop (Cancún, Mexico, November 2008).
 5. It was also agreed (document PC17 WG6) to use the ISSC MAP (document PC16 Inf. 9¹) as a starting point and that the guidance should be simple to follow and reflecting an appropriate level of precision.

Progress

* *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.*

¹ <http://www.cites.org/common/com/PC/16/X-PC16-09-Inf.pdf>

6. Mexico organised an International Experts Workshop on NDF methodology which was held in Cancún from 17-22 November 2008. The Plants Committee was represented during the planning phase and through attendance at the workshop by Margarita Clemente, Greg Leach, Beatrice Khayota, Dora Rivera, Noel McGough, Mariana Mites, Tukirin Partomihardo and Adrienne Sinclair. The Workshop established four Working Groups on plants: Trees; Perennial plants; Succulents and cycads; Geophytes and epiphytes. The Working Group reports are included in document PC18 Doc 14.2.
7. The WG6 has agreed that the document produced by the Perennial group at the NDF Workshop in Cancún titled 'Perennial Plants Working Group Annex Guidance for Scientific Authorities in making a CITES Non-Detriment Finding' (see also document PC18 Doc 14.2), includes the general elements that are best-suited for adaptation to medicinal plant NDFs. This document has two main components: (a) an evaluation of the resilience of a species to collection, which is accomplished by considering factors/criteria most indicative of resilience or vulnerability of the particular species to collection; and (b) an assessment of the factors affecting management of the collection or harvest. Examples of data sources are included for each element as guidance.
8. The Chairs of the PC17 NDF WGs have been liaising and developing a set of common principles that can apply generically to any plant NDF process. These are presented in the Annex to this document.
9. In the Perennial Plants Working Group report, the term 'criteria', within the context of elaborating a NDF, best correlates with the term 'factors' used in the risk assessment or factors which constitute sustainability. It is suggested that the elements used in assessing the factors/criteria are the starting point for phrasing indicators for the fulfilment of the criterion.
10. The WG will continue to work on the draft document in the time leading up to PC18, with an eye toward finalizing the draft at the meeting.
11. The WG will provide a draft of the Medicinal Plant NDF Guidance as an Information document at PC18, as well as an oral presentation to summarize the key elements of the draft guidance.
12. The WG will seek input from the PC and request endorsement of the draft guidance during the meeting or shortly thereafter.
13. The WG will draft a document for CoP15.

DEVELOPMENT OF PRINCIPLES, CRITERIA AND INDICATORS FOR THE MAKING
OF NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS - THE PRINCIPLE LEVEL

At PC17 the Chairs of the three NDF working groups (timber, medicinal plants and Agarwood) were tasked with liaising and reaching agreement on common usage of the terms 'principles, criteria and indicators'. It was further agreed that the "principle" level has to be based in the text of the Convention.

For the term 'principle' the chairs considered material provided in the ISSC-MAP document², discussions at the Mahogany and Agarwood working group meetings and the output from the Cancun NDF workshop, in particular the Trees Working Group. The following principles are presented as generic principles applicable to the NDF process in CITES regardless of the taxa being considered.

- 1) The non-detriment finding (NDF) for Appendix I and II species verifies that traded volumes are **not detrimental to the survival** of that species within the range state.
- 2) The NDF considers whether the species is maintained throughout its range at a level consistent with its **role in the ecosystems** in which it occurs.
- 3) The management requisites set by the NDF are tailored to **appropriate precision** according to the resilience or vulnerability of the target species.
- 4) The implementation of an **adaptive management** scheme based on regular monitoring is an essential prerequisite in the NDF evaluation process.
- 5) The NDF is based on appropriate **resource assessment methodologies** that are commensurate with the capacity to undertake them.
- 6) The NDF employs broad-scale assessment, potentially including establishment of **total harvest assessments** on either a national or regional basis.

² <http://www.cites.org/common/com/PC/16/X-PC16-09-Inf.pdf>