

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



Sixty-second meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 23-27 July 2012

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

CITES Appendices

Development and application of annotations

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been submitted by the Regional Representative of North America as chairman of the Standing Committee working group on annotations*.

Background

2. At its 19th meeting (PC19, Geneva 2011), the Plants Committee considered six documents specifically related to annotations and formed several working groups at that meeting to consider various issues concerning annotations. Topics included developing definitions of certain terms contained in annotations to clarify their implementation, determining whether it would be appropriate to exclude finished products from CITES controls for additional taxa, and evaluating the annotations for timber species to determine if they are appropriate to the commodities in trade. Following significant work and discussion at the meeting, most of these issues were referred to intersessional working groups for further deliberation.
3. The Plants Committee noted the document submitted by the Regional Representative of North America on behalf of the region, Document PC19 Doc. 11.6 on *Development and application of annotations to the listings of plant taxa in the Appendices*, and invited the proponents to submit it for consideration at the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC61, Geneva 2011). At SC61, the Standing Committee formed an intersessional working group, under the chairmanship of the Regional Representative of North America (the United States), with a mandate to explore:
 - The shared understanding among Parties of annotations, both their meaning and function; and
 - The adoption of appropriate and reasonable procedures for crafting plant annotations, which may include recommending that annotations be developed in consultation with the Plants Committee; revising the discussion of annotations in the listing proposal format in Annex 6 to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP15) on Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II to recommend, in addition to the elements already listed, that a proponent Party discuss the practical implementation of the annotated listing if adopted; and providing guidance in Resolution (e.g., Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP15) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*) or other appropriate location, including in identification materials as appropriate.
4. The *members* of the working group were specified as follows: Australia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Indonesia, Japan, Switzerland, Thailand, the United States, the European Commission, IUCN, Human Society International, International Environmental Law Project, IWMC – World Conservation Trust, and TRAFFIC.

* *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.*

5. The Committee agreed that the chairman of the Standing Committee working group on annotations would liaise with the Plants Committee's intersessional working group on annotations and with the Chairman of the Animals Committee to determine how best to work in a collaborative, non-duplicative and coherent manner on this issue.
6. At its 20th meeting, the Plants Committee (PC20, Dublin 2012) again considered six documents related to annotations. Although the Committee undertook extensive discussions to define certain terms used in annotations, it was only able to agree on definitions for the terms 'powder,' 'wood chip,' and 'finished products packaged and ready for retail trade.' It was acknowledged that additional discussions are required to develop definitions of other terms used in annotations. Additionally, further discussions on annotations for tree species included in Appendices II and III are dependent upon the outcome of a timber trade study that has not yet been initiated. The lack of clear outcomes from many of the deliberations of the Plants Committee regarding annotations provided little to augment any discussions by the Standing Committee working group on annotations. Furthermore, due to competing work priorities, the chairman of the Standing Committee working group was unable to devote the necessary time to make further progress. Consequently, the working group was unable to fulfill its mandate during the intersessional period between SC61 and SC62.

Recommendations

7. As provided under paragraph d) of Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP15) on Establishment of committees, concerning the appointment of working groups within the Standing Committee, the chairman of the working group recommends that the Standing Committee extend the mandate of the working group to allow it to prepare a document to be submitted for consideration at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This document would be submitted by the Secretariat on behalf of the Standing Committee.
8. The chairman of the working group also recommends that the working group be extended for the intersessional period between CoP16 and CoP17, and that its mandate be expanded to, in consultation with the Plants Committee, identify additional work required regarding annotations, possibly including a review of the effectiveness and practicability of existing annotations, and prepare a draft decision, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee during the intersessional period between CoP16 and CoP17.