

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



Fifty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-18 July 2008

SUMMARY OF THE SECRETARIAT'S ACTIVITIES FOR TREE SPECIES IN 2008

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Timber Officer

2. With the financial support of the Australian Government, a Timber Officer has been recruited to the CITES Secretariat to assist with the implementation of Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties relating to timber/tree species. The duties of this new position include establishing close cooperation with key international bodies promoting sustainable international trade and helping Parties to build scientific and technical capacity.

Collaboration with FAO

3. In accordance with Decisions 14.16 and 14.17, the CITES Secretariat has been liaising with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on opportunities for enhanced collaboration relating to forestry and non-timber products. Although the existing MoU between CITES and FAO was negotiated by the Fisheries Department, it could possibly be the framework for collaboration with FAO Forestry Department. However, it was agreed to enhance collaboration first and to consider the issue of a more specific formal base for the joint work at a later stage.
4. An immediate benefit of the collaboration with the FAO Forestry Department was the attendance by FAO at the 17th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC17, Geneva, April 2008). FAO has offered to assist the Plants Committee working group on tree annotations with definitions and trade data. Other areas of collaboration include participation and/or consultation on activities such as the workshop on the sustainable harvest of *Prunus africana*, State of the World Forest Genetic Resources, national forestry legislation and rural livelihoods.

ITTO-CITES programme on timber species

5. Collaboration between CITES and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) has its basis in Resolution Conf. 14.4 on *Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber*. The ITTO-CITES programme on timber species has been made possible through a large grant from the European Commission as well as funding support from the United States of America, Japan and Norway. Background to this collaboration was reported on at PC17 under agenda item 16.2 as described in document [PC17 Doc 16.2](#). Below is a summary of recent activities.

Ramin (Gonystylus spp.)

- a) The Asian regional coordinator for the ITTO-CITES programme, Mr Thang Hooi Chiew, has been discussing projects under the key themes of the programme with officials from the Governments of Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. A number of activities are expected to be implemented during 2008 with some of the activities envisaged to run over the next two years.

- b) The Malaysian Government has provided a preliminary request for funding of several projects, including possible activities relating to a non-detriment finding report for two selected permanent forests of Sarawak, spatial distribution maps of ramin using hyperspectral technology, a DNA database in Sarawak, and the development of a timber monitoring system using radio frequency identification (RFID) in Peninsular Malaysia. The Indonesian Government is expected to submit shortly project proposals covering an assessment of the population distribution of ramin (except *Gonystylus bancanas*) species in Indonesia, improvement in inventory design to estimate the growing stock of ramin, and a review of the current silvicultural system for ramin in Indonesia.

Bigleaf mahogany (Swietenia macrophylla)

- c) The Latin American regional coordinator for the ITTO-CITES programme, Mr Ivan Tomaselli, has been discussing projects with officials from national governments with the view that activities can commence in 2008 and be implemented over the next two years. Generally, projects under the programme will link with the 'Action plan for the control of international trade in the bigleaf mahogany' and some projects may also relate to the 'Action plan for *Cedrela odorata*, *Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii*'. Bolivia has already submitted two proposals for funding under the programme and Peru is expected to submit request(s) for assistance soon. A project on population dynamics and regeneration ecology is likely to commence shortly in Brazil.
- d) In addition, a CITES Secretariat representative undertook a mission to Peru to help revise CITES legislation, which, when enacted, would allow Peru to be placed in Category 1 under the National Legislation Project, and to undertake training for CITES authorities and enforcement officers. The representative was accompanied by Mr Tomaselli so that any follow-up activities could be considered under the ITTO-CITES programme.

Afromosia (Pericopsis elata)

- e) The ITTO-CITES workshop on sustainable trade in *Pericopsis elata* was held in Kribi, Cameroon, from 2 to 4 April 2008. The workshop was hosted by the Government of Cameroon and this was the first regional workshop funded under the ITTO-CITES timber programme.
- f) In attendance were representatives from producer and importing countries: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Ghana, and Belgium, France and Japan. A number of non-governmental and local trade groups, UNEP-WCMC and the ITTO and CITES Secretariats also participated.
- g) The key objectives of the workshop were to introduce the ITTO-CITES programme, to establish a regional network for *P. elata* range States, to review national implementation of the Appendix-II listing of *P. elata*, and to identify gaps and develop an action plan to ensure that international trade in *P. elata* is sustainable. The workshop resulted in a final report, declaration and action plan. These will be available shortly on a purpose-built website for the project. In the meantime, the documents will be available on the [ITTO website](#).
- h) Based on the action plan, the African regional coordinator for the ITTO-CITES programme, Mr Jean Lagarde Betti, is now discussing projects with officials from governments so that activities can be implemented over the next two years. One proposal for rehabilitation and maintenance of an existing *P. elata* plantation for research purposes will soon be submitted by Cameroon.

Review of Significant Trade

6. While the Review of Significant Trade continues for *Prunus africana*, two additional timber species were selected for review at PC17: *Pericopsis elata* and *Swietenia macrophylla*. A review of *P. elata* was recently completed, but given the level of trade, the Plants Committee has recommenced the process for this species. After further consideration since discussions at PC16 (Lima, July 2006), the Committee decided to include *S. macrophylla* in the process for all range States except Brazil, Guatemala and Mexico. The Secretariat has written to the range States concerned requesting information about implementation of Article IV of the Convention.

Plants Committee *Prunus africana* Working Group

7. The *Prunus africana* Working Group was established at PC16 to assist the seven countries, where the species has been identified as being of 'urgent concern', with implementation of the recommendations resulting from the Review of Significant Trade. A key element of this assistance is a workshop for Management and Scientific Authorities of these countries to enhance skills to conduct non-detriment findings, collect baseline data, formulate quotas and develop other management techniques.
8. After being postponed because of security issues, the workshop has been rescheduled for 8 to 11 September 2008 in Naivasha, Kenya. The CITES Secretariat and TRAFFIC are providing resource and logistical assistance to the workshop which is being hosted by the Kenya Wildlife Service. The workshop has been made possible with the generous financial contributions of France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

Plants Committee intersessional working groups on tree species

9. Following on from the outcomes of PC17, a number of intersessional working groups have been established relating to tree species. Three working groups will work on tree species annotations, non-detriment findings for timber species, and a non-timber forest product (NTFP) definition. Further information is available in the PC17 summary record.

Working Group on Physical Inspection of Timber

10. In accordance with Decision 14.60, the Secretariat has established this electronic working group by creating a dedicated and restricted online discussion forum accessible via the CITES website. Italy has agreed to chair this working group. A Notification has recently been issued informing Parties of the establishment of the working group and the electronic discussion forum, and inviting Parties and relevant intergovernmental organizations to submit the information referred to in Decision 14.60.

International Expert Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings – Mexico

11. The CITES Secretariat is on the Steering Committee for the International Expert Workshop on Non-Detriment Findings to be held from 10 to 15 November 2008 in Mexico. The working group on Trees (timber and medicinal and aromatic plants) is to produce outputs related to the methodologies, tools, information, expertise and other resources needed to formulate non-detriment findings.
12. Agarwood has been specifically included as a case study at the workshop. This case study will be based on TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's draft methodology that the Secretariat had contracted it to prepare on the formulation of non-detriment findings for agarwood-producing species. A version of the methodology was made available at PC17 as an information document and can be found in document [PC17 Inf. 4](#).

Regional workshop for the sustainable use and management of timber tree species

13. The CITES Secretariat has been invited to participate in the third regional workshop for the sustainable use and management of timber tree species in international trade that is being organized by UNEP-WCMC. The workshop is planned to be held in the West and Central Africa region later in 2008, depending on funding. One of the objectives of the workshop is to provide information for the Plants Committee in the framework of Decision 14.150.

Collaboration with the Academy of Wood Science and Technology

14. The Secretariat has been providing in recent years lectures to international students attending the Academy of Wood Science and Technology in Nantes, France. The Secretariat and the Academy are also exploring the possibility of making available the Academy's identification laboratory for training purposes and developing an e-course on CITES and timber. They are currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate this collaboration.

Chatham House – meeting on illegal logging

15. Upon invitation and sponsorship by Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the CITES Secretariat participated in a meeting on illegal logging in London from 9 to 10 June 2008. The Secretariat outlined the role of CITES in timber trade and provided an update on the ITTO-CITES programme for timber species. Further information about the meeting is available on the Chatham House website at: <http://www.illegal-logging.info>.