

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

---



Fifty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Doha (Qatar), 12 March 2010

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

RAMIN

This document has been submitted by Malaysia\* .

---

\* *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.*

## RAMIN TRADE REPORT FOR MALAYSIA

### JANUARY - NOVEMBER 2009

#### 1. Ramin Trade

As of January to November 2009, total export of Ramin traded by Peninsular Malaysia was 2,952 m<sup>3</sup> with 231 permits issued. In addition, 4 CITES re-export certificates for 152 m<sup>3</sup> of Ramin products were also issued for Ramin not originated from Peninsular Malaysia. As the previous year no export of Ramin was recorded from Sabah. The total export of Ramin traded by Sarawak until November 2009 was 2,591 m<sup>3</sup> with 120 permits issued.

The export destinations and the products of Ramin from Peninsular Malaysia are shown in Table 1 below. Italy is the largest market, taking 43% of total export, whilst Japan stood as the second largest Ramin market for Peninsular Malaysia. The combined export of these two markets constituted 83% of Ramin export from Peninsular Malaysia.

For Ramin products, sawn timber still constituted the largest, taking 55% of total volume exported, followed by dressed timber and mouldings. With the current export performance recorded till November, it is expected that the export performance for 2009 will further decline compared to 2008 and 2007 as a results of global economic recession faced by the timber sector since late 2008.

**Table 1: Export destinations for Ramin products (January to November 2009) for Peninsular Malaysia**

Export Destination		Ramin products	
Market	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )	Products	Volume (m <sup>3</sup> )
Italy	1,277	Sawn Timber	1,614
Japan	1,152	Dressed Timber	628
Germany	255	Mouldings	557
Others	268	Other	153
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,952</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,952</b>

The export destinations and the products of Ramin from Sarawak are shown in Table 2. China is the largest market, taking 24% of the total export, whilst U.S.A stood as the second largest Ramin market for Sarawak, followed by Japan. The combined export of these markets constituted 59% of Ramin export from Sarawak. For Ramin products, dowels and mouldings still constituted the largest, taking 55% of total volume exported.

**Table 2: Export destinations for Ramin products (January to November 2009) for Sarawak**

Export Destination		Ramin products	
Market	Volume (m3)	Products	Volume (m3)
China (including Hong Kong China)	623	Sawn Timber	1,153
USA	454		
Japan	448	Dowels/Mouldings	1,438
Others	1,066*		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,591</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,591</b>

\* including export to Peninsular Malaysia.

Although the import suspension of Malaysian Ramin products into Australia was lifted in September 2009, as Malaysia's application to register her management and conservation of Ramin under Australia's Commercial Import Programme has been approved, the export of Ramin to Australia has yet to recover.

The suspension was faced by Malaysia since 2007, in concurrent with prohibition by the European Commission which was lifted earlier at the end of 2007.

It is also observed that several manufacturers who consumed Ramin for their products have substituted this species with other equivalent species. The export performances of Ramin for the last three years for Peninsular and Sarawak are as shown in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively.

**Table 3: Export of Ramin from 2007 to 2009 (January to November) for Peninsular Malaysia**

	2007	2008	2009
Export quota (m3)	20,000	20,000	20,000
Export volume (m3)	6,409	6,122	2,952
Export performance (%)	32	31	15

**Table 4: Export of Ramin from 2007 to 2009 (January to November) for Sarawak**

	2007	2008	2009
Export Quota (m3)	12,875	3,178	3,178
Export volume (m3)	10,434.31	3,063.09 (5,112.1214m <sup>3</sup> )**	2,591
Export performance (%)	81.04	96.38	81.53

\*\* including stockpile of year 2007

## 2. Ramin Control and Enforcement

- Number of offences involving Ramin has been declining drastically since 2005 till 2007. In 2008 till November 2009 there were no offences involving Ramin. Control of Ramin has been regulated in accordance with Import Prohibition Order and Export Prohibition Order under Customs Act 1967. In Sarawak, control of Ramin is regulated in accordance with The Ramin Logs (Prohibition of Export) Order, 1980, The Ramin Shorts and Ramin Squares (Prohibition of Export) Order 1991 and The Sawn Ramin Timber (Restriction of Export) (Amendment) Order, 1991. These orders were made under section 96(1) (b) of Forest Ordinance, 1954.
- Collaboration with other enforcement agencies namely Royal Customs Department of Malaysia and Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency has been stepped up with regular visits to common entry and exit points and joint inspection work and operations. Briefings, meetings and consultations have been held with the Trade Zone Authorities and exporters as well as shipping and forwarding agents on the procedures enforced in free trade zone areas.
- Current procedure on Ramin export in Peninsular requires the removal pass to be submitted to the licensing Unit ensures that the harvesting and removal was approved by the Forestry Department at District level. The information will be reconciled for further verification between the source and export data to enhance control and monitoring of the species. It is also a legal requirement to issue Removal Pass in order to ensure proper movement of logs within Sarawak.
- Coordination with Customs Department who approved the export at the last points of export has also been undertaken with verification by Customs on the CITES Export Permit. Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) is currently developing the on-line system of CITES Permit issuance to enhance the annual export quota allocation to the exporters, which is expected to be completed in 2010.
- Sarawak Forest Department is currently developing an on-line system on Import and Export permit, including issuance of CITES permit to enhance the effectiveness of monitoring the annual export quota allocation to the exporters. The system is expected to be implemented in year 2010.
- It is envisaged that with the implementation of International Trade in Endangered Species Act 2008 (Act 686) in year 2010 will enhanced the effectiveness of the Management Authorities in regulating the Ramin trade in line with the CITES provisions and to ensure uniformity in enforcement actions.

### 3. Activities undertaken under the ITTO-CITES Programme

- Malaysia is very committed in our efforts to sustainably manage Ramin. Under the ITTO-CITES program, Malaysia was given the opportunity to further improve the management, conservation and regulation of this species.
- Malaysia has signed an agreement with ITTO on 29 October 2008 for the implementation of five activities under the ITTO-CITES Program. Three Agencies are currently involved in the implementation of the activities which are the Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia (FDPM), Sarawak Forestry Department (SFD) and Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) The total cost of the five Activities is estimated at US\$ 722,388. The 5 Activities are:
  - Non-detriment Findings Report on *Gonystylus bancanus* – A Quantitative Assessment of *G. bancanus* in two selected Permanent Forests of Sarawak;
  - The Quantification of Dry and Wet Inland *Gonystylus spp.* (Ramin), *Aquilaria spp.* (Agarwood) and *Intsia spp.* (Merbau) in Peninsular Malaysia;
  - Generation of spatial distribution maps of *Gonystylus bancanus* (Ramin) using hyperspectral technology and determination of sustainable level of harvest of Ramin in production forests of Peninsular Malaysia;
  - The Development of *Gonystylus spp. (Ramin)* Timber Monitoring System Using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in Peninsular Malaysia; and
  - Developing DNA Database for *Gonystylus bancanus* in Sarawak.
- All activities are currently ongoing and the progress of each activities are submitted to the Regional ITTO-CITES Coordinator every month. Malaysia has submitted the first 6 month progress report to ITTO in October 2009. The progress report was also presented at ITTO the *Workshop of the ITTO-CITES Project on Ensuring International Trade in CITES-listed Timber Species is Consistent with their Sustainable Management and Conservation: Gonystylus spp.* in Bogor, Indonesia in July 2009. In addition, ITTO has also sent a representative to monitor the status and progress of all 5 activities on 16-17 November 2009. A short brief on the progress of the 5 activities are included as *Annex I* to this document.
- Malaysia has submitted 5 new proposals to be undertaken in 2010 under the ITTO-CITES program as below:
  - National Workshop on Enforcement Compliance for Trade in Ramin (*Gonystylus* species);
  - Use of DNA for Identification of *Gonystylus* species and Timber Geographical Origin in Sarawak;
  - Sawn Timber and *Plywood* Recovery Study of Ramin (*Gonystylus bancanus*) in Peninsular Malaysia;
  - National Workshop on the Sharing of Findings from the Activities Implemented in Malaysia under the ITTO-CITES Project on Ensuring International Trade in CITES-listed Timber species is Consistent with their Sustainable Management and Conservation; and
  - *In Vitro* Propagation of *Gonystylus bancanus* (Ramin) in Sarawak

#### **4. Tri National Task Force on Trade in Ramin**

Three meetings on Tri-National Task Force meeting has been held hosted by Malaysia in 2004, Indonesia 2006 and Singapore in 2007. The meetings had addressed salient points with regards to Ramin trade and enforcement between three countries and had achieved substantial progress in meeting the objectives of the action plan. Since the trade of Ramin involving the three countries has been at a very insignificant level, it was agreed that the three countries will continue to communicate through various means without the need to meet at regular annual meeting.

In order to support and strengthen the implementation of CITES regulation between the 3 countries, Malaysia is continuously:

- Providing better understanding with Royal Customs of Malaysia and relevant authorities on data discrepancy and monitoring system regarding Ramin products;
- Building-up cooperation and networking with Environmental Non Government Organization (ENGO) and CITES Secretariat; and
- Providing assistance in implementing CITES regulations for ensuring the sustainable of Ramin trade in Malaysia.

## SHORT BRIEF ON THE PROGRESS OF 5 ACTIVITIES UNDER THE ITTO-CITES PROGRAM IN MALAYSIA

### 1. **Non-detriment Findings Report on *Gonystylus bancanus* – A Quantitative Assessment of *G. bancanus* in two selected Permanent Forests of Sarawak**

To-date, a total of 38 transects had been established and enumeration in the various forest types in the Kayangeran Forest Reserve in Lawas had been completed, while enumeration of the 11 sampling lines established in the Saribas Lupar Protected Forest in Sri Aman had also been completed. The analysis of the data involving stem structure and the distribution of ramin in both these areas was also completed. This information will be used to compute the sustainable level of harvest of *G. bancanus*. In addition, the preparation of the technical report on the computation of the sustainable harvest quota is expected to be completed in December 2009.

### 2. **Quantification of Dry and Wet Inland *Gonystylus* spp. (Ramin), *Aquilaria* spp. (Agarwood) and *Intsia* spp. (Merbau) in Peninsular Malaysia**

A total of 59 sample plots containing *Gonystylus* species, 1 plot of *Aquilaria* and 7 plots of *Intsia* had been identified for re-sampling, and a private company, Timberland Enterprise Sdn. Bhd., was appointed to undertake the field work and prepare the required reports. A total of 50 sample plots had been enumerated as of 30 November 2009, with the rest expected to be completed in December 2009. The Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia had also purchased the required field equipment for undertaking the forest inventory. The identification of suitable Permanent Sample Plots to monitor the growth, mortality and recruitment of *Gonystylus* species had also been completed.

### 3. **Generation of Spatial Distribution Maps of *Gonystylus Bancanus* (Ramin) Using Hyperspectral Technology and Determination of Sustainable Level of Harvest of Ramin in Production Forests of Peninsular Malaysia**

An assessment of the ramin spectral signature was conducted in October 2009 and the processing of the captured data has since been initiated. The study area in Compartment 77 of the Pekan Forest Reserve in Pahang had been surveyed and the development of the ramin tree database GIS is now completed. A four-day training course was held in October 2009 to provide hands-on training on the use of GPS for tree mapping which was attended by 40 participants from FRIM, the State Forestry Departments of Pahang and Kelantan, as well as staff of the Terengganu Timber Complex. Furthermore, the collection of primary data from ecological plots and the secondary data for assessing the stocking and population dynamics of ramin had been completed. However, the collection of data for the study of seedling dynamics is still being carried out.

### 4. **Development of *Gonystylus* spp. (Ramin) Timber Monitoring System Using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in Peninsular Malaysia**

The demarcation of the boundary of the study area had been completed while only 15 percent of the electronic marking and tagging of trees had been achieved. The acquisition of computer peripherals, RFID tags, handheld data logger with RFID scanner, and the rental of satellite (VSAT) communication system had been completed. In this context, a private company, Leadcom (M) Sdn. Bhd., was appointed to assist the Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia, among others, to implement and optimize the software platform, including the configuration of databases and software modules and interface, as well as to provide training to the field staff and users of the timber monitoring system using RFID technology.

### 5. **Developing DNA Database for *Gonystylus bancanus* in Sarawak**

DNA from all the leaf samples of ramin collected from trees in the Sedilu Forest Reserve, the Kayangeran Forest Reserve, and the Loagan Bunut and Maludam National Parks had been extracted, while 80 percent of the samples collected had undergone microsatellite analysis using the Genetic Analyser System at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM). The fragment analysis is currently being undertaken using the GeneMapper version 4.0 software while the statistical analysis of the data is carried out using GeneAIE v.6 software. Notwithstanding this, an estimated 40 percent of genotype profile of the collected samples had been generated.