

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

Sixty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Johannesburg (South Africa), 23 September 2016

Species specific matters

African teak (*Pericopsis elata*)

REPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

This document has been submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo.*

Introduction

At the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC66, Geneva, 11-15 January 2016), the Secretariat presented the report on the Application of Article XIII by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This report, which is contained in document SC66 Doc. 28, was followed by recommendations concerning the DRC, whose implementation report was to be presented by the country at the 67th session of the Standing Committee.

However, the Standing Committee had separated the issue of *Pericopsis elata* from the consideration of the application of Article XIII of the Convention. Consequently, *Pericopsis elata* was considered in document SC66 Doc. 43, which was prepared by the Working Group on African Teak (DRC) in connection with item 43 of the Agenda and submitted at the request of the Standing Committee, at its seventh session. The Recommendations are contained in document SC66 Com. 14 (Rev. by Sec.)

The present document is a detailed report on the implementation of the recommendations relating to *Pericopsis elata*, contained in document SC66 Com. 14 (Rev. by Sec.), in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for examination by the 67th meeting of the Standing Committee. It is drawn up on the basis of the following components:

- a) Consideration of the management of the remainder of the timber harvested in 2014 and 2015 and of the export quota for the year 2016;
- b) Consideration of the implementation status of the measures submitted in the NDF report (PC22 Doc. 12.1).
- a) *Consideration of the management of the remainder of the timber harvested in 2014 and 2015 and of the export quota for the year 2016***

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has taken all steps to comply with the recommendations of the Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee, under which it has until 31 October 2016 to export the stocks of *Pericopsis elata* (African teak), amounting to 19,000 m³ (round wood equivalent), harvested in 2014 and 2015, and, as an exception to paragraphs 20 and 21 of Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev CoP15),

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the export of these is authorized, as an exception, under the 2015 export quota (31,905 m³ round wood equivalent). The CITES Authorities at national level, people working in timber and all other stakeholders have been made aware that this recommendation applies.

However, the Democratic Republic of the Congo regretted the lateness of the publication on the CITES website of document SC66 Com. 14 (Rev. by Sec.) and of the revised export quota for the year 2016, which appeared only in June 2016.

Nevertheless, there is compliance with the export quotas, which are no longer issued under the former system based on quantity of timber cut, but rather in accordance with the operators' inventories and management plans for the logging concessions, following their validation. Export permits are issued only when the operators area ready to export the timber out of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

b) Consideration of the implementation status of the measures submitted in the NDF report (PC22 Doc. 12.1)

The DRC has undertaken to implement the measures set forth in its NDF report (PC22 Doc. 12.1), namely:

- Tracking and management of the volumes harvested and exported;
- Systematic conversion of the volumes of processed products into round wood volume.

b.1. Tracking and management of the volumes harvested and exported

With support from the Project for Sustainable Development of Forests (AGEDUFOR), the DRC has developed an information system (database) which assists in tracking the exports out of the remainder of the 2014-2015 quotas on the one hand, and the operations and exports under the 2016 quota on the other.

This tracking system makes it possible to increase the transparency of transactions, to verify the legal origin of the timber in trade, to follow and monitor the use made of the quotas. It records important information on an Excel spreadsheet, notably the logging concession contract number, the company, the quota year, the number of the CITES export permit, the list of products, the volume, the equivalent under bark volume, the volume exported, the CITES permit issue date, the export date, the importing country, and any relevant remarks (See annexed sheet).

In addition, it facilitates the transparent exchange of information among the various concerned Divisions of the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development (Divisions of Forestry Inventories and Management; Forest Management; Conservation of Nature; Internal Monitoring and Verification) in the utilization of this database which helps to provide the Management Authority with computerized data, assists in its issuing of properly verified export permits and enables it to produce realistic reports.

b.2. Systematic conversion of the volumes of processed products into round wood volume

A preliminary study has been undertaken and validated by the forestry departments of the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development, with the goal of defining the rate for conversion into round wood equivalent. The study estimated this rate at 48%, taking into account the high value of the species and the efforts invested by the operators to recover as much as possible of the felled timber for the second or even third processing (See annexed note).

The DRC has also made progress in its process for handling inventories and management plans for the logging concessions, which has resulted, subsequent to monitoring and verification, in the validation of three management plans and two management inventories by the relevant departments of the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development, and also in the updating of the export quota for the year 2016, in accordance with the stipulations of the NDF.

It may be recalled that the DRC's export quota for *Pericopsis elata* has increased progressively from 23,239 m³ (2015 NDF quota) to 31,905 m³ (updated 2015 NDF quota which for a long time remained unnotified to the Parties, until the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee), and then to

49,356 m³ (2016 NDF quota), following the progress recorded in the process for inventories and management plans relating to the logging concessions located within the range of the species (See annexed table).

Conclusion

The Democratic Republic of the Congo believes that it has provided a satisfactory response to the recommendations addressed to it at the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC66, Geneva, 11-15 January 2016) on *Pericopsis elata*. It undertakes to cooperate with the Secretariat to provide additional information if that should be necessary.