

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



Seventy-third meeting of the Standing Committee  
Online, 5-7 May 2021

Administrative and financial matters

Report on current activities of the scientific committees

THE PLANTS COMMITTEE

1. This document has been submitted by the Chair of the Plants Committee.\*
2. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and following extensive deliberations between the Chairs and Members of the Standing, Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat, it was confirmed that the face-to-face 25th meeting (PC25) of the Plants Committee would not take place as scheduled from 20-23 July 2020 (see [Notification to the Parties No. 2020/045](#) of 29 May 2020):
3. On the basis of the documents prepared for the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee, the Secretariat, at the instruction of the Chair of the Plants Committee, initiated a procedure for intersessional decision-making in accordance with Rule 19 on *Procedure for intersessional decision-making* of the Rules of Procedure for meetings of the Plants Committee.
4. The Plants Committee took the following intersessional decisions, which were published in [Notification to the Parties No. 2020/056](#) of 21 September 2020:
  - a) Ms. Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo (representative for Africa) and Ms. Rosemarie Gnam (representative for North America) were confirmed as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee respectively;
  - b) The Plants Committee workplan for 2020-2022 (CoP18 to CoP19), as outlined in document PC25 Doc. 7.2, was approved; and
  - c) Ms. Rosemarie Gnam (representative for North America), Ms. Fabiola Rocío Núñez Neyra (representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean), and Ms. Yan Zeng (alternate representative for Asia) were nominated as the Plants Committee representatives on the Standing Committee working group on capacity-building.
5. The Plants Committee also established six intersessional working groups and agreed their Terms of Reference. Details of the mandates and membership of each working group can be found [here](#).
6. The Plants Committee remained committed to progress its mandates in spite of the challenges it faced due to COVID-19 pandemic measures. The members met virtually on 23 November 2020 in two 2-hour sessions to agree on a roadmap for their intersessional work for 2020 and 2021. The roadmap was developed working with a meeting of the Plants Committee in May or early June 2021 in mind and anticipating that the Standing

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\* *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.*

Committee would be meeting in April and September 2021, and that the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19) would be held in March 2022.

7. In addition to the six formal working groups, the Plants Committee agreed that several items of its workplan could benefit from informal discussions between members. The general view was that this could facilitate and speed up proper discussions and decision-making at the single Plants Committee meeting to take place between CoP18 and CoP19. For several of these items, the Plants Committee invited inputs from experts on an *ad hoc* basis (e.g. when a study or report became available for review). Items include: Appendix-I listed species\*; Non-detriment findings\*; Specimens grown from wild-collected seeds or spores that are deemed to be artificially propagated; Agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.); *Boswellia* trees (*Boswellia* spp.); Nomenclature (*inter alia* Orchidaceae, *Dalbergia* spp. and Appendix-III listings\*); Annotation #15; and Orchid annotations. The PC workplan (see document PC25 Doc. 7.2) indicates the PC members who are in the lead for discussions on these items. The results of these informal discussions are expected to vary on a case-by-case basis. They could take the form of a written output or an information document, support to the Secretariat in the production of an update, or a verbal contribution, depending on timing and the progress made intersessionally.
8. Some phases of the Review of Significant Trade (RST) require consultation with the members of the Plants Committee through the Chair [*i.e.* consultations under paragraphs 1 c) and 1 k) of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*]. The consultations will take place as outlined in the relevant Resolution. Concerning the selection of new/species country combinations under the RST process, it was decided that no new cases would be selected for review in the event of a virtual meeting scenario. An exception to this is the inclusion in the RST process of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* for all range States. As outlined in document [PC25 Doc. 15.5](#), this case follows a recommendation from the Standing Committee and a complementary instruction from the Conference of the Parties (as per Decision 18.92 on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa*). At its 25th meeting, the Plants Committee is to review the Annex to document PC25 Doc. 15.5 and decide which, if any, *Pterocarpus erinaceus*/country combination should be included in Stage 2 of the RST process.
9. There is consensus amongst Plants Committee members that a face-to-face meeting is preferable, but the Plants Committee recognized that this will not be possible in the current circumstances, *inter alia* because several members would not be able to travel to such a meeting in 2021.
10. A second informal virtual meeting of the Plants Committee was held on 5 March 2021 to discuss what progress had been made with the implementation of the roadmap, and the arrangements for holding the rescheduled 25th meeting of the Plants Committee online, which will now take place from 2-4 June 2021 to 21 and 23-24 June 2021, as will be communicated through a Notification to the Parties.
11. I take this opportunity to warmly thank all Plants Committee members for the great job they did in advancing in the implementation of our workplan in the run up to the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee. Likewise, I thank the Secretariat for supporting me in my role as Chair of the Plants Committee.

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\* This agenda item is addressed to the Animals and the Plants Committees.