

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

---



Twenty-fifth meeting of the Plants Committee  
Online, 2-4, 21 and 23 June 2021

Species specific matters

Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been submitted by César Augusto Beltetón Chacón (representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean), Ursula Moser (representative for Europe) and Yan Zeng (representative for Asia), as Co-Chairs of the working group on Rosewood tree species.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 18.236 on *Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]*, in which it requested the Plants Committee to: a) consider the progress reported by the Secretariat and make recommendations regarding the study and the need for the international workshop referred to under Decision 18.234; b) consider the final study, and outcomes of the workshop, if held, and make recommendations on how to enhance implementation for CITES-listed rosewood tree species with a particular focus on non-detriment findings, including with respect to capacity building; and make further recommendations regarding non-CITES-listed rosewood tree species; and c) make recommendations to the Standing Committee and the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.
3. In order to facilitate submission of the report on progress to the Plants Committee, membership of the working group was established, in coordination with the CITES Secretariat, and a questionnaire was prepared for members to report on matters inherent to the working group's mandate.
4. On 19th February 2021, the Co-Chairs of the working group sent out requests for information. Requests and relevant documentation were sent to all members of the working group in English and Spanish, and the closing date for receiving all input was established as 12th March 2021.

Acknowledgements

5. We thank the following members of the working group for their timely submission of the requested information: Canada, Germany, Mexico, the United States of America, and WWF.

---

\* *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.*

**Progress reported in document PC25 Doc. 26.1, responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2020/023 in information document PC25 Inf. 6, and compilation and analysis thereof in paragraphs 8–11 of document PC25 Doc. 26.1**

6. Germany reported that it agrees with most of the recommendations. Nonetheless, with regard to 10 d), it considers that the impact of trade on wild populations of *Pterocarpus santalinus* (endemic to southeast India) remains a major concern. Ongoing illegal harvesting and trade are documented through continued seizures and subsequent auction of seized material (e.g., <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/chinese-buy-up-red-sanders-at-e-auction/articlehow/67445800.cms>). Although source code “W” is no longer used for this trade, wild populations are directly affected by it.
7. Germany noted that on page 5, point 9), the species is referred to as *Dalbergia malanoxylon* instead of *D. melanoxylon*, and requested that this be duly corrected; Germany also noted that on page 4, subparagraph 8. c) regarding non-CITES-listed species that are traded under the name “rosewood”, point 13) refers to *P. Chrysothrix*, which is a synonym for *P. tinctorius* and, therefore, should be included under 8. a) CITES-listed species that are traded under the commercial name “rosewood”. Accordingly, a correction is also requested here.
8. Mexico agreed with most of the conclusions drawn from the Secretariat’s analysis. Nonetheless, it made the following observations: subparagraph 8. b) includes the species *Dalbergia palo-escrito*, which is endemic to Mexico and was not reported by Mexico because it had no trade records for this species. However, given that Germany has reported the species in trade, Mexico considers that it would be important to identify the source of the wood reported by importing countries. In this regard, Mexico recommends that the Secretariat and the working group request this information so that the group has better elements to develop its work on point 9.
9. Mexico reported that it has now provided the CITES Secretariat with a manual for NDF formulation for *Dalbergia* spp.: [https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/media/1/planeta/cites/files/CONABIO\\_NDF\\_dalbergia.pdf](https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/media/1/planeta/cites/files/CONABIO_NDF_dalbergia.pdf). Mexico also recommended that any other tools developed by Parties, and which include these species, should be taken into consideration, e.g., identification guides.
10. The United States of America agreed that the information shown in column C of the Questionnaire (Excel document) on Appendix II rosewood species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)] be taken into consideration in the scope of the study and organization of the proposed international workshop. With regard to Decision 18.234, it suggested that the recommendations of the PC25 Working Group on Neotropical Tree Species regarding CITES-listed rosewood tree species should also be considered appropriate.
11. The United States of America noted that only 16 Parties, including range States and non-range States (importing/re-exporting countries), replied to Notification No. 2020/023 on Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)] (PC25 Inf. Doc. 6.), and expressed its concern about the lack of response, particularly from range States, which might be due to the technological and accessibility difficulties caused by the worldwide pandemic (e.g. Internet access, data access, availability of staff/species experts). In this regard, it believes that additional opportunities are needed to ensure full participation and a broader debate on this matter, e.g., compilation of further information at the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee and/or by means of a Notification to the Parties following the Plants Committee Meeting.
12. Regarding the Appendix II taxa listed under 10. a) for consideration as first-priority candidates, including *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, the United States of America suggested that *Pterocarpus tinctorius* be included in this group. It further agreed to including two (2) of the five (5) *Dalbergia* spp. from Appendix II listed under 10. b) to be considered among the first-priority taxa included in (10. a), namely: *D. maritima*, endemic to Madagascar (IUCN EN, assessment 1998); and *D. cubilquitzensis* as a synonym for *D. tucurensis* (listed in 10. a). Reference: Cervantes, A., J. Linares, and E. Quintero; 2019. An updated checklist of the Mexican species of *Dalbergia* (Leguminosae) to aid in its conservation efforts; Conabio; Revista Mexicana de Biodiversidad.
13. Regarding 8. c) non-CITES-listed species that are traded under the name “rosewood”, the United States of America noted that some of the species mentioned do not belong to the family Leguminosae (Fabaceae), namely, *Jacaranda* spp. and *Tabebuia rosea*, which belong to the family Bignoniaceae; and *Terminalia elliptica*, which belongs to the family Myrtales. It also noted that the compliance and enforcement issues raised concerning the trade of seized specimens of *Pterocarpus santalinus* (included in 10.d)) should be referred to the Standing Committee for discussion.

14. The United States of America requested that the following observations be taken into consideration with regard to the taxa listed in column C:
15. Regarding the 33 *Dalbergia* species reportedly traded under the name “rosewood” (8. b), *D. kingiana* (#17) is not a tree, but a shrub, and *Dalbergia rimosa* is classified as a woody liana or, in some cases, as an erect shrub or treelet, height 4–6 (-10) metres (see: Flora of China Vol. 10 ([http://www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora\\_id=2&taxon\\_id=109237](http://www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora_id=2&taxon_id=109237))). Nonetheless, timber products of these species are found in international trade.
16. Regarding 8. b) and 10. a), a number of *Dalbergia* species are accepted synonyms, based on other recognized references; however, they are not included as such in CITES Species +.
  - D. abbreviata* is a synonym for *D. velutina* Benth. (see <https://indiabiodiversity.org/species/show/245305>; POTW).
  - D. bariensis* is a synonym for *D. oliveri* (POTW).
  - D. cubilquitzensis* is a synonym for *D. tucurensis* (POTW).
 Further, *D. frutescens* is misspelled (*D. frutascens*), as is *D. melanoxydon* (misspelled as *D. 3elanoxydon*).
17. With regard to 8. C), *Lonchocarpus* spp. (misspelled as *Lonchocarpum*); *Myroxylon balsamum* (misspelled as *Myroxilon balsamum*); *Pterocarpus chrysothrix* is an accepted synonym for *P. tinctorius* (see POTW; CoP17 Inf. 48); *Tabebuia rosea* (misspelled as *T. rosae*); and *Terminalia alta* is an accepted synonym for *T. elliptica* (POTW); in 8. D) *Aniba rosodora* (misspelled as *Aniba roseodora*).

**Consideration of the conclusions and recommendations shown in document PC25 Doc. 26.2 on International trade in African *Pterocarpus* rosewood species**

18. Germany reported that it would welcome the inclusion of the two CITES-listed species of *Pterocarpus*, i.e., *P. tinctorius* and *P. erinaceus*, and also the remaining African species of *Pterocarpus*, in the scope of the study and the workshop mentioned in Decision 18.234 a) and b).
19. Germany reported that *P. erinaceus* is already included for consideration, pursuant to document PC 25 Doc. 26.1 No.10 a), and Decision 18.234 a) ii), to consider all CITES-listed “rosewood tree species” that are highly to moderately affected by trade as the first priority for compiling available data and information on the biology, population status, management, use and trade in order to address information gaps. Germany further noted that in document PC 25 Doc. 26.1, page 4, *P. tinctorius* is not referred to as such, but by the synonym *P. chrysothrix*.
20. The United States of America disagrees with “the entire *Pterocarpus* genus” being included in the preparation of the study and the international workshop. Decision 18.234 a) ii) establishes “as a second priority, non CITES-listed rosewood tree species, in particular those that are highly sought after for the timber trade”. The genus *Pterocarpus* includes 5–9 African species (depending on the reference used), including *P. erinaceus* and *P. tinctorius*, commonly known as African rosewood; five species from Asia Pacific, including *P. santalinus* from Appendix II; and two native species from the Western Hemisphere. Based on a cursory review, there does not seem to be any overlap between the ranges of the Asia-Pacific species and those of the African species. The United States of America noted that there is not enough information to support the entire genus being included in the scope of the study, particularly given the lack of response from range States that export timber products of *Pterocarpus* species.
21. The United States of America noted that it supports the inclusion of Appendix II African rosewood species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and *P. tinctorius* as first-priority species, according to Decision 18.234 a) ii). It further noted that it would prefer efforts to be focused on CITES-listed species traded under the name “rosewood” in order to enhance CITES implementation for these species. Nonetheless, it would not be opposed to including non-CITES-listed species of African *Pterocarpus* that are highly sought after for the timber trade for them to be considered second-priority species pursuant to Decision 18.234 a) ii).

**Providing recommendations in preparation for the study and international workshop referred to in Decision 18.234, including recommendations for it to be organized within the framework of the second international workshop on guidance to formulating NDFs, pursuant to Decision 18.134 on Non-detriment findings.**

Management initiatives or financial mechanisms identified for funding the study and international workshop referred to in Decision 18.234

22. Canada indicated the need to initiate cooperation with companies and manufacturers involved in the international trade of semi-finished and finished rosewood products, in order to:
  - a) obtain financial support for the proposed study and international workshop; and
  - b) enable, in cooperation with range States, the establishment of facilities for the propagation of priority rosewood species and the production of management plantations to guarantee that populations of priority species remain accessible and secure in the long term.
23. The United States of America reported that, with regard to paragraph c) of the working group's mandate, it agrees with the findings shown under 11 b), namely, to consider holding the international workshop called for in Decision 18.234 in conjunction with the proposed second international expert workshop on guidance for making NDFs as per Decision 18.134, particularly in view of the fact that there is some overlap in the scope of the two proposed workshops, and that both depend on external funding.
24. The United States of America pointed out that, in view of the current worldwide health and travel restrictions, which will probably remain in force throughout 2021 and possibly until 2022, the Working Group might consider recommending that the Plants Committee prolong the Decisions on rosewood species at the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19, 2022).

**Availability of external funding for implementation of the study and organization of the international workshop, consideration of the final study and outcome of the workshop as they become available, and drafting of recommendations, as indicated in paragraph b) of Decision 18.236**

Topics and content considered relevant or priority to be addressed in the framework of the international workshop referred to in Decision 18.234

25. Germany noted that the data and information that facilitate implementation of current listings are linked to:
  - raising awareness of the sustainability aspect of CITES;
  - strengthening the management of CITES-listed tree species;
  - raising awareness of the importance of management plans (including their monitoring) and reliable, representative inventories, including the potential regeneration and growth rates of the respective species;
  - recommending the implementation of projects to study annual diameter growth rates and regenerative potential of the species, and to provide guidelines and recommendations;
  - exploring the synergies between certification bodies (FSC, PEFC) and CITES; and
  - strengthening international cooperation among CITES Scientific Authorities.
26. Mexico recommended: 1) tackling information gaps (e.g., importing countries to report the origin of traded species), and establishing priorities for attention (e.g., define key information to be included, ideally, in management plans); 2) creating synergies among range States in terms of species conservation and CITES implementation; 3) fostering cooperation between importing and exporting countries to improve the traceability of "rosewood" species in trade by creating strategies to guarantee sustainability, strengthening coordination among the three CITES Authorities with regard to information sharing, identifying further materials and tools to be developed in order to enhance CITES implementation for rosewood species.
27. Canada suggested taking into consideration: 1) the current classification of rosewood species and identification of synonyms and misidentified species; 2) long-term projected or planned supply of priority species; 3) propagation and silvicultural techniques to produce plantations of priority species; 4) market trends and projected demand of CITES-listed species; 5) indications or projections of market demand or trends toward non-Cites-listed rosewood species; and 6) security trends and legal acquisition of priority species.

28. The United States of America noted that further opportunities are needed to ensure a greater participation of the Parties, particularly from the range States, and more in-depth discussion and debate on this important matter. With regard to the data and information currently used to report on the implementation of CITES listings of “rosewood” tree species, and in order to identify relevant information and information gaps, or the needs of candidate “rosewood” species, the United States of America further suggested that the following be considered:
- the list of CITES-listed “rosewood” tree species (first-priority category, with current nomenclature references);
  - distribution and range of “rosewood” tree species;
  - conservation status of the species, including threats;
  - population structure and trends;
  - reproductive biology, regeneration rate, and recruitment rates of the species;
  - inventory / population monitoring;
  - population management practices/stands/concessions and ownership (local/community, regional, national, etc.);
  - minimum/maximum diameter measurements;
  - methodology and application of timber conversion factor;
  - trade, traceability and monitoring information/protocols;
  - species grown in plantations and other types of production systems;
  - timber identification methods (e.g., anatomical, chemical and genetic analyses), materials, including proof of origin/georeferenced samples, identification tools, equipment and technologies;
  - Customs and enforcement capacity needs for identification of CITES-listed timber species;
  - identifying needs for capacity-building, identification materials and tools; and
  - the need for voucher specimens from range States for identification.
29. WWF believes that the workshop should produce a list of candidate taxa for inclusion, where possible, at genus level.

Structure of the agenda for the international workshop referred to in Decision 18.234 in order to achieve the proposed objectives

30. Germany noted that there is some overlap between the scope of the proposed international workshop on rosewood tree species and the scope of the second international workshop on guidance on the preparation of NDFs referred to in Decision 18.134 on Non-detriment findings. Germany considers that the recommendations relating to non-CITES-listed species obviously are not the subject of the workshop on NDFs (unless the impacts on ecosystems are analyzed). That said, Germany believes that, depending on the final structure of the second international workshop on guidance for making NDFs, and provided that the appropriate aspects are covered, relevant recommendations will be forthcoming to address Decisions 18.234 to 18.237.
31. Mexico considers it appropriate to hold the workshop on rosewood species within the framework of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Workshop on NDFs (Decision 18.134), and considers that the agenda should be drawn up based on the priorities identified by the Parties as per previous paragraph.
32. Canada suggested organizing a committee (“working group”), composed of Parties from the range States, importing Parties, Scientific Authorities, and stakeholders in international trade, in order to identify contributors and draw up a comprehensive workshop agenda that reflects the priorities of each of the stakeholder groups previously identified.
33. The United States of America noted that agrees with the international workshop referred to in Decision 18.234 being held as part of the second international expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDFs) mentioned in Decisions 18.132–18.134, particularly considering the cost of the proposed workshops. Taking into account the current worldwide health and travel restrictions, perhaps it would be better for many countries if it were held in 2022. If the international workshop on rosewood is held separately, the United States of America suggests that it be held online, or in the form of regional workshops, e.g., in East Asia, Africa and Madagascar, and Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean.
34. Regarding suggestions for the second international expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDFs) requested in Decisions 18.132–18.134, in response to CITES Notification to the Parties No. 2021/007 on Non-detriment findings (NDF), the United States of America:

- Supports the recommendations submitted by the representatives of the North American Region to the Animals and Plants Committee;
- Firmly supports the recommendation of the North American Region to establish a technical advisory committee (TAC); and
- Suggests that all members of the Animals/Plants Committee form part of the TAC, as has happened in the past when the Committees implemented similar tasks and determined which stakeholders should be included. This would be particularly important when updating guidance materials and planning the workshop on NDFs.

The United States of America also recommended that the following information be taken into consideration:

- gaps and needs when making non-detriment findings when harvesting and trade are ongoing, while the needs for scientific research on the species are being addressed;
- findings that determine that the export of specimens is not detrimental under certain conditions such as the harvest period, and/or age restrictions, and/or sex restrictions, and/or class and age restrictions, and/or limitations on harvesting gear, and/or size limitations, and/or harvest/catch quotas, and harvest monitoring for adaptive management. This approach allows for some exports to take place while research data is being collected for an informed NDF. Case studies in which this approach was adopted for formulating NDFs would be illustrative. The first Workshop on NDFs in Cancun, Mexico, focused on a risk approach that was explored in plenary sessions and case studies. The United States of America believes that it would be useful to consider the formulation of NDFs with conditions; and
- another gap/need related to the formulation of NDFs, and which it might be useful to discuss at a workshop on NDFs, would be the practice of formulating national and/or regional NDFs for species that are managed at a national or regional level. A regional approach might prove particularly useful for shared species, transboundary species, marine fishes and migratory species. A national-level NDF for a species, rather than individual applications, could provide a holistic framework for formulating NDFs for the species and would contribute to guaranteeing standard management practices for the populations in that country. It would also provide opportunities for establishing sanctuaries/protected areas in a country.

35. WWF reported that it would be pleased to participate in any calls for proposals or other processes aimed at finalizing the agenda.

### Recommendations

36. The Plants Committee is invited to based on the progress achieved in the implementation of Decisions 18.234 to 18.237, give consideration to the pertinence of the following draft Decisions for consideration of the Conference of the Parties:

#### **19.AA Directed to the Secretariat**

Subject to external resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) commission a study on the conservation and trade rosewood-tree species identified, taking into account the priorities, findings and recommendations contained in documents PC25 Doc. 26.1, PC25 Doc. 26.2 and PC25 Doc. 26.3;
- b) report on the progress of the study to the Plants Committee;
- c) taking into account the above, organize an international workshop, inviting relevant range States, trading countries, relevant organizations, industry representatives and other experts, with a view to presenting and discussing the results, and develop recommendations; and
- d) submit the final study for consideration by the Plants Committee, as well as the outcomes of the workshop, if held.

**19.BB *Directed to the Plants Committee***

The Plants Committee shall consider any progress reported by the Secretariat in relation to the implementation of Decision 19.AA and make recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

**19.CC *Directed to the Parties***

Parties are invited to collaborate with the Secretariat and the Plants Committee in the implementation of Decisions 19.AA and 19.BB, and support the work of the study and the international workshop, including seeking external resources from relevant organizations and stakeholders.

**19.DD *Directed to the Standing Committee***

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider any report relating to the implementation of Decision 19.AA to 19.CC;
- b) identify any implementation and enforcement issues associated with the international trade in rosewood tree species, particularly those identified as a priority by the Plants Committee; and
- c) make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.