

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



Twentieth meeting of the Plants Committee
Dublin (Ireland), 22-30 March 2012

Timber issues

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE BIGLEAF MAHOGANY
AND OTHER NEOTROPICAL TIMBER SPECIES
[DECISIONS 15.91, 15.92 AND 14.146 (REV. COP15)]

1. This document has been prepared by the Chair of the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species based on the conclusions reached at the fourth meeting of the Working Group held from 7 to 11 November in Petén, Guatemala*.

Acknowledgments

2. The participants: **a)** representatives of the following range States: **Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil**; **b)** representatives of the main mahogany importing Parties: **the Dominican Republic and Spain**; **c)** the representative of **Chile** as an observer; **d)** the two regional representatives of Central and South America and the Caribbean in the Plants Committee; **e)** the representative of the **International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)**; **f)** the expert from **Rainforest Alliance - Guatemala**, as a non-governmental organization with experience in the forest management of these species in the region; **g)** the representative of **organizations of exporters from Guatemala**; **h)** the Scientific Officer (Flora) of the **CITES Secretariat**; **i)** the **Chair of the Plants Committee**; and **j)** the delegate of the **Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee**, wish to express their deep appreciation to the Chair of the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species, the Organizing Committee of the meeting, CONAP (*Consejo Nacional de Areas Protegidas*, the National Council for Protected Areas of Guatemala), ITTO, CITES, ACOFOP (Association of Forest Communities of the Petén area), ICCO & KERK IN ACTIE, Rainforest Alliance's TREES programme, FNPV (*Fundación Naturaleza para la Vida*), the companies GIBOR, S.A. and Baren Comercial, S.A., and OMYC (*Sociedad Civil Organización para el Manejo y Conservación*) for their financial support and the excellent organization of the meeting.

Results

3. The fourth meeting of the Working Group was held under the auspices of ITTO, the CITES Secretariat, ACOFOP through ICCO & KERK IN ACTIE and Rainforest Alliance's TREES programme. Annex 2 includes the agenda and list of participants. Along with the call for the meeting, forms were sent to the Parties concerned to submit information and progress updates, in compliance with Decisions 15.91, 15.92 and 14.146 (Rev. COP15).
4. After the presentations and subsequent discussions had taken place, the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species adopted the following recommendations in plenary:

* *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.*

Population assessment [Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP15) Annex 4 1.b]

5. After analysing the projects undertaken by Colombia, Costa Rica and Guatemala to fulfil the commitments derived from Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP15) Annex 4 1.b, which recommends assessing the populations of the species mentioned in this Decision (*Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia stevensonii* and *Dalbergia granadillo*), the Working Group recommends considering the following general aspects, among others:

Taxonomic validation: Use herbarium records and other available resources to have taxonomic certainty of the species dealt with and consult the nomenclature specialist of the Plants Committee.

Potential distribution: Use all the information available, including herbarium records, databases, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), climate probability models and statistical tools assessing probability of occurrence of species.

Cover: Use plant (forest) cover maps or other available materials containing data on the location of natural populations, plantations and agroforestry systems that include the species concerned.

Stand density: Try to ensure that sampling error does not exceed 30 % in Basal Area for individuals over 10 cm DBH (Diameter at Breast Height = 1.3 m above the ground from the base of the tree).

Structure (vertical and horizontal): Assess the various stages of development in the sampling units.

Changes in land use: Assess changes in forest cover for the species concerned using forest cover maps from earlier periods, if such information is available.

Species ecology: Include an analysis of the ecological importance of the species.

Regeneration dynamics: Assess the species current regeneration status based on their ecology and reproductive biology, determining the number of individuals of the species concerned and their recruitment rate, considering the availability of earlier studies.

Tariff codes

6. The Plants Committee should prepare a draft decision requesting the CITES Secretariat to make the necessary contacts with the World Customs Organization (WCO) with a view to undertaking a joint review of the harmonized system tariff codes for specimens of CITES-listed species, with a special focus on tree species. With the same objective, Parties should also initiate the necessary contacts with their corresponding national authorities (Customs and the Ministries of Economy and Finance, *inter alia*).

Chain of custody and timber traceability systems

7. Exporting and importing countries should establish systems to ensure the legality of specimens of the species concerned that are in trade by using chain of custody and traceability systems and identify possible sources of funding to strengthen such mechanisms. Parties are urged to share their experiences in implementing chain of custody and traceability systems for timber.

Use of scientific names in the timber trade

8. Parties should establish the appropriate contacts with their Customs authorities to ensure the mandatory use of scientific names, alongside common and trade names, in Customs documents.

Authenticated reference timber samples

9. The Working Group made the following recommendations regarding authenticated reference timber samples:
 - Parties should increase their cooperation to build a collection of authenticated reference timber samples and make it accessible to officials in charge of identifying the tree species concerned.

- The Plants Committee should define what constitutes an authenticated reference timber sample and which standards apply to such samples, and set guidelines and operating procedures for the sample collection.
- The Secretariat should help identify funding to develop capacity-building programmes for Customs officials on timber identification of the species concerned.

Identification issues

10. Parties should promote the preparation and use of user-friendly identification guides for Customs authorities, and training of Customs officials in exporting and importing countries.
11. The Secretariat should support the exchange of information and experiences between Parties for these purposes.

Annotations and definitions

12. The Plants Committee, in cooperation with the Parties, should continue the review of the annotations of CITES-listed Neotropical trees and finalize it as soon as possible, providing a definition of the terms used.

Semi-finished products

13. The Plants Committee should prepare definitions of semi-finished products and finished products for submission at CoP16. The Working Group suggests considering the experience of the Government of Brazil in this regard.

Other specific recommendations and observations

14. The Plants Committee should draft a decision calling for an assessment of the production capacity of mahogany plantations in Fiji.
15. The Dominican Republic should further clarify the volumes of West Indian cedar (*Cedrela odorata*) and bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) timber imported and re-exported in the previous period, as they seem to be incorrectly reflected in the UNEP-WCMC database.
16. As recommended above, the Secretariat should help identify possible sources of funding for range States to implement capacity-building programmes on specific issues related to population assessments, taxonomic descriptions, management and conservation of the species concerned and control and documentation systems.
17. Range States should develop a registration system for plantations and agroforestry systems containing bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*), West Indian cedar (*Cedrela odorata*), *Dalbergia stevensonii*, *Dalbergia retusa* and *Dalbergia granadillo*, and support the creation of seed banks in order to promote forest plantations of the species considered by the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species.
18. The Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species expresses its concern about the lack of participation of some of its members in the activities arising from the terms of reference adopted at CoP15 and therefore encourages them to fully participate in all these activities.
19. To contribute to the continuity and success of the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species, Parties should ensure that the group is composed of the same individuals during the period between CoP15 and CoP16.
20. Range States of the species concerned with harvest bans in place should assess the effectiveness of such measures and promote the necessary studies to determine the conservation status of the species and the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs) to ensure their sustainable use in the future.
21. Parties interested in exporting timber from fallen trees of the species concerned after the occurrence of natural disasters should prepare an inventory of stocks available for export (exportable volumes) and share this information with the Secretariat.

Progress in the terms of reference and membership of the working group

22. At the request of the Chair of the Plants Committee, and on the basis of Decision 15.91 and Annex 3, which define the terms of reference and membership of the Group, the CITES Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2010/031 of 28 October 2010, requesting candidatures to complete the membership of the Group. Several candidatures were received and, in consultation with the Plants Committee, the Group has appointed two scientific experts, two experts from non-governmental organizations with experience in the forest management of these species in the region and three representatives from organizations of exporters from the three main exporting countries (Annex 1).

Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan for *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii*, contained in Annex 4 of Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP15)

23. Through the Chair of the Working Group on the Bingleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species, reports were received from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
24. The information received was organized and analysed, and the findings for each species and indicator are presented in the matrix of results of the "Action plan for *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii*". Information on progress with the action plan for *Swietenia macrophylla* is also included (see Annex 3).

Information received on *Cedrela odorata*

25. Of the 19 range States of *Cedrela odorata*, 11 completed and updated the information requested on the species, namely Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica in Central America; Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Brazil and Peru in South America; and Cuba in the Caribbean. The data obtained were arranged in a matrix contained in Annex 3.
26. Of the countries that submitted information on imports, only Mexico updated its import data (17,237.65 m³, originating from Peru, Bolivia and Guatemala), while Costa Rica and Cuba submitted the same information as the previous year. The Dominican Republic reported the import of 4,964.06 m³ of timber products between 2007 and 2011; 46 % of the sawn wood imported originated from Africa [Côte d'Ivoire (Abidjan) and Ghana], 30 % originated from Nicaragua and the remaining 24 % originated from Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras and Guatemala; the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and France submitted information for the first time. The remaining countries that submitted information did not include import data. It is key for Parties to consider the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* in order to avoid inconsistencies in the terminology used.
27. Regarding re-exports, Mexico reported re-exporting 315.12 m³ of sawn wood and 94 pieces of sawn wood to the United States; the United Kingdom, Spain and Germany also reported re-exports of West Indian cedar. After analysing the information received, it was concluded that data should be submitted in a standardized format for an accurate analysis of trade to be possible.

Information received on *Dalbergia retusa*

28. Of the eight range States of the species, which occurs from Mexico to Panama, four countries (Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica) responded to the survey.
29. Of the countries that responded to the survey, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, the United Kingdom, the Dominican Republic and France did not include any data on imports of *Dalbergia retusa*. The only countries that provided import data were Spain (14.28 m³ of timber, part of which originated from Guatemala and part of which was of unspecified origin) and Germany (1862.11 kg of sawn wood originating from Mexico). No country provided data on re-exports of this species.

Information received on *Dalbergia granadillo*

30. Mexico and Guatemala reported on *Dalbergia granadillo*, although Guatemala stated that the presence of the species in the country will be confirmed once the population assessment of timber species of the genus *Dalbergia* is concluded. No data were provided on imports or re-exports of the species.

Information received on *Dalbergia stevensonii*

31. Of the range States of *D. stevensonii*, only Mexico and Guatemala submitted information on the species, although they did not report any progress compared to the report submitted at PC19. Only Spain and Germany reported imports of the species. Spain reported the import of 8.01 m³ originating from Guatemala and Germany reported the import of 147.1 m³ of sawn wood originating from Belize and Guatemala. Only Germany provided data on re-exports.

Information received on *Swietenia macrophylla*

32. The range States of bigleaf mahogany that responded to the survey were Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil. The information provided indicates that all these countries have national legislation in place to regulate the harvesting and management of the species and guidelines for the development of management plans included in their regulations. In these countries, harvest cycles for bigleaf mahogany range from 30 to 40 years and minimum cutting diameters (MCD) range from 30 to 75 cm.
33. All the countries provided some information about the natural distribution of the species. In some countries, such as Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Ecuador and Colombia, a national or regional harvest ban is in place for the species.
34. The following countries reported the existence of bigleaf mahogany plantations: Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia and Venezuela, in small plots under 5 hectares, the Dominican Republic, which reported about 1,000 hectares (875 registered), and Peru in Ucayali (3,748.92 ha), Loreto (25.78 ha), Madre de Dios (242.98 ha) and San Martín (47.3 ha). The type of plantations reported were pure and mixed plantations, mostly in agroforestry systems.
35. As regards imports, Mexico imported 1,327 m³ from Bolivia, Peru and Guatemala. From 2006 to 2011, the Dominican Republic imported 84,324.95 m³; about 90 % of the bigleaf mahogany sawn wood it imported originated from Fiji, followed by Central and South American countries, mainly Guatemala. From 2006 to 2010, Spain reported the import of 394.36 m³ of timber from Bolivia, Peru, Nicaragua and Brazil. Germany reported the import between 2006 and 2011 of bigleaf mahogany from Mexico, Guatemala and Bolivia. Mexico, the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and France reported re-exports of bigleaf mahogany.

Proposed changes to the current Decisions

36. The Working Group recommends that the Plants Committee consider the following proposed changes to the current Decisions:

Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species

Directed to the Plants Committee

- 16.XX The name of the Working Group on the Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species shall be changed to "Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species". Its terms of reference and membership are included in Annex XX to these Decisions.
- 16.XX The Plants Committee shall explore mechanisms to support the implementation of Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP16) and the related Annex, within the framework of cooperation between CITES and the International Tropical Timber Organization, and shall report on progress at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 16.XX a) The CITES Secretariat, within the framework of its cooperation with the International Tropical Timber Organization and other entities, shall seek funding from interested Parties, intergovernmental organizations, exporters, importers and other interested donors to support the implementation of Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP16) and, if necessary, to ensure that the Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species may work effectively.

Annex XX

Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species

1. Terms of reference of the Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species:

- a) The group shall work under the auspices of the Plants Committee;
- b) The group shall act as a hub to circulate and exchange experiences on the sustainable use and management of these species;
- c) The group shall contribute to the strengthening of capacities in range States;
- d) If necessary, the group shall facilitate a complete and effective implementation of the Review of Significant Trade in the bigleaf mahogany in the range States concerned by this process;
- e) The group shall draft up reports on progress made in the management and conservation of and trade in the species dealt with by this group, as well as on lessons learnt, for submission at the 21st and 22nd meetings of the Plants Committee, which shall agree on how to submit them at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17);
- f) The group shall include, as one of its activities, an analysis of the information received from range States and from Parties on species included in Decision 14.146 (Rev. CoP16) and the present Annex;
- g) The group shall facilitate and promote the exchange of knowledge and experiences gained as a result of the inclusion of *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo*, *Dalbergia stevensonii*, *Aniba rosaeodora*, *Bulnesia sarmientoi* and other new species in CITES; and
- h) The chair of the working group shall produce written reports for the Plants Committee on the tasks specified in the paragraphs above for consideration at its 21st and 22nd meetings, and shall submit them to the Secretariat 60 days before those meetings are held.

2. Membership:

- a) All range States;
- b) The main importers of mahogany: the Dominican Republic, the United States of America and the European Union (France?, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).
- c) The two regional representatives of Central and South America and the Caribbean on the Plants Committee;
- d) Intergovernmental organizations: the European Union, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) and the *Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente and Desarrollo* (CCAD, Central American Commission on the Environment and Development);
- e) The CITES Secretariat (the Scientific Officer for Flora)
- f) Additionally, the Plants Committee shall select:
 - i) Two scientific experts with relevant experience in Neotropical tree species;
 - ii) Two experts from non-governmental organizations with experience in the activities mentioned in this Decision; and
 - iii) Three representatives from organizations of exporters from the main exporting Parties of the relevant products of these species that are regulated by CITES; and
- g) The chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of the working group shall be undertaken by people from the range States who will be selected by the Plants Committee on the basis of their *curricula vitae* within a

period of one month after the entry into force of the Decision. Should there be no candidate or should they resign from their functions during the intersessional period between CoP16 and CoP17, the regional representatives of Central and South America and the Caribbean shall act as interim chair or vice-chair of the group, as relevant.

Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo, Dalbergia stevensonii, Aniba rosaeodora, Bulnesia sarmientoi

14.146 The Conference of the Parties adopted the Action Plan attached as Annex 4 to these Decisions, to (Rev. complete knowledge on the status of conservation of, trade in and sustainable use of *Cedrela odorata*, CoP16) *Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo, Dalbergia stevensonii, Aniba rosaeodora* and *Bulnesia sarmientoi*.

Annex XX

Action plan for Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo, Dalbergia stevensonii, Aniba rosaeodora and Bulnesia sarmientoi

1. The range States of *Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo Dalbergia stevensonii, Aniba rosaeodora* and *Bulnesia sarmientoi*, shall:
 - a) complete and update the available information on the species mentioned in this Decision;
 - b) assess the populations of the species mentioned in this Decision, taking into account *inter alia* the distribution, cover, density, size structure, regeneration dynamics and changes in land use in keeping with available budgets in the range States;
 - c) report the existence, extent and type of forest plantations of the species mentioned in this Decision;
 - d) compile the information related to export of the species mentioned in this Decision, including volumes and products, indicating the percentage from plantations;
 - e) report to the Chair of the Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species progress in the compilation of the information outlined in paragraphs a), b), c) and d) above, 90 days before the 21st and 22nd meetings of the Plants Committee (PC21 and PC22), so that the Chair may present a report to the Committee and the Committee may adopt the necessary measures;
 - f) if necessary, consider the inclusion of their populations of *Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii* in Appendix III, with the adequate annotation, and ensure the implementation and enforcement of CITES with regard to those species in that Appendix;
 - g) consider the production of identification material for those species and similar species, collaborating with relevant expert organizations; and
 - h) consider providing technical and financial support to the Secretariats of CITES and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), in the framework of Resolution Conf. 14.4 on *Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber*.
2. Parties, with regard to *Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, Dalbergia granadillo, Dalbergia stevensonii, Aniba rosaeodora* and *Bulnesia sarmientoi*, shall:
 - a) compile the information on the import and re-export of the species mentioned in this Decision, including origin (wild or cultivated), volumes and products, indicating the country of origin and final destination;
 - b) report the existence, extent and type of forest plantations of the species mentioned in this Decision, including exported volumes and products;
 - c) report to the Chair of the Working Group on the compilation of the information outlined in paragraphs a) and b) above, 90 days before PC21 and PC22, so that the Chair may present a report to the Committee and the Committee may adopt the necessary measures; and

- d) continue, support and strengthen the cooperation between CITES and ITTO in the framework of Resolution Conf. 14.4.

3. The Plants Committee shall:

- a) establish the relevant methodology and necessary formats for the presentation of the information requested for the implementation of this Decision;
- b) request the Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species incorporate, as a part of its activities and in the context of the present Decision, an analysis of information received on the species concerned, and to facilitate communication and the exchange of information among range States, including knowledge and experience gained as a result of the inclusion of these species in the Convention;
- c) receive, analyse and follow up the Action Plan at its 21st and 22nd meetings; and
- d) [if appropriate, propose the relevant recommendations, such as an Appendix-II listing, for *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii* before the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.] **no consensus was reached.**

4. The Secretariat shall:

- a) seek external funding from interested Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, exporters, importers and other entities directly interested in supporting this Decision;
- b) inform Parties of the management of funds that have been raised, of technical assistance and of how they may accede to these resources;
- c) request technical and financial support from ITTO in the framework of Resolution Conf. 14.4 on *Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber*, and
- d) promote and assist capacity building in the range States through workshops, trainings and other activities considered relevant in the period between the 16th and 17th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE BIGLEAF MAHOGANY AND OTHER NEOTROPICAL TIMBER SPECIES HELD FROM 7 TO 11 NOVEMBER IN PETÉN, GUATEMALA

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