

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



Twenty-third meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 22 and 24-27 July 2017

Species-specific matters

REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP
ON CITES-LISTED TREE SPECIES

1. This document has been submitted by Guatemala, as host of the International workshop on CITES-listed tree species held in Antigua, Guatemala,* from 7 – 9 February 2017.

Purpose of the Workshop

2. The purpose of the workshop was to build capacities to strengthen CITES implementation for listed tree species, and to contribute to the implementation of the Decisions and Resolutions on tree species adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The main species of interest at this workshop were species of the genera *Dalbergia*, *Pterocarpus*, *Guibourtia*, *Adansonia*, *Bulnesia*, *Aquilaria* and *Gyrinops*, taxa that were considered in the working documents and proposals to amend or include species in the CITES Appendices at CoP17 (24 September – 4 October, Johannesburg, South Africa).

Workshop objectives

3. The objectives were defined as follows: i) to highlight the importance of CITES for regulating international trade in products of CITES-listed tree species; ii) to strengthen CITES implementation within a framework of international cooperation, thereby ensuring that the trade in products of tree species is legal, sustainable, and traceable; and iii) to consider the Resolutions, Decisions, and new listings or amendments adopted at CoP17.

Participants

4. The following countries were invited to participate in the workshop: Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union (EU), Gabon, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Senegal, Spain, Thailand, United States of America, and Viet Nam. Some international non-governmental organizations were also invited to attend.
5. Participants in the workshop: Argentina, Canada, Gabon, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, Thailand, United States of America, the CITES Secretariat through its Scientific Support Officer (Flora), and a representative of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO). A representative from Species Survival Network (SSN) and from the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) also participated in the workshop.

* 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.

Acknowledgements

6. The participants thanked Guatemala, particularly the National Council for Protected Areas (CITES Management Authority in Guatemala) and the Foundation Naturaleza para la Vida (Nature for Life), for organizing the event, and also the CITES and ITTO Secretariats for their logistic support, with special thanks to the European Union for the financial support that made the workshop possible.

Workshop conclusions and recommendations

After the relevant presentations, and discussions in working groups and plenary sessions, the following conclusions and recommendations were adopted:

7. Generally speaking, the results of CITES' work have not been shared within countries; accordingly, action should be taken to ensure better communication among the actors involved in CITES implementation (Scientific Authorities, Management Authorities, and researchers, among others).
8. The Conference of the Parties to CITES has made recommendations on the development of non-detriment findings (NDFs), which can be found in Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17). There are also recognized initiatives by Parties to contribute national experiences, through the development of manuals, guides, and other tools, that can foster effective implementation of NDFs.
9. It is important to continue the efforts towards collaboration between countries of origin and importing countries in order to improve controls and coordination, and thus contribute to effective CITES implementation.
10. It is essential to work with countries to review policies and procedures that encourage and enable actors in the production/export chain to work within a legal framework. One of the main disincentives to legality is that the procedures for obtaining administrative documents, licenses, certificates, and permits are bureaucratic and difficult to follow. CITES should act at the Party level to promote and support any such processes to revise and update procedures.
11. With regard to establishing an expert panel to examine proposals to amend the Appendices, it is considered that this new structure might complicate the existing relationship between CITES and organizations such as ITTO, FAO, and IUCN.
12. Approximately USD 9 million will be available for funding Phase III projects under the CITES–ITTO programme, focusing chiefly on thematic areas such as sustainable management and conservation of CITES-listed tree species, tools for identification of CITES-listed tree species and timber products, support for government policies relating to CITES compliance, the generation of benefits for communities and poverty reduction, and other general themes that will contribute to better formulation of NDFs and strengthen effective CITES implementation. Project managers are committed to transparency and shall provide support through an efficient process, using criteria and controls that ensure compliance with all guidelines established for reviewing project proposals.
13. It is important to use different methodologies and research techniques for identification, e.g., taxonomy, DNA, histology, spectrophotometry, and reference collections. It is necessary to have scientific experts in different methods and techniques working together and sharing information in order to develop more robust tools.
14. In compliance with the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity, efforts should continue to establish formal procedures for the exchange of timber samples for identification based on DNA extraction and analysis.
15. It is important to continue work on the identification of commercial products (existing and potential products) through constant analysis of countries' CITES trade data (exports versus imports) and Customs data.
16. To ensure efficient non-detriment findings (NDFs), it is necessary to continue providing guidance and technical assistance for data collection on: trade of CITES-listed species, national inventories, management plans, yield tables, monitoring systems, harvesting regimes, conversion factors, etc.

17. It is necessary to work continuously to build and strengthen capacity, targeting officers at the institutions responsible for CITES implementation in the exporting and importing countries.
18. It is important to establish verification tools, controls, and procedures that strengthen the chain of custody and the traceability of CITES-listed timber products in order to prevent fraud.
19. It is necessary to continue efforts to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of applying the annotations in the case of tree species, particularly the new annotations adopted at CoP17.
20. Where necessary, the Parties should update their national legislation, in line with the Decisions and Resolutions adopted at CoP17, in order to ensure effective CITES implementation.
21. All stakeholders in CITES implementation should be involved in the development of activities that contribute to enhancing commitment, education, and awareness.
22. Decisions 17.166 – 17.169: Identification (timber)
 - a) Formal mechanisms should be established for the collection, description, and exchange of timber samples for the purposes of identification.
 - b) The CITES Secretariat shall establish the necessary coordination mechanisms with the Secretariat of the CBD in order to set formal guidelines, within the framework of the Nagoya Protocol, for the exchange of samples for the purpose of DNA extraction for identification of species.
 - c) It is necessary to have reference collections at a regional level, given that it may prove difficult to establish such collections at a national level due to the lack of available funding and the current capacity of laboratories for timber identification.
 - d) The CITES Secretariat should send a Notification to the Parties, prior to the next meeting of the Plants Committee, requesting information on national timber reference collections in order to have a more complete vision of available databases.
23. Decision 17.203: Species-specific issues
 - a) Management of existing stockpiles (pre-convention/seizures) is necessary in exporting and importing countries, and priority should be given to establishing: inventories, records, guidelines for the disposal of timber (where necessary), and relevant evaluation of the impact of any measures adopted. The Parties shall continue to develop management plans with the support of other countries, e.g., as in the case of Madagascar, who has requested assistance to fight the illegal trade in *Diospyros spp.*, and *Dalbergia spp.*
24. Decision 16.58 (Rev. CoP17): Physical inspection of timber shipments
 - a) The Parties are encouraged to consider the possibility of having specialized CITES personnel in their Customs areas.
 - b) The CITES Secretariat shall send a Notification to the Parties requesting information on the shipment verification protocols implemented in their country for timber exports.
 - c) The Parties shall consider the possibility of acquiring technology (such as X-ray scanners) to help ensure that trade is controlled effectively at ports. It is also proposed that the CITES Secretariat contact the World Customs Organization to request information on the procedures and programmes that are linked to the container inspection systems.
 - d) Guatemala is requested to share its experience with the shipment verification protocol that was developed in the framework of CITES.
25. Resolution Conf. 17.1: World Wildlife Day
 - a) It is proposed that, in the context of this celebration, Parties highlight the importance of trees for wildlife in general. The possibility of recommending a theme related to the trade in tree species for a future World Wildlife Day was discussed.

- b) Within the framework of World Wildlife Day, it is proposed that the Secretariat contact the United Nations Forum on Forests or a similarly relevant body to raise awareness about the trade in tree species, and the illegal logging associated with such trade.
26. Resolution Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP15): Implementation of the Convention for timber species
- a) The Plants Committee is urged to revise the text of the Resolution, and to develop more formal guidelines for communication between the Secretariat and international organizations such as FAO, IUCN, and ITTO, in order to obtain feedback on any proposals to amend the CITES Appendices, and to submit a draft revision of the Resolution for adoption at CoP18.
27. Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP17): Use of annotations in Appendices I and II
- a) It is recommended that the Standing Committee Working group on annotations consider analyzing the annotations for flora and fauna separately, in view of the different challenges in each case.
28. Resolution Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17): Frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments
- a) The Parties are recommended to consider the application of the annotation for *Dalbergia spp.* in the context of Resolution Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17), noting that it was generally agreed that the listing was not intended to prevent non-commercial movements of musical instruments. It is likewise recommended that the Parties consider the guidelines for proposing annotations, and that the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee revise the guidelines and current procedures for analyzing the annotations prior to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, and decide whether it would be appropriate to draw up a proposal to amend Annotation #15 for submission at CoP18.

Recommendation to the Plants Committee

29. To take note of and consider the conclusions and recommendations of the experts who took part in the International workshop on CITES-listed tree species.