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

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade controls and marking

GUIDANCE ON MAKING NON-DETRIMENT FINDINGS FOR PERENNIAL PLANTS

1. This document has been submitted by Germany and has been prepared by TRAFFIC[1].

2. Ensuring trade is within sustainable limits is at the core of CITES. According to the Convention, Parties shall allow trade in specimens of species included in Appendices I and II only if the Scientific Authority of the State of export has advised that such export not be detrimental to the survival of the species being traded. This requirement is referred to as 'non-detriment finding' (NDF).

3. How NDFs are made is up to the Scientific Authorities of each Party. Although the Parties have not agreed on technical criteria for how NDFs are undertaken, the 16th Convention of the Parties adopted a resolution recommending the following elements as a basis for NDFs (Resolution Conf. 16.7): species biology and life-history characteristics; species range; population structure, status and trends; threats; species-specific levels and patterns of harvest; management measures; population monitoring; and conservation status.

4. Resolution Conf. 16.7 also calls upon Parties, to offer, on request, cooperative assistance to developing countries, for improvement of capacity to make non-detriment findings, based on nationally identified needs.

5. Making well informed, science-based NDF decisions is essential to preventing over-exploitation through international trade and central to the successful implementation of CITES. Considerable efforts have been made by some Parties, IGOs, and the Secretariat over the years to develop general and taxon-specific guidance for making NDFs. For plant taxa, significant advances have been achieved.

6. The project "Development of Training Modules for CITES Non-Detriment Findings (NDF) for Plants" was executed by TRAFFIC on behalf of WWF Germany, with financial support from the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN). This project aimed to improve the guidance and training tools available to assist Scientific Authorities in making Non-Detriment Findings for perennial plants.

7. The Guidance developed during the project builds on previous milestones, including:

   – IUCN Species Survival Commission's *Guidance for CITES Scientific Authorities: Checklist to assist in making non-detriment findings for Appendix II exports*[2];

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[1] *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.*

– The *International Expert Workshop on CITES Non-Detriment Findings* (Cancun, Mexico, 17-22 November 2008[3]), in particular the development of guidance at the workshop for perennial plants combining the IUCN checklist with elements derived from the International Standard for sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP, now included in the FairWild Standard version 2.0[4]).

– The CITES Virtual College module on making NDFs[5].

8. A first version this Guidance, and many useful contributions to its content, resulted from a small "Expert meeting on development of guidance and training for CITES non-detriment findings (NDF) for plants" hosted by TRAFFIC in Mexico City, Mexico, 1-3 February 2012. A second version was tested in an NDF training workshop in Hanoi, Viet Nam, in November 2012, hosted by the CITES Management Authority for Viet Nam. Case studies were prepared for this workshop on Cycad species. The current version of this guidance incorporates the results of the Viet Nam workshop and further comments from the participants in the Mexico City expert meeting.

9. We thank those who participated in our initial meeting in Mexico City in early 2012; Hesiquio Benitez Diaz, Alejandra García Naranjo, Patricia Ford, Noel McGough, Adrianne Sinclair, David Newton, Paola Mosig Reidl and Adrian Reuter. Many thanks also to the team efforts of Environment Canada for their reviews of versions of the guidance. We thank the CITES Management Authority of Viet Nam for hosting the workshop in October 2012 including the Director Do Quang Tung. We particularly thank Dr Nguyen Tien Hiep for his work in preparation of case studies.

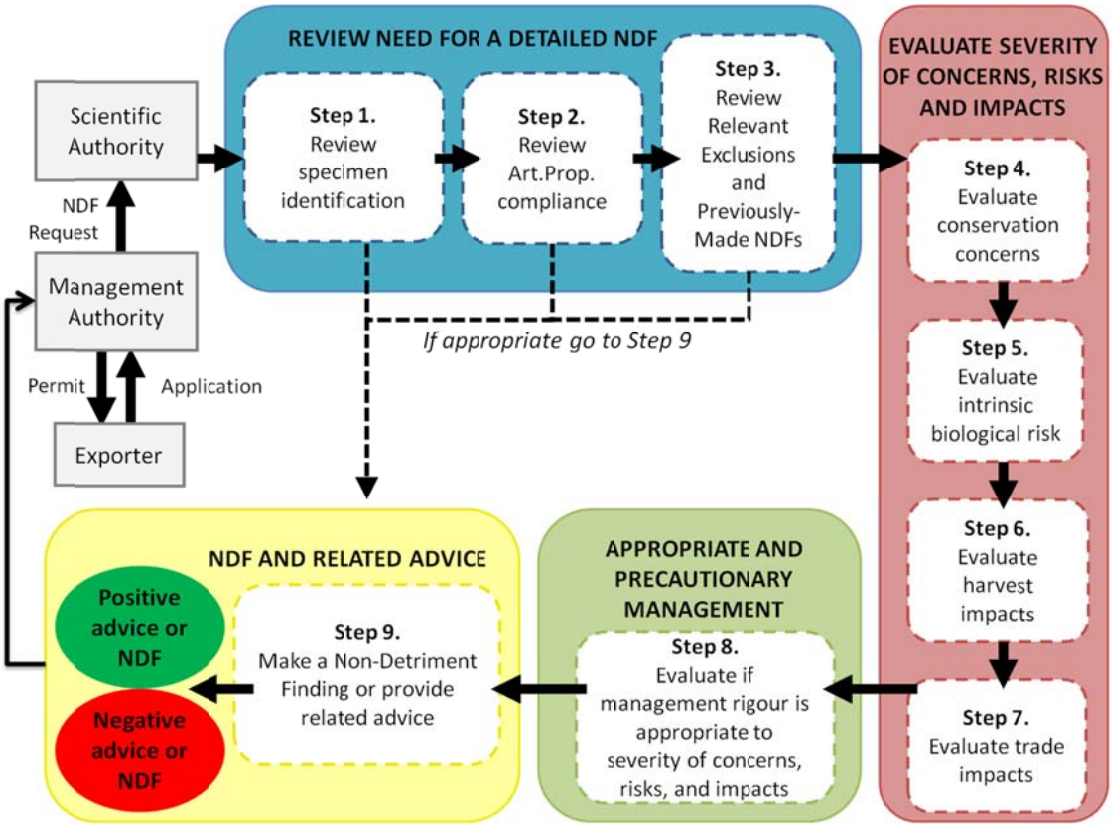

Figure: Nine-Step pathway for making Non-Detriment Findings for perennial plant species listed in CITES Appendix II

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2 http://data.iucn.org/themes/ssc/our_work/wildlife_trade/citescop13/CITES/guidance.htm#guide

3 http://www.conabio.gob.mx/institucion/cooperacion_internacional/TallerNDF/taller_ndf.html

4 http://www.fairwild.org/standard

5 https://eva.unia.es/cites/

10. This Guidance suggests 9 steps that a Scientific Authority can take to make a science-based NDF. These steps are science-based and are using information with data quality appropriate to the severity of conservation concerns. The overall process is shown in Figure 1.

    – Steps 1-3 involve the evaluation of whether a detailed, science-based NDF is needed for the species and specimens concerned.

    – Steps 4-7 involve the evaluation of conservation concerns, intrinsic biological risks, harvest impacts, and trade impacts relevant to the species concerned, and their severity.

    – Step 8 involves the evaluation of whether the management measures in place are sufficiently rigorous to mitigate (reduce the severity of) the concerns, risks, and impacts identified.

    – Step 9 involves the making of a NDF or other advice to the Management Authority based on the outcomes of Steps 1-8.

11. Each of the Guidance steps is comprised of the following components:

    – "Rationale: Why is this Step Important?" summarizing the contribution of the guidance step to the overall NDF process

    – A graphic presentation of the "Key Questions and Decision Pathway" for each step

    – Guidance notes for each key question

    – A description of the endpoint for each step

    – Useful sources and recommended information quality based on the severity of concerns, risks, and impacts identified in the previous steps

    – (Steps 4-8 only) Tables of factors to consider in evaluating the severity of conservation concerns, intrinsic biological risks, harvest impacts, and trade impacts, and the level of rigour of management measures in place.

12. We hope that Parties will use and adapt this Guidance to suit their own needs. Further revisions will be made to the current version on the basis of outcomes from test implementation and we would appreciate comments from Parties that do apply the approach so that these may also help in future revisions.

13. Although this document is intended to guide a Scientific Authority towards a decision, ultimately it will be necessary for the Scientific Authority to weigh up the risks and evidence to make its final NDF decision. This will require individual (or group) judgements; this guidance is designed to draw out the information relevant to informing the process that leads to that final decision.

14. The full Guidance is contained in PC21 Inf. 1.

15. In 2014 and 2015, the German Scientific Authority plans to organize and support NDF capacity building seminars in cooperation with interested Parties.

Recommendations

16. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 16.7, the Plants Committee is invited to submit this Guidance to the Secretariat for inclusion in the section for non-detriment findings on the CITES website

17. The Parties are invited to consider this Guidance as a reference for making non-detriment findings.