

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 matters

Regional reports

NORTH AMERICA\*

**1. General information**

- 1.1. Regional representative: Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz (Mexico)
- 1.2. Alternate representative: Ms. Adrienne Sinclair (Canada)
- 1.3. Number of Parties in the region: 3
- 1.4. Period covered by this report: February 2014 to June 2015

**2. Directory of experts on CITES plant issues**

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**- Scientific Authority**

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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. Overview of the activities of the regional representatives**

3.1. Regional representative (Mr. Hesiquio Benitez, Mexico)

- Is chair of the Plants Committee Working Group on the Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Res. Conf. 16.5).
- Is co-chair of the joint Animals and Plants Committee Working Group on periodic review with Ms. Carolina Caceres (the Regional Representative for North America and the Chair of the Animals Committee).
- Is chair of the Standing Committee Working Group on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

3.2 Alternate representative (Ms. Adrienne Sinclair, Canada).

- Is co-chair with Switzerland on the Plants Committee Working Group on reporting on trade in artificially propagated plants.

## 4. Activities carried out regarding

### 4.1 Significant trade

#### CANADA

The Canadian Scientific Authority on behalf of Canada's Scientific Authorities Working Group (SAWG) and the United States' Scientific Authority participated in a face-to-face meeting of the Advisory Working Group on the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, which met in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, United States in April 2015 for further discussions of the working group and to prepare documents for review by the Animals Committee and Plants Committee.

#### MEXICO

On June 6th, 2014 the Secretariat informed the Mexican Management Authority (DGVS) that *Carnegiea gigantea* (*sahuaro*, by its common name in Spanish), a species native to Mexico and the United States of America, was selected by the "Review of Significant Trade in specimens in Appendix-II species" (Res. Conf. 12.8 [Rev. CoP13]) as a 'species of least concern' (based on the recommendations of [PC21 WG2 Doc. 1](#), see also [PC21 ExSum. Cons., par. 12.4](#)).

On August 4th, 2014 the Mexican Management Authority (DGVS) responded to the Secretariat through the Official Communication SGPA/DGVS/07190/14 informing on the following:

- a) In addition to being listed under CITES Appendix II, in the national legal framework, the species is listed under the Mexican Official Standard NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 as a threatened species (category 'A'). Hence, in compliance with the Mexican Wildlife Act (*Ley General de Vida Silvestre*, LGVS), its harvest and use is authorized only for specimens coming from *Wildlife Management Units* (UMAs, by its acronym in Spanish) with management plans previously approved by DGVS.
- b) In 2011, Mexico granted a permit to the UMA "Rancho Lobos" to harvest 28,000 kg of sahuaro, the validity period of the permit was from July 15<sup>th</sup> 2011 to January 15<sup>th</sup> 2012. As a result of that harvest authorization, only 3 CITES export permits have been issued, covering a total of 8,400 kg of sahuaro. Since, DGVS has not issued new harvest permits for the species.

Furthermore, Mexico stressed that all harvest requests of *C. gigantea* for exportation purposes are assessed in compliance with the provisions of Article IV of the Text of the Convention. Based on this information, Mexico requested to be eliminated from the Significant Trade Review.

#### USA

The U.S. Scientific Authority hosted the second meeting of the Advisory Working Group on the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, held at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Conservation Training Center, West Virginia, USA, in April 2015. Attended by 18 delegates, the meeting facilitated further discussions of the working group to consider and advise on the existing process for reviewing direct trade in specimens of Appendix II species from wild, ranched, unknown and blank (unreported) sources. Progress will be reported at PC22.

### 4.2 Review of the Appendices

#### MEXICO

- The Mexican Scientific Authority (CONABIO) is collaborating with the USA in completing the periodic review of *Sclerocactus* spp. Particularly, since mid-2015 CONABIO is financing and coordinating a study entitled "Assessment of the conservation status and taxonomy of Mexican species of *Sclerocactus* (Cactaceae) listed under CITES Appendices", under the leadership of PhD. Salvador Arias from the Institute of Biology at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. The findings of this study will be presented in the joint document on the periodic review of *Sclerocactus* spp. by the USA and Mexico.
- Additionally, in compliance with the agreements of the 21st meeting of the Plants Committee (reflected in document PC21 WG5 Doc. 1), on July 28th 2015 (through the Official Communication DGCII-334/2015), Mexico consulted Guatemala on its availability to undertake the periodic review of the plant *Balmea stormiae* (Appendix I), a plant endemic to Costa Rica,

Guatemala, México and Salvador. The outcome of this consultation will be included in the document on the “Overview of species under review” to be presented by the Secretariat at the present meeting.

#### USA

The U.S. Scientific Authority is completing periodic reviews of the genus *Sclerocactus* (Cactaceae) (in collaboration with Mexico); its range includes the United States and Mexico, and the native plant *Lewisia serrata* (Portulacaceae). Findings to date will be reported to PC22.

### 4.3 CITES-projects in the Region

#### CANADA / MEXICO / USA

A two year project submitted by the North American Region CITES Authorities on “Strengthening conservation and sustainable production of selected CITES Appendix II species in North America” has been approved by the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) for funding under its “2015-2016 Operational Plan”, with a total budget of \$300,000 USD: \$65,000 for the first phase; and \$235,000 for the second phase. The Project’s aim is to portray the trade of Appendix II listed species in the Region to promote their legal, and sustainable trade, through: (Phase 1) the identification and prioritization of highly traded Appendix II species, followed by a comprehensive trade analysis; and, (Phase 2) the establishment and implementation of action plans to strengthen and improve regional collaboration on the implementation of CITES provisions for the selected species. For this purpose, the region is currently focused on developing the Terms of Reference for the consultant who will develop the first expected outcome of the project: the List of Priority Appendix II species of common regional interest.

#### MEXICO

CONABIO is developing the project on the “Assessment of the conservation status and potential sustainable use of candelilla (*Euphorbia antisyphilitica*) in harvested areas”, aimed to determine the species current distribution, abundance and conservation status in areas subject to harvest in order to strengthen its sustainable management. The project, which is expected to begin on October 2015, will be implemented in Northern States of Mexico where the species is distributed, starting with the State of Coahuila.

### 4.4 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.

Canada has maintained the Standing NDF reports for two commonly traded Canadian plants: American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) and goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*). The reports were updated in February, 2014 to keep consistent with provincial regulations. The non-detrimental findings have not changed. Export of wild American ginseng is considered detrimental and produced American ginseng (for example, woods-grown and wild-simulated) will be reviewed on a case by case basis upon consideration of production methods and provincial requirements. Export of wild goldenseal is considered detrimental. The Standing NDF Reports are available on the Environment Canada website at: <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=2942DC30-1>.

#### MEXICO

In compliance with Article IV of the Text of the Convention, as well as Res. Conf. 16.7, during the period reported the Mexican Scientific Authority (CONABIO) has formulated a total of 278 non-detriment findings (NDFs) of Appendix II Plant species.

## USA

In August 2014, the U.S. Scientific Authority made a positive non-detriment finding for the export of wild American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) legally harvested during the 2014 harvest season in 19 USFWS-approved States and for one Indian Tribal lands. See <http://www.fws.gov/international/plants/american-ginseng.html>

### 4.5 Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

#### MEXICO

The Mexican Scientific Authority (CONABIO) has collaborated closely in implementing the mandate of the working group on GSPC. A draft report of the working group will be presented for consideration of this meeting.

#### USA

The United States continues to work with a variety of plant specialists, federal and non-federal, domestic and foreign, on efforts that contribute to the five objectives of the IUCN Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), such as the National Assessment of Non-Timber Forest Products and National Seed Strategy, below.

### 4.6 Others

#### CANADA

In Canada, goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) is listed as Threatened under the federal Species at Risk Act and it occurs in the province of Ontario. In July 2015, several goldenseal populations were surveyed to confirm presence, estimate population size, consider threats, and document habitat changes since the last survey in 1998. The work was done by Ms. Adrienne Sinclair as part of a project to write a new status report for the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Ms. Sinclair did the survey in 1998 as part of her studies of goldenseal ecology.

## 5 Capacity building activities

### 5.1 General activities

#### CANADA

The members of the North American Region communicate regularly as part of our ongoing commitment to meet and discuss regional CITES issues. During this reporting period, 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. The network of Canadian Scientific Authorities also met to discuss national implementation of the scientific aspects of CITES, and to provide advice and comments on Canada's international activities.

In 2014, Environment Canada added to its series of CITES compliance promotion brochures to inform international travelers about their legal obligations under Canada's wildlife trade law and how it may affect them. The newest brochures address "American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)" and "Animal and Plant Ingredients in Traditional Medicine". The brochures are available at <http://ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=E0EAA954-1>. Environment Canada also recently produced two new posters available online: "Travelling abroad or visiting Canada?" (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=85436735-1>) and "Travelling with your exotic pet?" (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=23BD6799-1>).

#### MEXICO

- The Mexican Scientific Authority (CONABIO) collaborated closely in the regional workshop on "Development of permit applications and technical phytosanitary reports for non-timber species" held from July 16th to 17th in Coahuila, Mexico; with the participation of more than 60 technicians and representatives from governmental agencies. Specifically, CONABIO focused on building the

capacities of the technicians in the development of the supporting technical studies for candelilla, (a prerequisite for the formulation of an NDF for this species) in order to strengthen the current measures to guarantee that the harvest of this species is done in a sustainable, legal and traceable manner.

- During the reporting period, the Mexican Enforcement Authority (PROFEPA) has actively participated in building capacities in terms of the accurate identification in trade of CITES listed species. Specifically, it has collaborated with the “Barcode of Life Project” coordinated by the Mexican Network of Barcode of Life (Mexbol), which is composed of several institutions of higher education and research. Specifically, PROFEPA has collaborated by providing samples of timber specimens of *Dalbergia*, with the goal of contributing to the DNA library sequence of threatened species subject to international trade. The library is expected to serve as a reference tool to aid the efficient identification of CITES listed specimens.

#### USA

- **Wild American ginseng Information for Dealers and Exporters:** In 2014, the USFWS developed and published this brochure to promote good stewardship harvest practices and observance of laws and regulations for the harvest and export of wild American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*). Brochures were distributed to American ginseng dealers and exporters in the United States, and can be viewed or downloaded at <http://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/factsheet-american-ginseng-harvesters-dealers-exporters.pdf>
- **National Assessment of Non-Timber Forest Products (September 2014):** The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) sponsored this stakeholders meeting to inform policy options and identify information gaps that can limit effective decision making in the sustainable harvest and management of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). A segment on CITES and NTFPs was presented by a representative of the U.S. Scientific Authority, as part of in-depth discussions of the major issues affecting NTFPs (e.g., ecology, culture, economics, and regulations), including. NTFPs include the more than 200 medicinal plants are listed in the CITES Appendices, along with numerous plant species used for food, wax, fragrances, and horticulture. The meeting represented one of the first national, “all-lands” meetings to bring together multiple disciplines from federal and non-federal entities to focus exclusively on NTFPs, and will result in the publication of a comprehensive national assessment of NTFPs and impacts from climatic variability and change (anticipated publication early 2016).
- **USFWS participates in Wood Summit. A representative of the U.S. Management Authority** participated in the Fifth Bi-Annual Wood Summit on May 7, 2015, hosted by the C. F. Martin & Co., Inc. at the company’s headquarters in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. Topics on the agenda ranged from CITES process and Lacey Act Due Care to DNA Chain of Custody tracking and alternative material sourcing.
- **Capacity building activities outside the North American Region:** In the **ANNEX** to this document, the USA includes details on capacity building activities in a) the Central and South American and the Caribbean Region; b) the Africa Region; and, c) Asia.

#### 5.2 Contact with specialists and/or NGOs

#### USA

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 International Wood Products Association, the International Fragrance Association, and the twelve U.S. federal agencies and more than 300 non-federal cooperators of the U.S. Plant Conservation Alliance, including State Natural Heritage Programs, NatureServe, the Institute for Applied Ecology, and Botanic Gardens Conservation International U.S.

### 5.3 Other

#### USA

The U.S. Scientific Authority serves as a liaison to the American Ginseng Advisory Panel, which was formed by the American Herbal Products Association Foundation for Education and Research on Botanicals (the AHPA-ERB Foundation) in 2014. The Advisory Panel was formed to provide expertise on the development and maintenance of regional and national germplasm collections of American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*), that will preserve the genetic diversity of this important North American medicinal plant. American ginseng is listed in CITES Appendix II.

The USFWS hosted a 7-day visit from the Chief of the Scientific Authority for Flora of Cameroon in May 2015, to learn about U.S. strategies for managing non-timber forest products, developing networks of plant species and natural resource experts, and conducting non-detriment findings. Activities included visits to the USFS and with private landowners managing American ginseng and other non-timber forest products.

## 6. Difficulties of implementation encountered in your country

### 6.1 Technical issues

#### CANADA

As of August 2015, Canada no longer uses phytosanitary certificates as certificates of artificial propagation. Standard CITES export and re-export documents are being used, with source code A as appropriate.

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. As Canada is unable to meet these short timelines for making the necessary regulatory changes, a holding reservation on decisions taken at the 16th meeting of the CoP was placed to allow time for implementation of regulatory changes. In April 2015, the CoP16 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 temporary reservation on the CoP16 decisions was lifted in June 2015. 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 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to CITES.

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

#### CANADA

The Canadian Forest Service, CITES Scientific Authority continues to participate in inter-agency discussions aimed at raising the profile and comprehension of the global impacts of illegal logging, and at developing additional tools, strategic assessments and regulatory responses to better characterize illegal logging for CITES and non-CITES listed timber species.

#### MEXICO

- From June 11 to 12 of 2015, CONABIO hosted a workshop of experts to assess the conservation status of the timber species of *Dalbergia* in Mexico, under the light of the criteria established by the national legislation (i.e. the Mexican Official Standard NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010). Mexico will present the preliminary findings and recommendations of said workshop in a working document for consideration of the present meeting; these are aimed to improve the implementation of *Dalbergia* species currently listed in Appendix II.
- On August 11<sup>th</sup> a "Regional workshop on the implementation of CITES for timber species", was held in Quintana Roo (Campeche), with the participation of more than 75 representatives from the governmental sector, producers, and forestry technicians. Its purpose was to build capacities amongst relevant stakeholders regarding the implementation of CITES listings and the national legal framework

relevant to the conservation, management and sustainable use of timber species, with an emphasis in bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). The participation of the Mexican CITES Authorities focused on building capacities amongst producers and forestry technicians regarding the issuance of CITES exportation permits, and the information needed for formulating NDFs.

#### USA

- **Amendments to the 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 continued its phased-in approach to the plant import declaration requirement and provided additional national and international outreach. On 6 February 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) published a notice in the *Federal Register* informing the public of the next phase of plant commodities to be covered under the declaration requirement and requesting their comments.
- **U.S. efforts related to Peruvian mahogany:** The U.S. Management Authority continued to work closely with Peru regarding implementation of the Appendix-II listing of bigleaf mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*). We closely monitored the volumes of U.S. bigleaf mahogany imports from Peru during 2014 and 2015, and provided Peru with periodic reports on those imports, which, as of the time that this report was compiled, totaled 72 cubic meters in 2014 and 230 cubic meters so far in 2015. The United States provides this information to Peru on a regular basis to assist Peru in monitoring its exports and managing its export quota.
- **CITES Plant Rescue Center (PRC) Program:** In 1978, the U.S. Management Authority established the CITES PRC Program, in cooperation with USDA-APHIS, to care for live 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 2014, APHIS confiscated 28 shipments of live plant material that were in violation of CITES. These shipments contained a total of 3,985 plants and 16 cactus skeletons. The 26 shipments assigned to PRCs contained 2,693 cacti, 1,113 euphorbias, 112 orchids, 50 podophyllums, 11 succulents, 3 tillandsias, and 2 cycads, 2,343 aloes, 27 pitcher plants, and 8 tree ferns, plus 14 cactus skeletons.
- **USFWS participates in European Regional CITES Plants Meeting:** A representative of the U.S. Management Authority participated in the IX European Regional CITES Plants Meeting, held in Wageningen, the Netherlands, in November 2014. The U.S. representative participated in discussions on plant issues of interest to the European region and gave presentations on the progress of work in the Standing Committee Working Group on Annotations and initiatives and challenges in the United States related to implementation of CITES tree species listings.
- **20th North American Trilateral Meeting (April 2015):** The annual Trilateral meeting between Canada, Mexico and the United States, was hosted by the United States and included a CITES Table to discuss CITES implementation issues, preparation for CITES technical committee meetings, preparations for the CoP17; and other CITES issues of interest to the North America region.

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

#### CANADA

- Ms. Carolina Caceres, the Regional Representative for North America and Chair of the Animals Committee, is co-chairing the Advisory Working Group on the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade with the Plants Committee's Nomenclature Specialist, Mr. Noel McGough. Canada is a member of the Standing Committee Working Groups on Annotations, Electronic Permitting, Information Technologies and Electronic Systems, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; the AC/PC Working group on Extinct or Possibly Extinct Species; and the Plants Committee Working Groups on Reporting on Trade in Artificially Propagated Plants and on Plantations and Artificial Propagation of Trees and Agarwood (Glossary).

## USA

- **Ongoing participation in PC and PC/AC Intersessional Working Groups:** In addition to chairing the interim working group on annotations, as noted below, the United States continues its work under the Periodic Review and the Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade working groups, and is also participating in the capacity building, the extinct or possibly extinct species, and the review of identification material joint intersessional working groups.
- **Working group on development and application of annotations:** The United States is the Chair of this Standing Committee working group, which is directed to explore the shared understanding among Parties of annotations and to explore the adoption of appropriate and reasonable procedures for crafting plant annotations. This working group is to accomplish its tasks in close coordination with the Plants Committee. We are currently coordinating with the members of the working group to prepare a discussion document for submission to the 66<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee, and intend to provide a status report at PC22.

## 9. Other issues

### MEXICO

- **Ponytail palm (*Beaucarnea recurvata*):** As a result of the findings of a study financed by CONABIO and developed by TRAFFIC-North America in 2013, the Ponytail palm (*Beaucarnea recurvata*), a plant endemic to the Mexican states of Veracruz and Oaxaca, was identified as a species that could meet the inclusion criteria under CITES Appendices. In order to assess the species conservation status, uses and threats from September 25 to 26, 2014 CONABIO hosted a workshop of experts on the species, with nearly 30 participants from the governmental, academic and civil society. The main findings and recommendations of the workshop showed that the species might warrant inclusion under Appendix II (in compliance with Art. II, par. 2a of the Text of the Convention); and as a result, Mexico will present for consideration of the present meeting a draft amendment proposal for the inclusion of *B. recurvata* under Ap. II. Furthermore, since April 2015, CONABIO is financing a project on the “Assessment of the ponytail palm’s (*B. recurvata*) value chain, and status of its wild populations”, developed by the National Institute of Ecology; the preliminary findings of this project are expected in early 2016.
- **Inspection activities by the Mexican Enforcement Authority (PROFEPA):**

During the reporting period, PROFEPA carried out a total of 11,151 verifications of wildlife specimens (including wild specimens of flora and timber species listed in CITES Appendices), of which 2,240 were for exports, and the remaining 8,811 corresponded to imports. Specifically:

  - a) Between August and September 2014, PROFEPA confiscated 297 pieces of peyote (*Lophophora* spp.) and echeverias (*Echeveria* spp.) destined to Asia and Europe;
  - b) Through a special forestry operation on the combat of large scale illegal logging of tropical timber species, including *Swartzia cubensis*, *Swietenia macrophylla*, *Cedrela odorata* and *Dalbergia granadillo*, a total of 855 m<sup>3</sup> of raw timber material were confiscated.
  - c) In 2015, PROFEPA confiscated in the Port of Manzanillo (Colima) two shipments of *Dalbergia granadillo*, which summed a total of 40.750 m<sup>3</sup> of wood.

### USA

- **National Seed Strategy:** Through the U.S. Plant Conservation Alliance, the U.S. Scientific Authority is participating in the development of a U.S. national seed strategy to improve coordination between federal and non-federal land managers to conserve, restore, and rehabilitate native landscapes, ecosystems, and plant communities that are increasingly impacted by fire, development, encroachment from invasive species, or climate change. This is providing opportunities to coordinate with the variety of botanical experts (including plant geneticists, rare plant specialists, and restoration ecologists) to explore prospects for germplasm conservation and restoration for U.S. native CITES-listed plant species. The National Seed Strategy for Rehabilitation and Restoration 2015-2020 is near completion and is expected to be publicly released soon. For an overview, see: <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/prog/more/CPNPP/0/seedstrategy.html>

- **Pollinator Health Strategy:** In May 2015, the United States released a comprehensive pollinator health strategy to outline needs and priority actions to better understand pollinator losses and improve pollinator health. Several animal species involved in pollination or seed dispersal, including bats, beetles, butterflies, hummingbirds, marsupials, primates, rodents, and treeshrews are regulated under CITES. These animals are variously traded for consumption, for the pet trade, for collectors, among other trade activities. The Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators and accompanying Research Action Plan, written by an interagency task force at the direction of U.S. President Obama, can be accessed at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/05/19/announcing-new-steps-promote-pollinator-health>

## USA's capacity building activities outside the North American Region

### a) Capacity building in Central and South American and the Caribbean Region

The U.S. Department of the Interior-International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP) and the USFWS CITES Authorities, with funding from the U.S. Department of State (DOS), worked with the United Nations' Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to develop and publish an Analysis of CITES trade: Central America and the Dominican Republic (published in February 2014), in English and Spanish. The report was presented by DOI-ITAP and UNEP-WCMC to the CITES officials of Central America and the Dominican Republic for their review and discussion at a workshop held in Guatemala City in 2014, along with training on use of CITES databases. The report is at:

- English: <http://citescentroamerica.unep-wcmc.org/wordpress/english/>
- Spanish: <http://citescentroamerica.unep-wcmc.org/wordpress/spanish/>

Representatives of the U.S. Scientific and Management Authorities participated in a Capacity Exchange Workshop between Guatemala and the United States, hosted by the Guatemalan CITES Scientific Authority (3-7 November 2014), for CITES-listed timber species. The purpose of the workshop was to improve the effective implementation of CITES for Guatemalan timber species.

Also in Guatemala, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supported the DOI on multi-sectoral and cross-border cooperation, governance, judicial processes and economic incentives within the Maya Biosphere Reserve. In particular, DOI collaborated with the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Program to combat illegal logging along the Guatemala-Belize border. As a result of this partnership, seizures of illegally-logged timber (particularly rosewood, *Dalbergia* spp.) greatly increased with the aid of patrols and mobile control posts. DOI also supported an outreach campaign to raise awareness of the human and environmental cost of illegal logging and trade.

In Peru, a standardized protocol for collection and field storage of cambium and leaf samples, based on a Missouri Botanical Garden protocol, was informally approved by the Peruvian Amazon Research Institute (IIAP), La Molina University, and the Peruvian Ministry of Environment (MINAM) in July 2014; 43 people were trained in proper collection and field storage/preservation of cambium. In May 2015, the new Peruvian National Forest and Wildlife Service (SERFOR), convened a meeting among the USFS, MINAM, IIAP, and National Agrarian Research Institute (INIA) to improve coordination and standardization among three *Cedrela* studies being conducted with support from the U.S. Government, von Thunen, and Helveta. A working group was formed, and SERFOR and IIAP are leading the establishment of an official, standard protocol for all current and future *Cedrela* studies as well as another sampling training workshop to ensure collectors for all three projects are applying the standard protocol. Samples from 43 trees in 5 regions (Loreto, San Martin, Junin, Madre de Dios, Pasco) have been collected thus far. SERFOR has committed to continue to collect samples in all of their CITES inspections. This CITES-related work is funded by the DOS and USAID and implemented by the USFS.

USAID assisted Peru's MINAM, the country's scientific authority for CITES, in developing technical guidelines for silviculture plans involving endangered tree species, such as maintaining an adequate number of tree species on site to ensure natural regeneration. USAID also helped MINAM conduct various inventories of endangered species to improve conservation and management decisions, including an analysis of the state of orchids (Orchidaceae family) included in the CITES Appendices. Separately, USAID supported implementation of the Forest Management Plan for the Tahuamanu Tree Seedling Conservation Concession, which exists to ensure *in situ* germplasm conservation of two endangered tree species, mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and Spanish cedar (*Cedrela odorata*).

USAID also supports the efforts of Peruvian and international partners to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation, while promoting sustainable forest management, in line with the requirements of the U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Act's Forest Sector Governance Annex. In 2014, USAID supported the transition of Peru's Forest and Wildlife Directorate to SERFOR, housed under the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. USAID and its partners also helped draft regulations for the Forestry and Wildlife Law (passed in 2011), which were made available for review by indigenous communities. Complementary

activities helped two major national confederations of Amazon indigenous people learn how to participate in implementing the new law.

Technological solutions to enforcing regulations are a cornerstone of USAID support to Peru. In partnership with the USFS, we made great progress in the development of the Control Module for the National Forest and Wildlife Information System (SNIFF-MC), a state-of-the-art system that uses cloud-based technology to track timber from forest concession to port. The prototype of this system was successfully developed into a stand-alone chain of custody system and delivered to SERFOR in July 2014. The system is being piloted in two of Peru's major timber corridors while the full SNIFF-MC is being developed. As the SNIFF is implemented in the major logging corridors, forest authorities will be able to identify sources of illegal logging and take measures to address them. Information exchanges between USFS and SERFOR specialists, including workshops in Lima and a study tour on management of national information systems to the USFS Albuquerque Service Center Training, further prepared SERFOR to apply SNIFF.

Globally, USAID's Forest Legality Alliance (FLA) aims to stop illegal logging and associated trade by promoting compliance with a recent amendment to the U.S. Lacey Act, which requires that timber for wood and wood products sold in the United States be legally harvested in the countries of origin. In 2014, FLA supported work by the Global Forest and Trade Network to complete a legality framework for Panama. In collaboration with the European Forestry Institute, FLA partner "Reforestamos Mexico" catalyzed cooperation among government agencies in Mexico, Brazil and Colombia to combat illegal logging and associated trade, and contributed to the formation of new legality indicators in Mexico's national forest policy. Several new country profiles were uploaded to the website's "risk tool," and FLA's Sustainable Wood and Paper-based Products procurement guide was updated.

#### **b) Capacity building in Africa Region**

To improve the effective implementation of CITES, the United States provides assistance to other CITES Parties through capacity building. The African French-speaking countries are a U.S. priority area for these efforts given their high biodiversity and volume of traded wildlife. At the request of both Gabon and Cameroon, representatives of the U.S. CITES Authorities conducted two CITES Needs Assessments—one in Gabon (June 2014) and the other in Cameroon (December 2014)—to provide them with recommendations to improve CITES implementation in the respective countries.

In Madagascar, USAID partners completed a preliminary report on rosewood and ebony trade, used to inform a September 2014 Non-Detriment Finding workshop to assess the current state of knowledge on rosewood (*Dalbergia* spp.) and ebony (*Diospyros* spp.) and to identify information gaps and priority actions to make sure that the legal export of these species will not adversely affect the wild populations protected under CITES Appendix II. More information is at <http://www.traffic.org/home/2014/9/26/forest-stakeholders-meet-to-examine-madagascar-timber.html>

Faced with the threat of trade sanctions, the Government of Mozambique worked with USAID to prepare new regulations pertaining to harvest and trade of wild animals and plants, and submit them for public consultation. The CITES Secretariat recommended a trade suspension for Mozambique in 2014 due to significant trade in three genus of cycads and three species of vertebrates, if the country failed to bring its national regulations and enforcement in line with CITES requirements.

#### **c) Capacity building in Asia**

From May 25 to 29, 2015, U.S. Forest Service, through USAID funding, participated in and assisted Freeland Foundation in implementing a Special Investigations Group training on Rosewood at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) Center in Bangkok, Thailand, part of USAID's Asia's Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (ARREST) program. The USFS also coordinated the participation of a representative of the U.S. Department of Justice, a retired agent of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, and a wood ID expert from the Ministry of Forests in Brazil. The Rosewood Special Investigations Group was attended by twenty-five law enforcement investigators including customs, police, forestry officers and prosecutors. Investigators, scientists and anti-money laundering specialists from World Customs Organization, Thailand, Lao PDR, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Cambodia, Malaysia and the U.S. shared information about criminal groups and the most successful investigation methods. The USAID-supported training, implemented on the ground by Freeland Foundation, helped increase the capacity of the officers to share best practices across continents in order to target illicit networks engaged in this highly profitable organized crime. The training focused on the illegal international trade in CITES protected rosewood by presenting the group with cutting-edge investigation techniques to detect ongoing rosewood trafficking between source, transit and consumer countries.