

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

Regional reports

ASIA

1. This document has been prepared by the Regional Representatives of Asia (China and Kuwait) in consulted with parties in that region.
2. General information:
  - a) Representatives: Ms. ZHOU Zhihua: citeszzh@sina.com (China) and Mr. Edwino S. Fernando: edwino.fernando@gmail.com (Philippines).
  - b) Alternates: Ms. Shereefa Al-Salem: sh.alsalem@epa.org.kw (Kuwait) and Ms. Joeni Setijo Rahajoe: joenizr@indo.net.id (Indonesia).
  - c) Number of the Parties in the region: 34 (thirty four).
  - d) Number of the Parties responding to communication (Aug.1 - Aug. 20): 5 (China, Kuwait, Singapore, Thailand and the United Arabs Emirates).
3. This report covered the activities on CITES implementation, especially plants conservation, taken by parties in Asia between the 21st and 22nd meeting of the Plants Committee.
4. **Participation in CITES meeting/activities carried out (international & regional):**
  - a) Asian parties participated in the 65th Meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES in July 2014.
  - b) Asian parties participated in the 27 Animal Committee Meeting in Sept. 2015.
  - c) China, Kuwait, Singapore, Thailand and other Asian countries participated in the Asian Regional Workshop on the Management of Wild and Planted Agarwood taxa held from 19 to 23 January 2015 in Assam, India.
  - d) Asian parties participated in the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN-Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), Hanoi, Vietnam, 28-29 May 2014.

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- e) Asian parties participated in the 10th Meeting of the ASEAN-Experts Group on CITES (AEG-CITES) Hanoi, Vietnam, 30-31 May 2014.
- f) Asian parties participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> ASEAN – WEN Meeting, Banda Seri Begawan, Brunei 5-6 May 2015.
- g) Asian parties participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> AEG - CITES Meeting, Banda Seri Begawan, Brunei 7- 8 May 2015.
- h) Singapore, China etc. participated in the ICCWC Workshop to Combat the Smuggling of Timber from Madagascar to Asia, Seoul, Korea, 19-20 May 2014.
- i) Asian parties participated in the ASEAN-SOMTC Technical Workshop on Environmental Crime, Bangkok, Thailand, 23-24 April 2014.
- j) Representatives from Management Authority and Customs from East and Southeast Asian parties participated in the Regional Dialogue on Preventing Illegal Logging and Trading of Siamese Rosewood (*Dalbergia cochinchinensis*) from 18 to December 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand.
- k) United Arab Emirates participate in the 15th Conference on Biodiversity Conservation in the Arabian Peninsula organized Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPPA) and The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 03-04 February 2014.
- l) United Arab Emirates participate in The London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade 12-13 February 2014.
- m) United Arab Emirates participate in the 1st United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Program, 23-27 June 2014.
- n) United Arab Emirates participate in the Sub-regional Seminar for the Arabian Gulf Countries titled “Countering Illicit Trade – A legal Perspective”, 20-23 October 2014.
- o) United Arab Emirates participate in the Kasane conference on illegal wildlife trade in Botswana, March 2015.

## 5. Cooperation with Parties and others

### 5.1 China

The China-Germany Joint Training Course on Timber Identification was successfully convened from 24 to 26 September 2014 in Beijing, China. The event was co-hosted by the Management Authorities of both China and Germany and German Scientific Authority, and co-organized by the Research Institute of Wood Industry under the Chinese Academy of Forestry, and the Thünen Institute of Wood Research, Hamburg, in which some 60 officers from customs inspection, entry and exit quarantine authority, CITES Management Authority and relevant scientific institutions took part. Through systematic theory study and practical exercises, the risk awareness and identification capabilities of the trainees on endangered timber species have improved significantly.

Bilateral memorandums of cooperation for CITES implementation were signed with Indonesian and German counterparts in 2014 and 2015 respectively, making institutional arrangements for deepening mutual understanding, exchange and pragmatic cooperation.

Special negotiation on wildlife crime under the framework of Sino-US Strategic and Economic Dialogue was held in end June 2015. Officials from CITES Management Authorities of China and US had detail discussion and formulized the cooperation plan on this issue.

### 5.2 Kuwait

Kuwait participate as the coordinator of CITES Convention for the Arabic speaking countries, in the 14th meeting of Arab Team for The International Environmental Conventions of Biodiversity and Desertification, The Arab League – Cairo – Egypt September 2014. Kuwait submitted a report regarding the important activities that Kuwait contribute within the region.

Kuwait Participate in December 2014 in the meeting of the regional convention on wildlife conservation in their natural habitats in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which deal with regional matters including CITES convention.

### 5.3 Singapore

On 10 June 2014, AVA met with Mr George Phocas (Special Agent, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Attaché to US Embassy in Bangkok), Mr Rick Switzer (Regional Environment, Science, Technology and Health Officer, US Embassy Bangkok) and Mr Eric Seong (Economic Officer, US Embassy Singapore) to discuss the wildlife enforcement training and some fisheries issues. The wildlife enforcement training had been proposed as an area of cooperation under the US-Singapore FTA, with the objective to build capacity and enhance skills and knowledge of wildlife enforcement officers in Singapore and the region, to tackle the illegal trade.

### 5.4 Thailand

The Regional Dialogue on Preventing Illegal Logging and Trading of Siamese Rosewood Bangkok, Thailand 18-19 December 2014.

### 5.5 United Arab Emirates

Sub-regional Seminar for the Arabian Gulf Countries titled "Countering Illicit Trade – A legal Perspective", 20-23 October 2014.

Regional training workshop on Prevention of Wildlife Trafficking Regional Training Workshop hosted by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) in partnership with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), 17-21 November 2014.

The Ministry of Environment and Water in collaboration with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) participated in a training workshop for Oman authorities on combating illegal trade and implementation of CITES 15-20 February 2015.

## 6. Implementation of CITES, including conservation, legislation and law enforcement activities

### 6.1 China

China actively participated in Operation COBRA III, an international law enforcement operation conducted in May 2015 with the aim of combating wildlife crime and bringing the criminals involved to justice.

In mid June 2014, the Management Authority convened the National Workshop on CITES Implementation and Enforcement for the Import of Endangered Timber Species, in which customs representatives responsible for inspection and anti-smuggling from main ports for timber import were participated, aiming to further raise the risk awareness on the import regulation of endangered timber species, and to improve the capabilities on detecting illegal consignments of timber.

In the year 2014, a string of nationwide crackdown operations have been carried out by wildlife law enforcement authorities under the uniform organization of NICECG (National Inter-agency CITES Enforcement Coordination Group). Operation Guardian, conducted by Customs' anti-smuggling authorities, with a focus on fighting against endangered species smuggling. Operation Skynet 2014 and Operation Sword 2014, conducted by Forest Police authorities, with an emphasis on countering domestic wildlife crimes. In these special operations, such key links among illicit wildlife trafficking chain as international transfer, domestic sale and processing were precisely struck, with increased numbers of seizures, prosecutions and convictions made.

### 6.2 Kuwait

Kuwait issue new national legislation regarding CITES (Law 42/2014) regarding Environment Protection and revised the modified of the current CITES "Resolution No.93/2003 regarding Sale and Trading in Endangered Wild Species", to fulfil the requirement for classification the current legislation to grade I.

### 6.3 Singapore

In March 2014, AVA with the support of the Singapore Customs, interdicted a shipment of about 3000 tons of rosewood (*Dalbergia* species) logs from Madagascar which was intended to be re-exported to other countries in Asia by a Singapore company. Wood samples were sent to the US Forest Service to confirm the species as *Dalbergia* species of rosewood. The Malagasy rosewood populations are subject to a zero export quota which has been extended to January 2016. Investigations and the case trial are currently on-going.

### 6.4 Thailand

In the process to proclaim subordinate law on the rules, procedures and conditions for the registration of agarwood plantation.

Using the electronics for issuing CITES Permit.

### 6.5 United Arab Emirates:

The Ministry of Environment and Water is currently developing a new CITES e-permitting system.

The Ministry of Environment and Water issued Ministerial Decree No. 224 for year 2015 on protecting wild plants species.

## 7. Training/capacity building and public awareness activities

### 7.1 China

The Management Authority together with the Ministry of Commerce continued to organize training seminars on CITES implementation and enforcement for officials from development countries. In June and September 2014, two such seminars were held, specialized for officers from Southeast Asia and Africa separately.

There were nine e-commerce enterprises in China, including the internet business tycoons, Alibaba and Tencent, to launch an initiative "Please say NO to Illegal Wildlife and Their Products" to the whole society on 10 October 2014, committed not to offer services for illegal trade in wildlife.

Seventeen leading courier companies, including both leading national and multinational companies with outlets in China such as China Post, SF Express, EMS, DHL, FedEx and TNT, jointly launched an initiative "Zero-tolerance to Illegal Wildlife Trade" on World Wildlife Day 2015, pledging not to deliver illegal wildlife and their products.

China continued to send short messages, through China's mobile telecom operators, to all Chinese nationals travelling abroad upon arrival, reminding Chinese travelers of not purchasing and carrying back to China the illegal wildlife and their products.

The Management Authority, in collaboration with the Research Institute of Wood Industry under the Chinese Academy of Forestry, accomplished the compilation of Identification Manual on Endangered and Rare Timber Species Commonly Seen in Trade in China, in which nearly 30 timber species in China's import trade were included. The manual aims to improve the conservation awareness and enforcement capacities of CITES law enforcement authorities, with the focus on customs, exit & entry quarantine and forestry authorities.

### 7.2 Kuwait

Several campaigns in Kuwait Friday market for the public awareness.

### 7.3 Singapore

On 3 March 2014, AVA posted an infographic on AVA Facebook to highlight AVA's efforts in combating illegal wildlife trade including plants and timber and to raise awareness about wildlife.

Between 29 June and 3 July 2015, AVA attended the Operation PAWS II Regional Investigative Support Meeting at the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting, facilitated by Interpol and attended by several ASEAN and South Asian countries, serves as a platform for participating countries of Operation PAWS II (aimed at targeting the illegal trade of key species such as tigers, pangolins, ivory and rhino horn, reptiles and red sanders) to each provide an update to the outcomes, on-going investigations and priority targets arising from the Operation. Following the updates, the Meeting also mapped out a target development framework and investigative follow-up actions.

On 26 June 2015, AVA delivered a presentation on Wildlife Enforcement in Singapore to Biological Sciences students at the National University of Singapore (NUS). The talk included an overview of CITES, the role of AVA in the implementation and enforcement of CITES in Singapore, and also highlighted significant case studies on seizures of illegal wildlife. Students also had the opportunity to share with AVA on their views towards the sustainability of wildlife trade and wildlife smuggling.

In July 2015, AVA sent a circular to remind shipping and logistics companies, declaring agents and freight forwarders to be careful when accepting jobs for import/transit shipments which may contain illegal wildlife and timber and report any suspicious shipments to AVA for investigations. This formed part of AVA's public outreach programme to educate the relevant industry about CITES.

#### 7.4 Thailand

Our staff attended the training course on Identification of Rosewood which organize by Royal Forest Department, Thailand.

Organize the training course on Identification of Succulent plant in CITES listed at Bangkok, Thailand.

#### 7.5 United Arab Emirates

Regional training workshop on Prevention of Wildlife Trafficking Regional Training Workshop hosted by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) in partnership with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), 17-21 November 2014.

CITES Training workshops for customs authorities in the UAE with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), 17-21 May 2015.

CITES Training workshops for agriculture engineers and veterinary doctors at the Ministry of Environment and Water 8 February-30 May 2015.

### 8. Other CITES-related activities

#### 8.1 China

China has actively participated in the research and development of identification for CITES-listed timber species. In 2014, China's wood anatomy specialists respectively attended the Workshop on the Identification techniques of Dalbergia and Diospyros in Hamburg, Germany, organized by the Swiss Department of Environmental Sciences, and the Experts Panel Meeting on Criminal Identification for Wood in Vienna, Austria, organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

#### 8.2 Singapore

Review of the Appendices

Singapore gazetted the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act (Amendment of Schedule) Notification 2014 to reflect the inclusion of several new mammals, birds and timber species on CITES Appendix III by Nicaragua, Pakistan and the Russian Federation, which came into effect on 24 June 2014. In May and June 2014, AVA sent circulars to the traders and the timber association to inform on the new CITES listing of the timber species and the CITES permit requirements for import, export and re-export of these timber species from the listing countries.

Submission of 2013 CITES Annual Report

Singapore submitted its CITES annual report for 2013 to the CITES Secretariat on 30 September 2014. The timely submission of a CITES annual report is an obligation of a Party to the Convention. The report recorded the type of permits and certificates granted, quantities, species and types of animal and plant specimens traded for that year.

#### ASEAN-WEN Regional Stakeholders Law and Policy Workshop

On 8-10 December 2014, Singapore participated in the ASEAN-WEN Regional Stakeholders Law and Policy Workshop on Wildlife Crime, at the Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL) in the National University of Singapore. The workshop brought together representatives from the legal, prosecution and CITES authorities of all 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS), with the aim to provide a strategic approach towards an array of key non-specific wildlife national laws associated to prosecute wildlife criminals. The workshop comprised of presentations by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, ASEAN-WEN, US Department of Justice and the environmental division of the Supreme Court of Thailand, discussions on the adequacy of wildlife laws in AMS and AMS presentations on their wildlife enforcement efforts. There were also breakout groups to discuss and share on standards to improve criminal legal systems, how various organisations such as NGO, enforcement, prosecution and judiciary authorities can jointly curb the illegal wildlife, the challenges faced by AMS in their wildlife enforcement efforts and proposed solutions.

#### 8.4 Thailand

Carried out research on

- Non-detriment Findings of *Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.
- Non-detriment Findings of *Aerides* Lour.
- Non-detriment Findings of *Vandopsis lissochiloides* (Gaudich)
- Non-detriment Findings of *Grammatophyllum speciosum* Blume
- Non-detriment Findings of *Cibotium baromezt* (Linn.) J.Smith
- Non-detriment Findings of *Cycas siamensis* Miq.