

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



Twenty-first meeting of the Plants Committee
Veracruz (Mexico), 2-8 May 2014

Regional matters

Regional reports

NORTH AMERICA^{*}

1. General information

- Regional representative: Mr. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz (Mexico)
- Alternate representative: Ms. Adrienne Sinclair (Canada)
- Number of Parties in the region: 3
- Period covered by this report: April 2012 to January 2014

2. Directory of experts on CITES plant issues:

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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.*

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MEXICO

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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3. Activities carried out regarding:

3.1 Significant trade:

CANADA

The Canadian Scientific Authority Working Group participated in the Advisory Working Group on the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, which included submitting comments to the meeting in Vilm, Germany in June 2012, and follow-up activities.

MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No further activity since, no CITES-listed plant species native to the United States or Mexico are included in the Significant Trade Review.

3.2 Review of the Appendices:

MEXICO

The Mexican Scientific Authority financed and coordinated the periodic review of *Tillandsia mauryana*, an endemic species to Mexico currently listed in Appendix II. The outcome will be submitted by Mexico for consideration at PC21 under the corresponding agenda item.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The U.S. Scientific Authority is completing a periodic review of the genus *Sclerocactus* (Cactaceae); its range includes the United States and Mexico. Based on the periodic review of *Dudleya stolonifera*, the USA submitted a proposal to delist the species from Appendix II at CoP16, which was adopted by the Parties. A progress report on the Periodic Review of the USA native plant *Lewisia serrata* will be provided at PC22.

3.3. CITES-projects in the Region:

MEXICO

Yucca queretaroensis

In late 2013, CONABIO concluded the study "Assessment of conservation status, uses and threats of *Yucca queretaroensis* Piña (Agavaceae) and the relevance to include it in the CITES Appendices", as result, Mexico submitted CoP16 Prop. 50 to include *Yucca queretaroensis* in Appendix II, which was adopted by consensus at CoP16 (Bangkok 2013).

Euphorbia antisiphilitica (candelilla):

- CONABIO in partnership with the Mexican National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) is developing the "National Inventory of Candelilla", which aims to determine the species current distribution, abundance and conservation status in managed areas in order to establish sustainable harvest rates. The Inventory's Phase I (collection of information) was completed in December 2012, yielding the following results: 1) a monograph of the species, 2) maps of potential distribution 3) Methodological proposal for a field evaluation (phase II), and 4) digital polygons of harvested areas.
- In 2013, the proposed methodology for Phase II was tested in two selected sites of Northern Mexico (Cuatro Ciénegas Coahuila) by a pilot project financed by the *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development* (UNCTAD), and implemented by PhD María Teresa

Pulido. The main findings of the pilot project have provided a basis to adjust and define the final methodology of the Inventory's Phase II, which is scheduled to begin during this year.

- Currently the Mexican CITES and Forestry Authorities are developing a "National Strategy of Candelilla", which is aimed to enhance the species conservation and sustainable use.
- CONAFOR and the Autonomous University of Coahuila, together with the company "M&H METAMLECANICA", have designed a new and improved extraction equipment of candelilla wax, which is expected to increase the yield of this raw material. On this regard, the Autonomous University of Coahuila, with financial aid from CONAFOR, is concluding a "Commercial scale validation of candelilla's technological package", which is aimed to: a) develop a manual of the redesigned equipment; and b) contrast the yield and quality of the wax obtained through the redesigned equipment, versus that of the wax obtained through traditional methods (i.e. by means of organic acids).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The U.S. Scientific Authority is conducting a range-wide status review of Appendix-II-listed goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*), native to the United States and Canada, which is harvested for its medicinal properties. In 2012, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) contracted with NatureServe, a U.S.-based non-profit conservation organization that maintains national conservation and status data on more than 70,000 species, to update the species' conservation status rankings and to complete assessments using the *IUCN Red List Criteria* and the Climate Change Vulnerability Index, as well as update information on economic botany of the species. The next phase of the review will include updating market and industry data.

3.4 Non detriment findings (NDFs):

CANADA

Standing Non-detriment Finding (NDF) Reports are used to document the current management practices in Canada for commonly-traded Canadian species to support permit decisions on sustainable exports of legally obtained CITES specimens. National Standing Non-Detriment Finding reports for American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) and Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) are published on the CITES-Canada website (www.cites.ec.gc.ca).

The Canadian Scientific Authority is an active member of the Ginseng Recovery Team made up of Canadian federal, provincial and municipal government members. This recovery team monitors wild ginseng populations and their status, as well as researches threats to ginseng and its habitat. Landscape-level and site-specific protection and recovery measures are being determined and implemented.

3.5 Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

MEXICO

- The Mexican Management and Scientific Authorities participated in the "Regional Workshop on the GSPC and the Strategic Biodiversity Plan 2011-2020" in Mexico City, from 15-17 November 2012. The workshop also counted with the participation of CBD's and/or GSPC's national focal points from Costa Rica, Cuba, USA, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panamá, Puerto Rico, UK, and the Dominican Republic; in addition to representatives from TRAFFIC, New York's Botanical Garden, the University of Puerto Rico, the Biological Station "Las Cruces", and the Mexican Indigenous Tourist Network.
- The Mexican Scientific Authority was closely involved in the drafting process (since PC18; Buenos Aires, 2009) of the recently adopted Resolution Conf. 16.5 on "Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity" (CoP16; Bangkok, 2013). Furthermore, the Mexican Scientific Authority contributed to the current meeting's working document on GSPC, which outlines next steps and recommendations addressed to the PC with regard to the implementation of Res. Conf. 16.5.

- Additionally, in compliance with the collaboration encouraged by Res. Conf. 16.5, and within the framework of the national implementation of CBD's GSPC, the Mexican Scientific Authority participated at the "*Workshop on the conformation of the Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the Mexican Strategy for Plant Conservation (MSPC)*", in Mexico City, 13 September 2013. Specifically, the Mexican Scientific Authority chaired the working groups on "Plant conservation" and "Threats to native flora", and provided general assistance for the workshop's coordination. The main result of the workshop was the successful establishment of MSPV's National Coordination Committee, which agreed to define a work programme for the successful implementation of the MSPC.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States as a Party to CITES, through the work of State agencies and Natural Heritage Programs, Federal agencies, universities, botanic gardens, arboretums, native plant societies, NGOs, and other institutions and plant specialists working in their capacities, contribute towards the United States meeting the five Objectives of the GSPC.

3.6 Others:

MEXICO

ITTO-CITES Program:

- The Mexican Scientific Authority and the General Directorate for Forestry and Soil Management (DGGFS-SEMARNAT) attended the "Central American regional workshop under the ITTO-CITES Program", in La Antigua, Guatemala from 16-18 July 2014. The workshop was hosted by Guatemala's government (CONAP and INAP), and was convened following the recent listing in Appendix II of species of *Dalbergia* from the region at CoP16 (Bangkok, 2013). Workshop participants learned about the ITTO-CITES Programme to date, shared experiences on their management of mahogany, rosewood and other CITES-listed species, and developed a set of ideas for proposals for assistance under the Programme.

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) (Decisions 16.13 to 16.16):

- In compliance with Dec. 16.14 at its 64th meeting (SC64; Bangkok 2014), the Standing Committee established an intersessional Working Group on IPBES chaired by Mexico.
- Mr. Hesiquio Benitez, with support from the UNEP, participated as an observer on behalf of the CITES Scientific Committees at the IPBES MEP-2 (Cape Town, South Africa; 27-31 August 2013).
- Furthermore, CONABIO collaborated closely on the development of CITES request (mentioned by par. d) of Decision 16.14), which was resumed by the assessment on "Sustainable use of wild species" adopted by IPBES (IPBES-2; Antalya, 9-14 December 2013) in its 2014-2018 work programme.
- CONABIO also co-wrote with the Chairs of the Scientific Committees and the Secretariat the AC27/PC21 (Veracruz, 2014) working document on IPBES, which, *inter alia*: a) advises the AC and PC to establish a drafting group to develop a brief set of recommendations for consideration of the SC WG on IPBES; b) identification of experts for the assessment on sustainable use of wild species; and c) advise on the pertinence of a draft Resolution on IPBES and CITES collaboration and any other matter relevant to the implementation of Decision 16.4.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. efforts related to Peruvian mahogany. The U.S. Management Authority continued to work closely with Peru regarding Peru's implementation of the Appendix-II listing of bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). Work included monitoring the volume of bigleaf mahogany imported into the United States from Peru during 2012, 2013, and January 2014, and it provided Peru with periodic reports on those imports. To date, a total of 100 cubic meters in 2012, 224 cubic meters in 2013, and 0 cubic meters in January 2014 were imported. The United States provides import information to Peru on a regular basis to assist Peru in monitoring its exports and managing its export quota.

4. Capacity building activities

4.1 General activities

CANADA

- The members of the North American Region communicate regularly as part of our on-going commitment to meet and discuss regional CITES issues. In 2012, the Region met by teleconference and in person onsite prior to meetings of the CITES Animals Committee, Plants Committee and Standing Committee to focus on regional preparations and positions for these meetings. A North American Regional meeting was hosted by Mexico in February 2013, in advance of the Conference of the Parties. In between meetings, the Region maintained communication through conference calls and email.
- In December 2013, the Canadian network of CITES scientific authorities held a meeting to explore Canada's interests and challenges regarding national implementation of the scientific aspects of CITES, and to provide advice and comments on Canada's international activities.
- In 2012, Environment Canada added to its series of CITES compliance promotion brochures to inform international travellers about their legal obligations under Canada's wildlife trade law and how it may affect them. The newest brochures address "Endangered species and trade" and "Endangered Species and the International Traveller." The brochures are available at <http://ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=EOEAA954-1>.
- In February 2012, Canada participated and facilitated portions of a small meeting of experts, held in Mexico, which was part of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, TRAFFIC and WWF project to develop guidance and training for making NDFs for plants. A primary purpose of this meeting was to further develop the technical basis and decision-making steps for NDFs for plants, based on the report of the Perennial Plants Working Group (Cancun NDF workshop).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **Cooperation between CITES and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO).** The United States continued to provide support for effective implementation of CITES requirements for CITES-listed tree species through the ongoing ITTO-CITES Work Program. The Program supports work in all three tropical regions of the world. The current work includes support to enhance CITES implementation for listed trees, including *Aquilaria* species, *Cedrela odorata*, *Gonystylus* species, *Pericopsis elata*, and *Swietenia macrophylla*.
- **U.S. engagement with the musical instrument community.** A representative of the USFWS participated in the 2012 annual meeting of the Violin Society of America, which was held in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, in November 2012. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss issues related to CITES CoP16 and to present the U.S. proposal to develop a musical instrument certificate for the frequent cross-border movement of musical instruments containing CITES-listed species. The audience of violin and bow makers, as well as musicians, was extremely engaged and interested in the implementation of CITES. Additionally, the U.S. CITES Authorities continue to engage more broadly with the community of musical instrument manufacturers and musicians, including international trade in Brazilian rosewood (*Dalbergia nigra*), ebony (*Diospyros* species), and Pernambuco (*Caesalpinia echinata*).
- **Guide on Importing and Exporting CITES-Listed Species.** The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA), a U.S. national trade association representing members of the herbal products industry, developed a "Primer on Importing & Exporting CITES-Listed Species" to provide guidance for U.S. importers and exporters of commonly traded CITES-listed species that are used as ingredients in traditional medicines and dietary supplements. The primer is available on-line at: http://www.ahpa.org/Portals/0/pdfs/AHPA_CITES_Import_Export_Primer.pdf.
- **Capacity building through the International Technical Assistance Program.** The U.S. Department of Interior-International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) with the assistance from the USFWS, provide CITES capacity building and training around the world. In 2012 and 2013, the following workshops were provided:

- **Meeting of the CAFTA-DR CITES Environmental Cooperation Project (December 2012; Managua, Nicaragua).** Representatives from the U.S. Management and Scientific Authorities participated in a DOI-ITAP meeting with representatives of the Scientific and Management Authorities of the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) member countries (Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) and Belize in preparation for CoP16. The meeting provided an opportunity for the countries to share priorities and information in advance of CoP16, including a Belizean presentation on the Appendix-II proposals to list *Dalbergia granadillo*, *Dalbergia retusa*, and *Dalbergia stevensonii*.
- **Workshop to Strengthen the Capacity of Authorities to Implement CITES in the Republic of Panamá (May 2013):** Representatives from the U.S. Scientific Authority and DOI-ITAP, and the CITES Secretariat conducted a workshop in Panama City to train Panamanian CITES officials in the making of non-detriment findings and general CITES matters. Approximately 35–40 officials, including government lawyers, military personnel, border patrol agents, environmental police, and plant and wildlife inspectors participated in the 3-day event.
- **Regional Workshop to Build Capacity to Undertake CITES Non-detriment Findings in Central America and the Dominican Republic (September 2013).** Thirty-five experts from the CITES Scientific and Management Authorities, and national fisheries agencies of Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panamá, as well as representatives from the Organization of Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus (OSPESCA), participated in a 3 ½ day regional training workshop on making non-detriment findings (NDFs), held in San Salvador, El Salvador, 3-6 September 2013. Workshop participants learned about CITES Resolutions pertaining to NDFs, tools and methodologies to improve making NDFs, and discussed NDFs developed by other countries. Participants analyzed plant and animal species case studies from the region, and developed recommendations and agreements intended to improve the general knowledge and capacity relating to NDFs for CITES-listed species traded in the region. Workshop trainers included: Dr. Rosemarie Gnam, Chief of the U.S. Scientific Authority, Jon Siemien, biologist, U.S. Scientific Authority; David Morgan, Chief of the CITES Secretariat Scientific Support Unit; Dr. Alison Rosser, United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre; Ms. Paola Mosig, TRAFFIC Mexico; and regional experts from OSPESCA.

In-country enforcement & inspection capacity:

- **CITES Plant Rescue Center Program.** In 1978, the U.S. Management Authority established the CITES Plant Rescue Center (PRC) Program, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), to care for live specimens of CITES-listed plants legally abandoned or forfeited to or seized by the U.S. Government due to non-compliance with CITES. Currently, 84 institutions cooperate as volunteer PRCs in the United States, all of which are public botanical gardens, arboreta, zoological parks, or research institutions. In 2012, APHIS confiscated 32 shipments of live plant material in violation of CITES. Of these 32 shipments, 31 were assigned to cooperating plant rescue centers. The assigned shipments contained a total of 1,130 plants and 50 kilograms of seeds (665 euphorbias, 201 aloes, 135 cacti, 51 orchids, 43 tillandsias, 25 podophyllums, and 10 plants of other taxa; 50 kilograms of palm seeds). In 2013, APHIS confiscated 31 shipments of live plant material in violation of CITES. Of the 31 shipments, 30 were assigned to cooperating plant rescue centers. The assigned shipments contained a total of 6,680 plants (3,864 orchids, 2,343 aloes, 411 cacti, 27 euphorbias, 27 pitcher plants, and 8 tree ferns). In recent years, there has continued to be a general reduction in the number of shipments of live specimens of CITES-listed plants confiscated by APHIS. However, the numbers of plants assigned to plant rescue centers has increased. During the 3-year period 2005-2007, APHIS confiscated 501 such shipments and 10,335 plants were assigned to plant rescue centers; during 2008-2010, APHIS confiscated 372 such shipments and 12,623 plants were assigned to plant rescue centers; and during 2011-2013, APHIS confiscated 105 such shipments and 16,944 plants were assigned to plant rescue centers.
- **The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service-Plant Protection Quarantine (APHIS-PPQ).** In June and July 2013, the APHIS-PPQ conducted two CITES Regulatory Workshops for APHIS-PPQ and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at two Plant Inspection Stations in Texas. The 3-day training sessions provided a comprehensive overview of CITES and updates from CoP16, permitting requirements, identification resources, seizure/forfeiture protocol, and

other areas related to port enforcement and capacity building to strengthen officers' roles and responsibilities. The training enable officers' to correctly regulate CITES materials and take appropriate regulatory action. CBP and APHIS-PPQ officers and other personnel along the USA-Mexican border are directly involved with CITES enforcement at the designated ports.

4.2 Contact with specialists and/or NGOs:

MEXICO

- In collaboration with TRAFFIC-North America, CONABIO coordinated the project entitled "Study to identify Mexican species relevant within the framework of international trade" (2012-2013), with the aim to classify native species (whether CITES or not) in "priority of attention" categories for decision making purposes, on the basis of: a) their 2005-2010 international trade registers; and b) their conservation status. In accordance with the study's recommendations, in December 2013 CONABIO issued a public summon for the development of projects aimed to update the conservation status information of *Beaucarnea recurvata* (elephant's foot), in order to assess if the species meets the criteria to be listed in the Appendices.
- In October 2013, UNAM signed an agreement with the Smithsonian Institute of the U.S. National Museum of Natural History to carry out the project "Bar Code of Wildlife -Mexico". That project will seek to use bar codes as a tool to support the CITES law enforcement authority in Mexico (PROFEPA) in identifying species traded internationally that are difficult to identify. The CITES authorities, in cooperation with the academic sector (UNAM), the MEXBOL network of the National Science and Technology Commission (CONACYT), the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR) and the Scientific Division of the Federal Police, have developed a document that describes the scope of the project in Mexico, and a list of 800 species (200 priority species in addition to similar and associated species) that require sequencing for inclusion in a genetic reference library.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In addition to the groups mentioned elsewhere in this report, the United States worked with a variety of plant specialists and NGOs in the reporting period, including the Chicago Botanic Garden, the Institute for Culture and Ecology, the Integrated Taxonomic Information System, the International Wood Products Association, the Montgomery Botanical Center, the National Network of Forest Practitioners, State Natural Heritage Programs, and the U.S. Botanic Garden.

4.3 Other:

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

40th Anniversary: Leading up to CITES CoP16, USFWS launched a social media campaign highlighting facts about the Convention, as well as a representative sample of the animal and plant species that it protects. The forty day campaign, which was anchored by a [blog](#) and subsequent posts on Facebook and Twitter, served as a countdown to CoP16 and also as a reminder that 2013 marked the 40th Anniversary of CITES. U.S. Department of State engaged on this campaign and a number of social media posts were shared or retweeted by U.S. Embassies around the globe. USFWS also wrote a series of articles on the history of the Convention and U.S. priorities for CoP16, all of which were prominently featured in the [Winter 2013 edition of Fish & Wildlife News](#)- a USFWS publication that is distributed to a variety of stakeholder groups and is available online.

During this reporting period, the U.S. CITES Authorities continued to improve its outreach activities to increase public awareness of the State and Federal regulations concerning the harvest and export of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), as well as emphasis on implementing good stewardship harvest practices for this species. Improvements were also made to the U.S. CITES Authorities public Web pages for American ginseng, cacti, and orchids:

<http://www.fws.gov/international/plants/american-ginseng.html>;

<http://www.fws.gov/international/plants/cacti.html>; and

<http://www.fws.gov/international/plants/orchids.html>.

5. Difficulties of implementation encountered in your country

5.1 Technical issues:

CANADA

The Government of Canada places temporary "holding reservations" on decisions taken at the Conference of Parties. The Convention, written in 1975, allows 90 days for countries to update their regulations. Canada is unable to meet these short timelines for making the necessary regulatory changes. In October 2013, the CoP15 amendments to the list of CITES-regulated species were legally in force in Canada with completion of the regulatory process to update the Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations (WAPTR) of the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPRIITA) and the CoP15 reservation was lifted. Canada has placed a holding reservation on decisions taken at the 16th meeting of the CoP to allow time for implementation of regulatory changes. Completion of the regulatory changes is targeted for late 2014 at which time the holding reservation will be lifted. The Government of Canada is serious about protecting species at risk within its borders and internationally, and committed to our responsibilities to CITES. Canada continues to strongly support the decisions made by the 16th Conference of Parties to CITES.

6. Other topics related to CITES (i.e. medicinal plants, timber, etc.)

CANADA

The Canadian Forest Service, CITES Scientific Authority has participated in numerous inter-agency discussions aimed at raising the profile and comprehension of the global impacts of illegal logging, and at developing additional tools and regulatory responses to this important issue.

MEXICO

- In 2012, PROFEPA implemented the "Project to Strengthen the Verification of Exports of Regulated Species" whose objective is to identify irregular situations and areas of opportunity for better compliance with the law in the cross-border movements of regulated wild flora and fauna, marine and forest species.
- During 2012 and 2013, PROFEPA seized 758 cubic metres of tropical wood in two seaports that resulted in actions in the national territory involving the seizure of 1,356 cubic metres of round wood and squared wood (timber), 27 tonnes of coal, nine cargo vehicles and nine tools, the closure of three sawmills, the suspension of six authorized logging properties due to the misuse of documentation, and the application of 66 administrative procedures.
- In 2013, the "Operation for Monitoring and Prevention of Illegal International Trafficking of Protected Species" was carried out by PROFEPA in coordination with customs, agriculture and livestock health, police, military and migration authorities. Its objective was to prevent and combat the illegal cross-border movement of specimens, parts, and by-products of protected species by carrying out systematic monitoring actions and scheduled inspection, and by establishing control and inspection points at border crossings not usually covered by PROFEPA.
- In 2012, PROFEPA in coordination with WWF-TRAFFIC North America with funds from the USFWS, held the "Workshop to Strengthen the Skills of Officials Responsible for the Management and Enforcement of Wildlife Legislation in Mexico". Training was provided to 81 public servants from the federal environment sector and local governments, who are responsible for the management, verification and inspection of wildlife for national and international trade. In 2013, "Workshop to train instructors in matters of trade in and trafficking of wildlife", was organized. To date, the contents of the workshop have been passed on to servants in the PROFEPA, CONABIO, the General Customs Administration and the Office of the Attorney General of the To continue with this initiative, a proposal was submitted to the USFWS Wildlife Without Borders Program in 2014 and has been pre-approved.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **U.S. CITES American ginseng export program.** In implementing the Appendix-II listing of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), the USFWS works closely with other Federal agencies and the

25 States that have approved American ginseng export programs, and are responsible for managing this species on lands within their jurisdiction. Information provided by these other agencies is used by the U.S. CITES Authorities for making the necessary legal acquisition and non-detriment findings for the issuance of export permits. During the reporting period, the U.S. CITES Authorities regularly communicated with the States on issues related to American ginseng, including revision of State ginseng management regulations and administrative changes to the State programs. The U.S. Scientific Authority worked with the U.S. Forest Service to ensure that harvest levels of American ginseng in National Forests are not detrimental to the survival of the species. In 2012, the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin became the first federally recognized Indian Tribe approved by the U.S. CITES Authorities for their American ginseng export program.

In May 2012, representatives of the U.S. CITES Authorities participated at an American ginseng meeting hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The meeting focused on recent program changes by the DNR for the regulation of wild American ginseng, and ginseng related activities of the Menominee and Chippewa Indian Tribes, as well as meeting with ginseng dealers and exporters to discuss State and Federal regulations for the harvest and export of wild and artificially propagated American ginseng. In addition, U.S. CITES Authorities staff toured the facilities and growing fields of a major American ginseng grower.

In December 2012, representatives of the U.S. CITES Authorities presented information on the CITES export requirements for American ginseng, and the management and conservation of the species at the International American Ginseng Expo, held in North Carolina, USA.

- Medicinal Plant Working Group (MPWG) and the Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA). The U.S. Scientific Authority continues to chair the MPWG and serve as the USFWS federal liaison to the national federal/non-federal PCA. The MPWG was formed under the PCA in 1999, to facilitate U.S. efforts to work more closely with traditional medicine practitioners and consumers to curb over-exploitation, as recommended in Resolution Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14). During this reporting period, MPWG focused on monitoring of native medicinal plants and creating linkages with growers, as well as botany and ethnobotany students interested in conservation and sustainable use research for economically important plants. The PCA-sponsored speaker series included the role of community gardens in conservation and raising the profile of threatened and endangered plant species, as part of the 40th Anniversary of CITES and the U.S. Endangered Species Act (www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/fish__wildlife_and/plants/pca/meetings.html).
- Amendments to the U.S. Lacey Act. As described in past North American Regional Reports, the Lacey Act, which makes it illegal to import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce any wildlife specimen taken or traded in violation of the conservation laws of a U.S. State or of another country, was amended in 2008 to protect a broader range of plants, including foreign plant and timber species. During the reporting period, the U.S. Government took a number of steps toward fully implementing the new Lacey Act amendments. In May 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) submitted a report to the U.S. Congress examining the implementation of the 2008 amendments and how the import declaration assists with enforcement of the amendments and in July 2013, USDA, working in conjunction with USFWS, published an interim final rule defining the terms "common cultivar" and "common food crop", as they apply in the Lacey Act. In addition, the U.S. Government continued its phased-in approach to the declaration requirement and provided additional national and international outreach.
- United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement. Since the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) was concluded in 2008, the United States has worked closely with Peruvian authorities to implement the agreement, and in particular the Forest Sector Annex to the Environment Chapter. The Annex includes special focus on Peru's forest management with regard to CITES-listed tree species. In April 2012, the Environmental Investigation Agency, an environmental NGO, petitioned the United States to request that the Government of Peru carry out audits and verifications of certain shipments, producers, and exporters of bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and Spanish cedar (*Cedrela odorata*) in response to concerns about timber that may have been illegally harvested and exported to the United States. The United States undertook an extensive review of the information in the petition and decided not to request audits and verifications, but instead pursued a forward-looking five-point action plan with Peru to address challenges highlighted during review of the petition.
- U.S. Forest Service CITES related activities. In 2012, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) conducted a wood identification workshop in the Dominican Republic for 35 attendees from government and universities. In January 2013, a USFS expert conducted a wood identification workshop in Nicaragua

using the USFS Central America wood identification manual. The workshop was attended by nearly 40 participants from government and universities.

- The USFS team of experts based in Lima, Peru and Washington, D.C., with funding from U.S. Agency for International Development, continued its extensive work assisting the Government of Peru (GOP) with its National Information System for Forest and Wildlife. In 2013, the USFS jointly developed a timber tracing software prototype that was used for a year at checkpoints along Peru's most complex timber corridor. An improved 2.0 version of the software will be deployed in February 2014.

7. Work to be done until the next meeting of the Plants Committee (if not already mentioned above)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **Ongoing participation in PC and PC/AC Intersessional Working Groups.** The United States is chair of the interim Standing Committee Working Group on annotations. The WG will submit a document to the joint meeting of the Animals Committee and Plants Committee in 2014.

8. Other issues

MEXICO

- Mexico will host the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC27), the present 21st meeting of the Plants Committee (PC21), and their joint sessions (AC27/PC21), held at Veracruz from April 28 to May 8 2014. Including a series of parallel activities, as follows:
 - a) Guided visits to sites where CITES species are successfully used and managed;
 - b) A poster session aimed to broadcast experiences on investigation, management and conservation of CITES species, promoting the exchange and collaboration between Mexican communities and CITES experts; to be held during the official reception of the first day of the AC27/PC21 joint sessions.
 - c) Parallel events lead by relevant CITES stakeholders, and,
 - d) A public seminar on CITES to give relevant sectors and the CITES international community the opportunity to exchange information and experiences on the proper implementation of the Convention (scheduled on May 3rd, 2014).
- **Regulations on foreign trade:** The Ministry of Economy (SE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Mexico (SEMARNAT) published, on December 19 2012 an "Agreement that establishes the classification and coding of goods whose import and export is subject to regulation by SEMARNAT.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **International Sandalwood Symposium.** A U.S. Scientific Authority botanist participated at the International Sandalwood Symposium, held at the University of Hawai'i, Hawai'i, USA, 21-24 October 2012. The workshop was organized by the International Sandalwood Foundation and the United Plant Savers, U.S. based NGOs. Sandalwood oil is derived from sandalwood trees and is used in the global cosmetic and fragrance industries. Over a 100 participants from eight countries, including researchers, growers, landowners, university students, and U.S. government officials, attended the workshop. Topics included scientific research on the taxonomy, genetics, biology, and oil chemistry of sandalwood (*Santalum species*, *Santalaceae family*), regional production of sandalwood and oil, market trends, and species conservation concerns. Although no *Santalum species* are regulated under CITES, *Osyris lanceolata*, East African sandalwood (*Santalaceae*) was included in Appendix II at CoP16.
- **Native Plant Conservation Initiative (NPCI) and CITES-listed species.** The U.S. Scientific Authority served on the project selection committee for this collaborative grant program between the Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA; <www.nps.gov/plants>) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). With funding from the USFWS, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service, the NPCI addressed the conservation, maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration of native plants

and their ecosystems on a national level, funding projects across the continental United States to Alaska and Hawai'i and as far away as American Samoa. In 2012, the NPCI grant program funded the U.S. Red List Authority for Plants, NatureServe, to assess the conservation status of all U.S. orchid species, and to complete climate change vulnerability assessments. Also in 2012, NPCI funding contributed to the formation of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank, which is a 9-State germplasm collection and seed banking program for priority native flora that are used for restoration and rehabilitation of public lands in the region (<http://www.marsb.org/>). In 2013, the NFWF dissolved the NPCI grant program, and replaced it with an ecosystem-based grant program. The MPWG Chair and PCA will continue to work with the NFWF to promote research and outreach for CITES-listed and non-listed U.S. native plants.

- **CITES-listed Pollinators.** The USFWS developed a social media campaign to raise awareness of CITES-listed pollinators and outreach material during the U.S. National Pollinator Week in 2012 and 2013. Featured pollinators included hummingbirds and pollinated flora such as Appendix-II saguaro cactus (*Carnegiea gigantea*).