

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

Regional matters

Regional reports

OCEANIA

1. This document has been submitted by the regional representative for Oceania (Dr Greg Leach, Australia)\*.

General Information

2. a) Representative: Greg Leach (Australia)  
b) Alternate: Marika Tuiwawa (Fiji)  
c) Number of Parties in the region: nine (Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu). This increase follows Tonga becoming the 183<sup>rd</sup> Party to join CITES on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The following 8 countries in Oceania are not Parties to the Convention: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tokelau, and Tuvalu.
3. Directory

The Australian Management Authority continues to maintain a regional directory of contacts and experts in the region. A revised version is being prepared following the regional workshop held in June 2017 and will be provided to the Secretariat for posting on the CITES web site.

Communication with Parties in the region since PC 22(Tbilisi, Georgia 19-23 October 2015)

4. A report of PC22 highlighting those issues of relevance to Oceania was distributed to CITES contacts in the region. Items highlighted included:
  - a) Annotations, in particular for timber listings. Many Oceania Parties continue to seek clarity on implementation of various annotations.
  - b) Guidance on making NDF's for perennial plants. The opportunity to seek a workshop in Oceania on the 9 steps process developed by Germany and TRAFFIC was flagged to the region. Noted was the expansion of this guidance with examples of marine animals which would be of interest to the region.

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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.*

- c) Review of Significant Trade. The region was encouraged to support the extensive work done to revise the process of Significant Trade Review. In terms of current reviews, there are no species of concern for Oceania in these stages of species reviews.
- d) Timber Identification. The need for improved reference collections and forensic capabilities for timber identification will be a regional capacity issue and a suggestion was made to investigate a shared resource within the Oceania region. The region is likely to need to produce vouchered sandalwood samples as there may be confusion with identification of East African sandalwood in trade.
- e) East African Sandalwood. The region needs to monitor developments in East Africa as it may impact trade from the Oceania region with possible confusion between *Santalum* and the African *Osyris*. There is possibly an emerging issue for Oceania in that non-CITES listed *Santalum* species in the Oceania region could be caught up in look-alike issues with the CITES listed African Sandalwood.
- f) Agarwood. The proposed Decisions relating to compiling data and information, a further workshop, cooperation between sectors, and supporting artificial propagation of Agarwood were not considered to be non-controversial for the region.
- g) Production systems of tree species, plantations and definitions of artificial propagation. Oceania Parties with concerns about having their particular tree production systems recognised as artificial propagation were encouraged to respond to the questionnaire.
- h) Assessment of the implementation of Res Conf. 16.10. PNG is a range state for Agarwood in Oceania. Parties made aware of the issue between the Glossary endorsed by PC and whether this addresses the requirement for an identification manual. Difficulties with the complex annotation and the mix of products that are controlled was noted.
- i) Implementation of the Convention for *Dalbergia* spp. The impact of implementing a full generic listing was highlighted to Oceania Parties. Such a listing could have implications across Oceania and it might require getting a better understanding of *Dalbergia* harvest across the region – particularly international export from forestry activities in PNG and the Solomon Islands.
- j) Periodic Review. There are no species of concern to Oceania in the Periodic Review process.
- k) Annotation for Appendix-II orchids to exempt finished products package and ready for retail trade. Oceania and Australia is on the SC WG. The region was advised of the forthcoming Notification which will be issued to seek participants in this PC WG. There does not appear to be an issue with orchids being harvested for the medicinal/nutraceutical market in Oceania.
- l) Timber resolution. The plethora of issues around the Timber Resolution (Res. Conf. 10.13 Rev CoP15) was raised under a number of agenda items. The Oceania region will have views on issues such as plantation definitions and monospecific versus mixed species plantations. The region was advised of the proposal to undertake work on this Resolution.

#### Relevant CITES implementation issues in the region

5. The major factors impacting on CITES implementation are capacity and communication. There is a small population size in relation to area administered, and for island states the government departments are small. Travel in the region is expensive and prohibitive for regular meetings or workshops. Electronic communication is often unreliable. Some Parties have very low levels of trade in CITES species and so attending to CITES requests for information is a low priority. This has meant the regional meetings at the CoP are an invaluable opportunity for Parties in the region to meet face to face and full advantage of this was taken at CoP17 with daily meetings.
6. In a region dominated by the marine environment and with numerous Small Island Developing States, the marine CITES listings attract a significant amount of attention. Conversely, plant issues have received very little attention in this period and have not been a specific component of any regional workshops.
7. Australia has reported facing a number of challenges in implementing the listing of rosewood timber species, in particular identification of timber species in trade, and the interpretation of Annotation #15 to the genus-wide listing of *Dalbergia*.

8. Fiji now has a revised and amended Endangered and Protected Species (EPS) Act 2002, called the EPS Bill of 2016.
9. The alternate representative for Oceania on the Plants Committee has initiated meetings with Forestry staff in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu to consider tree species that may be threatened by trade from the region. These preliminary discussions have highlighted some species of concern, notably in the genera *Santalum*, *Diospyros*, *Agathis*, *Dacrydium* and *Canarium*. The species *Cordia subcordata* and *Gmelina moluccana* have also been discussed.

#### Capacity-building activities and awareness campaigns

10. Oceania was well represented at CoP17 and this allowed the regional meetings at the CoP to commence discussions to seek funding and develop a program for an Oceania Regional workshop.
11. New Zealand, with Fiji, hosted the regional workshop of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Fiji, from 29 May 2017 to 2 June 2017. It was held at DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel, Sonaisali Island, Fiji. The workshop was hosted by New Zealand as the new Oceania regional representative to the CITES Standing Committee. The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade funded the workshop. The workshop aimed to build capacity in the implementation of CITES and in particular, to ensure that regional efforts to combat wildlife trafficking are cooperative and effective.
12. Parties, non-Parties and various organisations were invited. Attendees were from Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, along with delegates from the USA, CITES Secretariat, Oceania Customs Organisation, SPREP and PEW Charitable Trusts.
13. The meeting opened with a welcome including a traditional ceremony and welcoming remarks by John E. Scanlon, Secretary-General CITES. This was followed by a traditional handing over ceremony for the repatriation of 146 seized tabua from New Zealand to Fiji with the Hon. Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji Rear Admiral J.V. Bainimarama, a New Zealand Maori representative, Fijian traditional body and other guests.
14. Participants discussed CITES trade in Oceania, the roles and relationships between the Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities, national legislation, permitting, and species identification. With specific regards to plants, PNG raised the importance of considering the listing of sandalwood on Appendix II.

#### Agenda items of interest to the Oceania Region

15. The following items will be of particular interest to the region:
  - a) Capacity building and identification issues
  - b) Non-detriment findings
  - c) Timber identification
  - d) Definition of the term 'artificially propagated'
  - e) Production systems
  - f) Agarwood
  - g) Rosewood
  - h) Annotations