

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

ADDENDUM TO THE DOCUMENT ON AFRICAN TREE SPECIES

1. This addendum has been submitted by Ali Mahamane, as Chair of the working group on African tree species, and the working group co-Chairs Beatrice Khayota, and Daniel Wolf.*
2. The document also refers to document PC25 Doc. 27 on *African cherry* (*Prunus africana*).
3. The working group on African tree species was established by the Plants Committee through intersessional decision making, as published in [Notification 2020/056](#).
4. The working group addressed the mandate to:
 - a) work primarily via electronic means;
 - b) seek to facilitate the circulation and exchange of experiences among the range States, importing countries and other stakeholders on the sustainable use and management of CITES-listed African tree species;
 - c) consider the overview of African tree species presented in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 28;
 - d) consider the Secretariat's recommendations on *Prunus africana*, contained in document PC25 Doc. 27, and draft a report on the implementation of Decision 18.260, paragraph a);
 - e) seek to identify gaps and weaknesses in the capacity of range States of African tree species to effectively implement CITES for these species;
 - f) examine how the processes currently used by countries to develop annual export quotas compare with the processes recommended under CITES and develop recommendations for reconciling them;
 - g) explore the conversion factors used for different commodities (e.g., logs, sawn wood, bark) and develop recommendations for improving such processes;
 - h) seek to identify other African tree species that may benefit from inclusion in the CITES Appendices;

* 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.

- i) bring any issues related to implementation and enforcement of CITES listings for African tree species to the attention of the Plants Committee; and
 - j) report its findings and recommendations to the next meeting of the Plants Committee.
5. The working group had 15 members and Parties, and 11 Observers, as follows:
- Co-chairs: Ali Mahamane (representative for Africa), Beatrice Khayota (alternate representative for Africa), and Daniel Wolf (alternate representative for Europe);
- Parties: Cameroon, China, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Germany, Madagascar, Namibia, Netherlands, Singapore, Uganda and United States of America;
- Observers: United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Chambre Syndicale de la Façure Instrumentale (CSFI), Environmental Investigation Agency USA, Forest Based Solutions, Forest Trends, League of American Orchestras, Taylor Guitars, TRAFFIC, and World Wildlife Fund.
6. The working group established a workplan with the following items:
- i) consider the Secretariat's recommendations on *Prunus africana*, contained in document PC25 Doc. 27, and draft a report on the implementation of Decision 18.260, paragraph a);
 - ii) consider the overview of African tree species presented in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 28; identify other African tree species that may benefit from inclusion in the CITES Appendices; and
 - iii) examine how the processes currently used by countries to develop annual export quotas compare with the processes recommended under CITES and develop recommendations for reconciling them.
7. The working group received responses from Cameroon, Germany, Uganda, DRC Congo, the USA, the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Forest Trends, TRAFFIC and WWF.

Synthesis

8. Regarding the recommendations on *Prunus africana*, contained in document [PC25 Doc. 27](#), paragraph 5 a):
- a) Germany, DRC, Forest Based Solutions and WWF agree to the publication of the NDF recommendations on the CITES Secretariat's website, its use in the procedure of Review of Significant Trade and/or voluntary export quotas. Germany suggests that NDFs should also contain a passage about the potential of harvesting bark from artificially propagated trees from agroforestry systems.
 - b) Forest based Solutions remarked that this type of standard, yet specific assessment, based on up-to-date information, would be appropriate for analysis of any African tree taxon, would improve conservation interventions, species identification, transparency for analyzing trade, and would increase the ability of a given range state to implement appropriate regulations. Moreover, this would improve listing proposals.
 - c) Germany made specific suggestions to several recommendations, as reflected in strike-underline in the consolidated recommendations contained in the Annex to the present Addendum.
 - d) The USA agree that Parties may consider the information, but do not agree to already publish the recommendations at this moment, since the recommendations appeared still to be in the formative stage and require more work. Specifically, the USA question the following:
 - Recommendation i) On what basis the grid based systematic design was the recommended inventory method.
 - Recommendation ii) How a complete sampling of 100% of trees would be defined, and whether additional information on plantations or agroforestry systems would be required.

Recommendations iii-vii) The clarity and practicality of the recommendations, as well as their logical order.

Recommendations viii, ix) Whether the recommendations may be too prescriptive, and in how far recommendations to range States to share practical experiences with monitoring and traceability tools would be more helpful.

9. Regarding the recommendations on *Prunus africana*, contained in document [PC25 Doc. 27](#), paragraph 5b:

a) the following recommendations were prioritized as areas for future research:

WWF, Germany, Democratic Republic of the Congo, USA	sustainable harvesting techniques
Germany	inventories
Germany, Democratic Republic of the Congo, USA	long term monitoring (designs and studies) and traceability
Democratic Republic of the Congo	plantations and agroforestry

b) Germany suggested that long-term, scientific studies on representative sampling plots should also include research on the basic ecology of *P. africana* including average bark thickness, bark recovery potential, and mortality rate. Germany suggests that studies mentioned under paragraph 5b i) could be incorporated in more broad, holistic studies addressed under paragraph 5b iii).

c) Additional to what is already mentioned in paragraph 5b v), Germany considers further research into the potential for traceability systems and/or the potential for certification of bark coming from farmlands and agroforestry systems as important. Such studies could be realized in the next round of the CITES-tree species program, or run as bi- or multilateral studies between an exporting country with the financial support of those actors profiting from the exploitation of the natural resource (usually wholesalers in both the exporting and importing countries and the industry) and in additional collaboration of the importing country.

d) Democratic Republic of the Congo proposes to undertake research as follows:

- i) mobilization of funds both internally and from external partners, in particular importers of *Prunus africana*;
- ii) distribution of funds according to the importance of the research subject and the abundance of the species in the areas of distribution;
- iii) involving local skills and populations in the research work;
- iv) taking into consideration the opinions and advice of the operators (exporters and importers) for the conduct of the research work.

e) The USA note that studies should be preceded and informed by an extensive literature search, to include, if appropriate, local ecological knowledge, potentially developing an annotated checklist of publications on this topic before deciding which methods to test, etc. The USA also note that studies should use replicated designs, which may be implemented at a regional level and using common research protocols.

10. Regarding the recommendations on *Prunus africana*, contained in document [PC25 Doc. 27](#), paragraph 5c:

a) WWF supports recommendations on inventory methodologies and on adding value to locally produced products. With regard to the latter, WWF re-emphasizes the need to ensure that the annotation is adjusted if trade controls no longer cover the specimens relevant to the first point of export.

b) Democratic Republic of the Congo notes that technical involvement of importing countries of *Prunus africana* would be necessary to be reassured on the used inventory method; and suggests

- i) the establishment of *Prunus africana* nurseries in and around the exploitation areas;

- ii) support and technical assistance for the local populations;
 - iii) to accompany forestry administration officials in the identification of new production sites of *Prunus africana*, belonging to landowners or local communities;
 - iv) the creation of a single tax grouping the services involved in the exploitation and export of *Prunus africana*;
 - v) that the national government, through its Ministry of Industry, should study the possibilities of setting up primary processing units in the exploitation areas.
- c) Germany suggests to wait for outcomes from current projects of the CITES-tree species program and to address recommendations under paragraph 5c in the next round of projects of the CITES-tree species program, as bi- or multilateral studies between an exporting country with the financial support of those actors profiting from the exploitation of the natural resource (usually wholesalers in exporting and importing countries and the industry) and in additional collaboration with the importing country.
 - d) Germany suggests to broaden the scope of paragraph 5c i) to invite not only “importing countries” but especially also profiteers of the natural resource, e.g. wholesalers in both the exporting and importing countries and the industry;
 - e) Germany agrees that regeneration in the wild should take precedence to agroforestry systems and especially monocrop-plantations (paragraph 5c ii). However, it holds the opinion that this should not generally imply that most exported bark has to be sourced from the wild (especially as long as the recommendations on wild harvest are not fulfilled). Germany believes that the potential for exporting bark from agroforestry systems should be promoted and farmers should be encouraged to produce bark in multi-crop agroforestry systems. The establishment for a market for bark from artificially propagated trees should be promoted to release pressure from trees in natural forests;
 - f) Germany concludes that the proclamation of sustainable use, harvest and trade as well as national processing could be better communicated and exchanged, e.g. via social media amongst local communities (e.g. Youtube videos, facebook groups, video clips made by farmers/forest managers for farmers/forest managers).
 - g) The USA believe that any new studies should be preceded by a review of prior efforts, undertaken for example in the CITES tree programs, to ensure that outcomes are appropriately considered and future work builds on and does not duplicate work already initiated or completed.
11. Regarding the overview of African tree species presented in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 28; and other African tree species that may benefit from inclusion in the CITES Appendices:
- a) The WG participants welcomed the overview of African tree species presented in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 28 and did not have additional comments.
 - b) The following African tree species were suggested as possibly benefitting from future inclusion in the CITES Appendices:
 - i) Forest Trends, WWF, Germany and CIEL suggested *Pterocarpus* spp.
 - ii) Germany, CIEL, and Uganda suggested *Azelia* spp. or *Azelia africana*.
 - iii) Taxa mentioned by two participants were *Autranella congolensis*, *Baillonella toxisperma*, *Diospyros* spp. (populations outside Madagascar), *Entandophragma cylindricum*, *Guibourtia coleosperma*, *Khaya* spp., *Lophira alata*, *Millettia laurenti*, *Millettia stuhlmanii*, *Okoubaka aubrevillei*, *Triplochiton scleroxylon*.
 - iv) CIEL additionally suggested various species of palms and other trees: *Beccariophoenix alfredii*, *Borassus madagascariensis*, *Brachystegia leonensis*, *Commiphora guidottii*, *Dacryodes buettneri*, *Delonix pumila*, *Dyopsis andrianatonga*, *Dyopsis bejofo*, *Dyopsis onilahensis*, *Dyopsis pilulifera*, *Dyopsis pusilla*, *Dyopsis albofarinosa*, *Dyopsis tsaravoasira*, *Dyopsis ampasindavae*, *Dyopsis antanambensis*, *Dyopsis arenarum*, *Dyopsis basilonga*, *Dyopsis carlsmithii*, *Dyopsis ceracea*, *Dyopsis hovomantsina*, *Dyopsis ifanadianae*, *Dyopsis leptocheilos*, *Dyopsis tokoravina*, *Khaya anthotheca*, *Khaya*

grandifoliola, *Khaya ivorensis*, *Khaya madagascariensis*, *Khaya senegalensis*, *Masoala madagascariensis*, *Okoubaka aubrevillei*, *Podocarpus henkelii*, *Raphia australis*, *Ravenea glauca*, *Ravenea musicalis*.

- v) Cameroon proposes that a detailed analysis should be made of the exploitation of African species in trade.
 - vi) TRAFFIC submitted two reports regarding CITES and non-CITES listed tree species in Madagascar and Namibia.
12. Regarding the comparison of processes currently used by countries to develop annual export quotas with the processes recommended under CITES and recommendations for reconciling them, participants emphasized that:
- a) paragraph 10 of Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15) on *Management of nationally established export quotas* states that a NDF should be carried out before the setting of a quota, and reviewed annually - in practice it appears that this is not always done. Participants suggested that Parties should submit an NDF at the same time that they inform the Secretariat of their nationally set export quotas, and these should be updated annually;
 - b) a quota should only be set following an assessment of data recording the consistent monitoring and management of the volumes harvested and exported;
 - c) a systematic conversion of the volumes of processed products into round wood equivalent (RWE) volumes, based on appropriate conversion rates, should be carried out in order to set an appropriate and sustainable quota;
 - d) quota periods often stretch far beyond the recommended calendar year, with the use of each quota as a goal to reach during an indeterminate timeframe, rather than a limit. As noted in Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), Annex, para. 9, “[a]s far as possible the period covered by an export quota should be the calendar year (i.e. 1 January to 31 December).” Furthermore, “[a]n annual export quota is not a target and there is no need for a quota to be fully used.” Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), Annex, para. 2. If the quota is not used within the year, a Party may “exceptionally” authorize exports in the subsequent year, Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), Annex, para. 20, but rather than the exception in many cases this is now common practice, with two (and occasionally more) quotas being used concurrently; and that
 - e) an export quota is sometimes set without an NDF, contrary to Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15), Annex, para 10. Both legal and illegal harvest should also be taken into consideration when establishing the quota, which does not always occur. Furthermore, in addition to an NDF for setting the first quota, an NDF should also be made when the quota is “revised and reviewed annually.” If an export quota is established without an NDF, sometimes this species-country combination is subsequently selected for the Review of Significant Trade process. A “conservative” quota recommendation from the Plants Committee until an NDF is made may in some cases still be too high.
13. Cameroon urges to develop and implement management, operation and harmonized monitoring arrangements for *Prunus africana* and emphasizes the importance of taking the following information into account when making proposals:
- i) The difficulty of accessing production sites of *Prunus africana*;
 - ii) that only local populations have the possibility of accessing production sites at 2000 m altitude; and that
 - iii) management, monitoring, control and traceability measures are difficult to implement in these areas on mountain slopes.

Revised recommendations

13. The Plants Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of documents PC25 Doc. 27, PC25 Doc. 28 and the present Addendum;
- b) concerning Decision 18.261 on African cherry (*Prunus Africana*) consider the recommendations in the Annex to this addendum and, if pertinent, request the Secretariat to publish the recommendations contained the Annex of the present Addendum;
- c) concerning Decision 17.302 on *African tree species*, and progress achieved in its implementation, consider the pertinence of the following draft Decisions for consideration of the Conference of the Parties:

19.AA Directed to the Plants Committee

The Plants Committee shall:

- a) update the list of African tree species and associated CITES processes contained in the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 28;
- b) based on documents PC25 Doc. 27, PC25 Doc. 28 and PC25 Doc. 28 Add., establish priorities to strengthen the implementation of the Convention for the African tree species, including priorities for future work on *Prunus africana*;
- c) liaise with Parties in advancing the priorities identified above;
- d) report the outcomes of this work to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, upon request of the Plants Committee, assist in the implementation of Decision 19.AA.

19.CC Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider any report from the Plants Committee regarding Decision 19.AA and develop recommendations for consideration of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

- d) report outcomes of this work to the Conference of the Parties.

Guidance relating to the sustainable harvest and regulation of trade of *Prunus africana*
[modified from paragraph 5 a) of document PC25 Doc. 27]

Methodologies for inventories

- i) *The grid based systematic design is the recommended method for inventory methods. At a minimum the following parameters should be recorded: mid height diameter, bark thickness, and trunk height up to first branch. Extrapolations of harvestable bark volumes should consider errors of the inventory and contain a precautionary approach.*
- ii) *Inventories should include surveys of cultivated resources or agroforestry resources of *Prunus africana* (e.g. in gardens). Due to small extension, these inventories in cultivated areas and agroforestry systems should include complete sampling of 100% of trees.*
- iii) *Scientific evidence is needed on minimum inventory density and on designs that enable to base future monitoring on inventory data (incl. GPS-coordinates and health status of tree); and*
- iv) *Exact and binding zoning and marking of the single individual annual harvest units is necessary.*

Sustainable harvesting techniques

- ~~iii~~v) *Based on a precautionary approach, it is recommended to use long rotation times of 7 years for a half rotation, and 14 years for a full rotation. The length of the rotation time should be based on local studies, if available, and adapted according to observed recovery rates.*
- ~~iv~~vi) *Minimum harvested diameter at breast height should be 30 cm. The bark should be harvested from one metre above ground to the level of the first branches.*
- vii) *Harvest should not destroy the cambium of the tree.*
- viii) *The recommended harvest method is to harvest two quarters of the bark at opposite sides of the trunk.*
- ~~viii~~x) *In plantations or agroforestry, debarked parts of the trunks should be protected by adequate means, such as soil mixed with cow dung, manufactured or other adequate products, to protect against insect infestations.*

Monitoring and traceability

- ~~viii~~x) *Scientific Authorities should regularly inspect harvest concessions and plantations or agroforestry systems of *P. africana* in order to monitor harvest impacts and compliance with recommended harvest practices.*
- ~~ix~~xi) *Parties should use suitable and cost-effective technologies and methods, such as physical or plastic barcodes, stardust paint or genetic approaches, in combination with standardized packaging to efficiently label and trace *P. africana* material from harvest to the point of further processing.*