

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



Twenty-second meeting of the Plants Committee
Tbilisi (Georgia), 19-23 October 2015

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Compliance and enforcement

Non-detriment findings

NDF FOR *PERICOPSIS ELATA* IN THE
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

This document has been submitted by the CITES Management Authority of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

INTRODUCTION

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) classifies *Pericopsis elata* (afroormosia) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as an endangered species. In consequence, this species is listed in CITES Appendix II.

As part of the programme to boost the capacity of the countries producing afroormosia to apply the CITES provisions, the DRC is in receipt of funding to undertake a project of drawing up a non-detriment finding for this species.

This project is intended to fill in the gaps in the information on the potential, phenology, recovery, tracking of production, processing and export of afroormosia, in order to produce the scientific bases to support the drafting of the non-detriment finding.

The first phase of this project began in September 2013. It led to the preparation of the first version of the document, published in May 2014, in which the export quota was set at 23,240 m³ (log equivalent).

The second phase of the project started in May 2015, resulting in the preparation of the second edition of the NDF document, amplified and updated.

The sustainable possible quota for *Pericopsis elata* is now calculated on the basis of the raw data from the verified and monitored baseline inventories, undertaken in the logging concessions located within the area of distribution of the species.

* 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.

A mission for verification of baseline inventories has been undertaken by the forest administration, followed by a second for checking purposes by the regional coordinator of the ITTO assisted by an independent observer. It may be noted that the results of these two missions and those of the baseline inventories themselves are similar. In consequence, the updated possible annual quota has been set at 31,905 m³ (round wood equivalent).

The following gives a summary of the document, with particular emphasis on:

- The situation concerning submission of baseline inventory reports;
- The quota calculation method;
- The need to set an exceptional-circumstances quota, or transition quota;
- Tracking and monitoring of harvests and exports.

1) Situation concerning submission of baseline inventory reports

The process of establishing the baseline for the logging concessions is ongoing in the DRC. As part of drawing up the NDF, estimating the export quota is based on the data from the forest baseline inventories established by the forestry companies and approved by the forest administration, in particular the *Direction des Inventaires et Aménagement Forestier* (DIAF) (Directorate for Forest Inventories and Management).

It may be recalled that the initial quota in May 2014 was established on the basis of nine baseline inventory reports submitted to the DIAF (Table 2: Quota granted in 2015 to companies/page 38 of the NDF, 2nd edition).

Currently, out of the 23 titles located within the area of distribution of afromosia:

1. One concession (COTREFOR 0/80/11) is under management and the Annual Operating Plan for 2015 has been submitted;
2. Two plans for the management of the concessions CFT 046/11 and 047/11 have been submitted and will enter into force starting in 2016;
3. Eight more titles (SIFORCO 052 b/14, 053/14 and 054/14; FORABOLA 042/11; SODEFOR 036/11 and 037/11; SODEFOR ex. FORABOLA 064/14 and SICOBOIS 033/11) are also well advanced in the management process and have baseline inventories submitted and/or approved.

In all, 11 forest titles for which the baseline inventory reports have been submitted have received revised or updated 2015 quotas.

However, given that the inventory report for the concession 059/14 (SODEFOR ex. CFT) has still not been submitted, the quota of 3376 m³ which had been assigned following the completion of the ground inventory work has been abandoned. Table 2 in the Annex shows the progress of the baseline establishment process.

2) Calculation methods for the quotas assigned to the forest titles

For the purpose of the NDF of May 2014, the quotas assigned to the forest titles were calculated on the basis of the data from baseline inventories. That was made possible by the establishment of rules for sustainable planting management using the matrix model which allows developments to be simulated in the light of different parameters (die-off rate, exploitation actions, harvesting rate, etc.) and for its recovery index to be calculated in the light of the established minimum exploitation diameter. As the recovery rate is a tool used for management of plantings, it is the tool considered the most useful for our work in ensuring the sustainability of the management of the forests under study.

The minimum exploitation diameter has been set in each concession so as to make it possible to attain, at the end of a 25-year rotation, a minimum recovery rate of 50%. On the basis of these parameters, the annual possible quotas have been estimated by relating the gross volumes calculated for branches of a diameter greater than the minimum exploitation diameter to the usable surface areas of the concessions, and applying the maximum harvest rate of 80% and a marketing coefficient of 85%.

For each concession, the gross (standing) volumes exploitable per hectare have been calculated by totalling up, for each diameter class equal to or greater than the minimum exploitation diameter, the products of the average densities of the branches inventoried multiplied by the unit volumes given multiplied by the corresponding cubic content rates.

This approach has made it possible to update the quotas granted to the forest titles concerned. It brings the initial quota assigned for 2015 to 31,905 m³, in place of the 23,239 m³ originally assigned.

Annex 2 gives the details of the parameters selected and the calculations made for the quotas assigned to each concession.

3) Quota management

The export quotas are set by Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15) and its Annex "Guidelines for management of nationally established export quotas". In addition to these general principles, the document notes that it is important, for the management of harvests, to "take account of the regulatory and biological context" (paragraph 6).

Thus, the system of establishing and managing the export quotas for afrormosia wood in the DRC takes account of the factors related to its particular context, namely:

- The assigning and tracking of the quotas in the light of the annual felling allowances. The regulations of the DRC permit the opening of an annual felling allowance for a period of 3 years; the quotas do not have to be closed every year, but may remain valid for several years;
- In the DRC, the distances to be covered and the transportation conditions require that a minimum period of three months between the felling of the tree and export of it may be claimed. The time period is more important for the isolated concessions and in the light of the low transportation capacity of the river;
- And more.

Taking into account the factors related to the particular context of management of export quotas, it has proved necessary to define a quota system based on the allocation of fixed quotas to the annual felling allowance, in particular so as to remain consistent with the approach used to set the quotas.

Thus, this principle implies that the quotas assigned in this way are valid for several years. Indeed, taking account of the regulation that provides for the possibility of exploiting an annual felling allowance for the two years following the granting of the permit, and of the time periods needed to remove the wood, transport it and perhaps also process it, inevitably every quota will be valid for four years, equating to the three years of the regulated opening up of the annual felling allowance to exploitation, followed by a year in which timber under this annual felling allowance, exploited fully legally over the preceding years, may be exported. Figures 8 to 10 illustrate the tracking and management system.

4) Need to establish an exceptional-circumstances quota

As presented in earlier sections, a system of management of the quotas directly related to the annual felling allowances is being applied starting in 2015. Thus, only timber coming from the 2015 annual felling allowance may be exported as part of the 2015 quota. The latter will remain valid for four years, until 2018.

By contrast, in the preceding years, each quota was valid only for one calendar year (1 January to 31 December), and all the *P. elata* timber exported during year n was counted against the quota for year n, whatever the felling year or the annual felling allowance to which the exported timber belonged. Thus, for example, timber from the 2012 annual felling allowance exported in 2013 was counted against the 2013 quota. In the same way, timber under the 2013 annual felling allowance, exported in 2014, was counted against the 2013 quota.

Taking account of the change in the system of quota management occurring in 2015, the part of the timber under the 2014 annual felling allowance which could not be exploited or exported in 2014, could not – in the absence of any suitable measure - be exported as part of any export quota whatsoever, despite the fact that such timber had been exploited in accordance with national regulations and with the sustainable use rules then in force. The timber in question could have been exploited if the quota management

measures defined in Chapter 6 had been put into operation in 2014. The current impossibility of exporting that timber is thus uniquely related to the change in the way the quotas operate.

This particular and exceptional situation, related to the transition from the old to the new system for management of export quotas, renders necessary the establishment of a specific and exceptional measure in order to permit the export of stocks of wood harvested in 2014 or 2015 on the basis of authorizations for industrial cutting of lumber issued in 2014, it not having been possible to export the lumber by the end of 2014. It has therefore been decided to grant a unique and exceptional export quota, known as a transition quota, for the wood in question.

Given that the wood under the annual felling allowance which has benefited from an extension of the cutting permit, will be harvestable until the end of 2015, the termination of the validity of this unique and exceptional transition quota has been set at 31 December 2016.

This unique and exceptional transition quota refers only to timber harvested from areas legally open to exploitation in 2014 (2014 industrial cutting authorizations), and solely to timber coming from the six forest concessions meeting this criterion.

The exceptional transition quota for the six concessions is set as follows:

CONCESSION		Transition quota (m ³)
COTREFOR	018/11	6 738
CFT	046/11	3 356
FORABOLA	042/11	3 316
SICOBOIS	033/11	66
SIFORCO	052 b/14	20 861
SODEFOR	037/11	2 721
TOTAL		19 058

5) Tracking and monitoring of harvests and exports

Strict application of the legal and regulatory provisions in force in the DRC will make it possible to guarantee the sustainability of the exploitation of *Pericopsis elata*. The documents present briefly the areas of responsibility of the various administrative offices involved in the tracking and monitoring of forest exploitation and the marketing of products in the wood trade in the DRC.

To ensure effectiveness, a series of recommendations should come into force starting on 1 September 2015:

1. The concession holders whose forest titles have been taken into account for calculating the 2015 quota have been informed of the maximum volume of *P. elata* that they are likely to be able to export, for each title concerned, in the course of 2015, taking into account the results of the baseline or exploitation inventories prepared;
2. Any request for a CITES export permit relating to a cargo of *P. elata* shall be submitted by the requestor in accordance with the model shown in Annex 2 of the NDF. This request shall be supported by the following information:
 - a) References to the forestry contract for the concession from which the volume of *P. elata* has been removed for which a CITES permit is requested;
 - b) References to the annual felling allowance under the four-year management plan drawn up covering the transitional period from which the volume of *P. elata* has been removed for which a CITES permit is requested, stating the maximum volume authorized for *P. elata* in the annual felling allowance concerned;

- c) References to the cutting authorization(s) from which the volume of *P. elata* has been removed for which a CITES permit is requested, stating the maximum volume authorized for *P. elata* in the cutting authorization(s) concerned;
- d) If the request for a CITES permit relates to the exploitation of *P. elata* logs: cutting numbers of the branches harvested to make up the volume of *P. elata* for which a CITES permit is requested;
- e) If the request for a CITES permit relates to the exploitation of offcuts resulting from an initial sawing of *P. elata*: cutting numbers of the branches likely to have been harvested to make up the volume of sawn wood for which a permit is requested;

The permit request, including all of this information, shall obligatorily be annexed to any permit granted. A permit lacking such an annex shall be considered improper and will not be usable for trade in *P. elata* under the terms of CITES.

- 3. A simple computerized database (using a spreadsheet program, for example) shall be set up to ensure tracking of the export of cargos of *P. elata* under CITES. This database shall allow instant tracking of the progress of exports of *P. elata*, simultaneously relating them to the national quota and to the quota set up for each concession in the light of the results of its baseline inventory. Where the permit granted relates to sawn pieces of *P. elata*, recording this in the database shall automatically convert the volume of sawn products into round wood equivalent, using a yield factor provisionally set at 30%. This round wood equivalent volume will be taken into account for tracking both the national quota and the individual quotas for each concession.
- 4. This database shall be placed on-line on an official website, secure and dedicated. Access to the site shall be provided to the CITES Secretariat as well as any national CITES authority of a Party to the Convention which requests it.

Immediately following approval by the CITES Management Authority, each export permit and its documentary annex shall be scanned and uploaded to the official site hosting the database.

Done at Kinshasa, on
Frédéric DJENGO BOSULU

Table of revisions of 2015 quotas allocated and progress of the baseline establishment process

Company	Concession (CCF number)	Initial quota allocated (m ³)	Progress of the baseline establishment process	Revised 2015 quota (m ³)
COTREFOR	018/11	8 703	Management plan in force and 2015 Annual Operating Plan submitted	8 703
CFT	046/11	1 387	Management plan submitted	1 387
CFT ex-SODEFOR	047/11	445	Management plan submitted	445
FORABOLA	042/11	2 513		2 513
SODEFOR ex-CFT	059/14	3 376	Inventory report being drafted	0
SODEFOR ex-FORABOLA	064/14	1 352	Inventory report submitted, analyzed, additional information requested and supplied	1 352
SICOBOIS	033/11	271	Inventory report submitted, analyzed, additional information requested and supplied	271
SIFORCO	052b/14	5 192	Inventory report approved	8 461
SIFORCO	054/14		Inventory report approved	
SIFORCO	053/14		Inventory report submitted, analyzed, additional information requested	
SODEFOR	036/11	–	Inventory report submitted, analyzed, additional information requested and supplied	1 121
SODEFOR	037/11	–	Inventory report submitted, analyzed, additional information requested and supplied	7 652
TOTAL		23 239		31 905

Table of details of the parameters selected and calculations made to determine the quotas assigned to each concession

Company	Concession (CCF number)	Useful surface area (ha)	Minimum exploitation diameter selected (cm)	Rate of recovery obtained	Gross volume available per hectare (m³/ha)	Estimated possible annual quota (m³)
CFT	046/11	98 281	80	50%	0.541	1 387
CFT	047/11	170 154	70	54%	0.096	445
FORABOLA	042/11	206 168	70	50%	0.448	2 513
SODEFOR	059/14	181 407	70	53%	0.684	3 376
SODEFOR	064/14	204 995	70	90%	0.243	1 352
SICOBOIS	033/11	50 923	70	53%	0.133	271
SIFORCO	052b/14	160 668	70	48%	0.787	3 438
SIFORCO	054/14	149 481	70	58%	0.431	1 754
SIFORCO	053/14	133 213	70	56%	0.902	3 269
SODEFOR	036/11	104 028	80	53%	0.453	1 121
SODEFOR	037/11	162 096	90	71%	1.735	7 652