

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



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Strategic matters

TOWARDS A RESOLUTION ON CITES AND FORESTS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC25, online, June 2021), the Secretariat presented document PC25 Doc. 12 and its addendum on *Towards a resolution on CITES and forests* for their comments, providing the rationale for the development of such a resolution and its proposed structure.
3. Noting the need to establish a strategic framework under the Convention to streamline the implementation of forest-relevant mandates and contribute effectively to global forest policies and initiatives, the Secretariat proposed to develop a resolution with an intent to enhance coherence between CITES and the international governance framework on forests; improve resource mobilization to support the implementation of forest-relevant mandates; and give due recognition to the Convention's role in the long-term conservation of species of wild fauna and flora occurring in, and dependent upon, forests.
4. As underscored by the Secretariat in the relevant PC25 documentation, the proposed resolution would be of a strategic nature and therefore does not intend to replace more technical Resolutions. Rather, the proposed new resolution could represent a strategic point of reference to more effectively contribute to the timely implementation of CITES provisions relevant to forests, including by building upon the collective knowledge, resources, mechanisms and networks of the existing global governance framework on forests.
5. Following consideration of document PC25 Doc. 12 and its addendum, the Plants Committee agreed to the establishment of an in-session working group at PC25. In introducing the recommendations of the working group, the Chair of the Plants Committee noted that there was general support for the development of a resolution on CITES and forests, but recognized that views on the process for pursuing such an initiative differed, with several options identified by the in-session working group.
6. Based on the recommendations of the in-session working group, the Plants Committee retained two options for progressing the development of a resolution on CITES and forests [see PC25 Com. 6 (Rev. by Sec.)], and recommended that the Secretariat submit both to the Standing Committee for consideration at the present meeting (SC74). As a first option, it recommended that the Secretariat develop and submit a draft resolution on CITES and forests [Option 1 in document [PC25 Com. 6 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)]; and as a second option, it offered two draft decisions on the subject [Option 2 in document [PC25 Com. 6 \(Rev. by Sec.\)](#)]. In the following sections, the Secretariat presents and provides its comments on these two options.

Option 1: Draft resolution on *CITES and forests*

7. A draft of a resolution on *CITES and forests* prepared by the Secretariat is presented in Annex 1A to the present document. Under this option, the draft resolution would be submitted by the Secretariat for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19, Panama City, 2022).

8. The scope of the draft resolution, as mentioned in its preambular part, relates to the recommendations and activities called for in various Resolutions and Decisions that are relevant for the implementation of the Convention for species listed in the Appendices that are occurring in, and dependent upon, forests. For ease of reference, they are collectively referred to in the draft resolution as the “CITES forest-cluster of activities”.
9. Noting that forests are largely defined by lands that are predominantly covered by trees (FAO, 2018)<sup>1</sup>, the CITES forest-cluster of activities will centre around flora-related activities, and trees in particular. But it is also expected to leverage the implementation of relevant terrestrial fauna-related mandates and decisions in effect.
10. An example as to how the CITES forest-cluster of activities could be structured following a meeting of the Conference of the Parties is outlined in document PC25 Doc. 12, Annexes 1 and 2 for forest-relevant Resolutions and Decisions in effect following CoP18.
11. The main objectives of the draft resolution are to:
  - a) enhance coherence between CITES and the international governance framework on forests;
  - b) improve resource mobilization to support the implementation by Parties and others of the CITES forest-cluster of activities; and
  - c) increase awareness and visibility about the Convention’s role in the conservation of species of wild fauna and flora occurring in, and dependent upon, forests.
12. In accordance with these objectives, the preamble and operational part of the draft resolution groups its provisions under three thematic areas:
  - a) The first area provides guidance on the **collaboration with organizations with substantial mandates and programmes relating to forests**, such as the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW). The Secretariat takes this opportunity to provide further background on two relevant aspects which it had also brought to the attention of the Plants Committee at PC25, namely collaboration with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the Global strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD).
    - i) Regarding collaboration with ITTO, the Secretariat noted in document PC25 Doc. 12 and its addendum that Resolution Conf. 14.4 on *Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber* has not been revised since its adoption in 2007 and does not reflect the most recent developments regarding collaboration between CITES and ITTO. The Secretariat explained at PC25 that rather than revising this resolution, its provisions could be updated and incorporated under a broader resolution on *CITES and forests*, further noting that ITTO is a partner organization of the CPF. The draft Resolution in Annex 1 incorporates updated provisions regarding collaboration with ITTO and includes a paragraph to repeal Resolution Conf. 14.4.
    - ii) Regarding the GSPC, the Secretariat suggested in document PC25 Doc. 12 to incorporate Resolution Conf. 16.5 on *Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity* into a resolution on *CITES and forests*. However, the Plants Committee discouraged merging Resolution Conf. 16.5. In line with this advice, while acknowledging the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) as a key partner for the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities, the draft resolution does not suggest merging or repealing Resolution Conf. 16.5. Following consideration of documents PC25 Comp. and PC25 Doc. 13 Add. on *Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation*, the Plants Committee agreed to propose that Decisions 18.49 and 18.51 be replaced by new draft decisions to be agreed at CoP19, aimed at exploring the pertinence of revising Resolution Conf. 16.5 in light of outcomes under CBD regarding the post-2020 future of the GSPC.
  - b) The second area provides guidance on **resource mobilization and information exchange** to catalyse the timely implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities and the undertaking of projects and programmes associated with it.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO. 2018. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Terms and Definitions*. [www.fao.org/3/I8661EN/i8661en.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/I8661EN/i8661en.pdf)

- i) In terms of resource mobilization, the draft resolution acknowledges the opportunity for the timely implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities presented by the budget scenarios drafting process under the Convention's provisions on financing the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the upcoming triennium (currently Resolution Conf. 18.1).
  - ii) It is proposed to formalize a structured framework (i.e. a CITES forest programme) to harness ongoing and future CITES forest activities, projects and programmes, such as the CITES Secretariat-implemented *CITES Tree Species Programme* (CTSP) and the project the Secretariat conducts with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on "*Support to the implementation of the UN-REDD Initiative for Sustainable Forest Trade in the Lower Mekong project, with a focus on trade in CITES-listed timber species*". The Secretariat expects that CITES and its Parties will be called upon to engage in a growing number of similar forest initiatives and projects. This is anticipating that the current trend to include more forest-dependent species in the Appendices will continue and the Convention will gain visibility as a key instrument in contributing to the global governance framework on forests. This would be in line with the 2021-2030 Strategic Vision and particularly its Goals 4 (*CITES policy development also contributes to and learns from international efforts to achieve sustainable development*) and 5 (*Delivery of the CITES Strategic Vision is improved through collaboration*) (see Resolution Conf. 18.3).
  - iii) In this area, Parties are also invited to prioritize the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities in designing and undertaking programmes and projects relevant to *CITES and forests* and share with the Secretariat and other Parties information derived from such initiatives.
- c) In the third area, guidance is provided on **outreach and visibility** relating to the CITES forest-cluster of activities, including in events such as the World Wildlife Day and the International Day of Forests.
13. As a complement to Option 1, the Secretariat has also drafted decisions to support the implementation of the resolution in its first iteration, should it be adopted at CoP19, including *inter alia* a specific instruction for the Secretariat to develop a dedicated webpage on the CITES website. They are presented in Annex 1B.

Option 2: Draft decisions for developing a resolution on *CITES and forests*

14. Annex 2 to the present document presents two draft decisions which were agreed by the Plants Committee at PC25. They are intended to further consider the benefits of pursuing a resolution on CITES and forests and reviewing existing resolutions in this regard between the 19th and 20th meetings of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19 to CoP20).
15. CITES work relating to forests must contribute meaningfully in a synergized, effective way to the new Global Biodiversity Framework and its targets, expected to be adopted by CBD in 2022. Of particular relevance would be its proposed Targets 5 and 10, which at the time of writing respectively aim: to ensure that harvesting, trade and use of wild species is sustainable, legal and safe for human health; and to ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, increasing the productivity and resilience of these production systems.
16. The Secretariat therefore considers it a matter of urgency that the objectives set out in the draft resolution under Option 1 can be acted upon already at CoP19. The urgency has been recently echoed by the UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021 (CoP26) through the *Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forest and Land Use* and its commitment to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation. Of particular relevance is the declaration's reaffirmation to significantly increase finance and investment from a wide variety of private and public sources, which aligns well with the draft resolution's second thematic area relating to resource mobilization for the implementation of the CITES-forest cluster of activities. This urgency would not be fully recognized by the adoption of the two draft decisions, postponing the possible development of a resolution on *CITES and forests*. The Secretariat notes that under Option 2, any resulting new resolution would probably not come into effect before 2026.
17. The Secretariat saw the need for and took the initiative to develop a resolution focusing on CITES and forests. It brought this forward to the Plants and Standing Committee to seek their views. However, the Secretariat notes that the Plants Committee's draft decisions, as worded, lack any further role for the Secretariat in developing a possible resolution on *CITES and forests*, or in supporting the Plants and Standing Committees in advancing the initiative.

18. Further, the implementation of the Plants Committee's draft decisions may also not lead to the development and implementation of an agreed CITES forest-cluster of activities nor pave the way towards mandates that can create meaningful synergies between CITES and the global framework on forests, as envisaged by the Secretariat.
19. The above considered, the Secretariat is of the view that should the draft decisions be considered pertinent for consideration at CoP19, the Standing or Plants Committee would be best placed to bring them forward.

#### Recommendations

20. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) consider the Secretariat's draft resolution on *CITES and forests* contained in Annex 1A and the complementary draft decisions contained in Annex 1B of the present document;
  - b) consider, as an alternative, the Plants Committee's draft decisions contained in Annex 2 of the present document; and
  - c) on the basis of the above, provide any guidance to the Secretariat on this matter.

Option 1: Draft resolution by the Secretariat

## Conf. 19.X

## CITES and forests

NOTING Resolution Conf. 18.3 on *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* and its purpose to, *inter alia*, ensure that CITES policy developments are mutually supportive of international environmental priorities and take into account new international initiatives, consistent with the terms of the Convention;

NOTING FURTHER Resolution [71/285](#) of the United Nations General Assembly on *United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030* and the importance of promoting coherence between CITES and the international governance framework on forests;

COMMENDING the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at [COP15] and EMPHASIZING its targets [5 and 10] as they pertain to forests;

COMMENDING FURTHER the Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forests and Land Use endorsed by over 140 countries in the framework of the UN Climate Change Conference UK 2021 (CoP26) and their commitment to, *inter alia*, conserve forests and other terrestrial ecosystems and accelerate their restoration;

WELCOMING Resolution [73/284](#) of the United Nations General Assembly on the *United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)*;

CONSIDERING that the ecosystem-level contribution of CITES is reflected in the preamble of the Convention, where Parties have recognized that wild fauna and flora in their many beautiful and varied forms are an irreplaceable part of the natural systems of the earth which must be protected for this and the generations to come;

MINDFUL that forests are largely defined by lands of a given area that are predominantly covered by trees;

AWARE OF the steady increase of the number of valuable flora species included in the Appendices, and in particular of timber-producing tree species, in order to address potential threats posed by unsustainable levels of international trade;

EMPHASIZING the need to catalyse the timely implementation of activities called for in Resolutions and Decisions that are relevant to the implementation of the Convention for species listed in the Appendices that are occurring in, and dependent upon forests, hereinafter referred to as "the CITES forest-cluster of activities";

RECALLING that in 2018, the Secretariat joined the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), an informal, voluntary arrangement among international organizations, institutions and secretariats with substantial programmes on forests, and a mission to help enhance the contribution of all types of forests and trees outside forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals, to promote the sustainable management for all types of forests, and to strengthen long-term political commitment to that end;

CONSIDERING that the CPF counts amongst its fifteen members long-held CITES partners in matters relevant to forests, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat;

RECOGNIZING that the collaboration with the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) is broadened and streamlined through the Secretariat's engagement with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and through the implementation of the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP);

NOTING Resolution [2015/333](#) of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) on the *International arrangement on forests beyond 2015*, which specifies the core functions of the CPF;

RECALLING also that in 2013 the Secretariat joined as an inaugural member the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW), a voluntary partnership of international organizations with substantive mandates for the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources, and a mission to increase cooperation and coordination on sustainable wildlife management issues among its members, where such adds value, in order to promote the sustainable management of terrestrial vertebrate wildlife in all biomes and geographic areas, contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to human food security, livelihoods and well-being;

CONSIDERING that CPW counts amongst its membership partners that also have substantial programmes on or relevant to forests such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat, TRAFFIC – The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network, and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE);

RECALLING further the Secretariat's partnership with the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICCCWC), and the contributions of INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank and the World Customs Organization (WCO) in the promotion of improved forest law enforcement;

MINDFUL that Resolution Conf. 19.1 on *Financing the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2023-2025* requests the Secretary-General to prepare budget proposals for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting and REMINDING the opportunity this presents for the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities;

WELCOMING the successful outcomes of the CITES Secretariat's strategic partnerships with ITTO and FAO, respectively, in the implementation of forest-related projects such as the "*CITES Tree Species Programme*" and the "*Support to the implementation of the UN-REDD Initiative for Sustainable Forest Trade in the Lower Mekong project, with a focus on trade in CITES-listed timber species*";

BELIEVING that, as more forest-dependent species are included in the Appendices and that the Convention continues to gain visibility as a key instrument in contributing to the global governance framework and international efforts to achieve sustainable development, CITES Parties will be called upon to engage in a growing number of forest-related projects and programmes;

AWARE OF the importance of raising visibility to the Convention's significant contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of species dependent on forests, and ensuring relevant outreach activities;

NOTING Resolution Conf. 17.1 (Rev. CoP18) on *World Wildlife Day* and the Secretariat's role as facilitator of the United Nations World Wildlife Day (WWD) and its linkages with Resolution [67/200](#) of the United Nations General Assembly on *International Day of Forests*; and

ACKNOWLEDGING the opportunity that the above events provide in increasing outreach and visibility on CITES' contribution and role in the long-term conservation of forests, and on the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. DIRECTS the Secretariat to, after each meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP), publish a compendium of activities in Resolutions and Decisions that are relevant to forests and CITES-listed species dependent of forests;
2. NOTES this compendium will represent the CITES forest-cluster of activities for the intersessional period;

#### **Regarding collaboration with organizations with substantial programmes on forests**

3. RECOMMENDS that, in implementing Resolutions and Decisions relevant to the CITES forest-cluster of activities, Parties take account of the coherence between CITES and the international governance framework on forests, including but not limited to the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030*

and the work plans of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests' (CPF)<sup>2</sup> and the *Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management* (CPW);

4. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to maintain and ensure mutually supportive collaboration with the CPF and CPW and other organizations and networks with substantial programmes on forests, and to report on a regular basis to the Standing, Plants, and Animals Committee on this collaboration, as appropriate;

***Regarding resource mobilization for the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities and the undertaking of associated projects and programmes***

5. INVITES the Secretariat to consider the CITES forest-cluster of activities as a whole in its fundraising activities or in preparing budget proposals for consideration by the Conference of the Parties;
6. ENCOURAGES the Secretariat to actively engage with relevant partners, including but not limited to CPF and CPW members, in seeking funds for the implementation of externally funded activities of the CITES forest-cluster;
7. CALLS UPON Parties to actively support the Secretariat in this endeavour;
8. WELCOMES the Secretariat's engagement in strategic partnerships, such as with FAO and ITTO, for the development of projects that contribute to the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster;
9. INVITES Parties to prioritize the implementation of the CITES forest-cluster of activities in designing and undertaking programmes and projects relevant to CITES and forests;
10. FURTHER INVITES Parties to share with the Secretariat for publication on the website outputs, outcomes and progress derived from the implementation of such initiatives;

***Regarding outreach and visibility relating to the CITES forest-cluster***

11. ENCOURAGES Parties to share with the Secretariat information relevant to the implementation of this Resolution for publication on the CITES website;
12. ENCOURAGES the Secretariat to identify opportunities to raise visibility on progress in the implementation of this Resolution, *inter alia* in the context of World Wildlife Day, the International Day of Forests and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration; and
13. REPEALS Resolution Conf. 14.4 on *Cooperation between CITES and ITTO regarding trade in tropical timber*.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/esa/forests/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Short-version-CPF-Work-Plan-2021-2024.pdf>

Draft decisions by the Secretariat as a complement to the draft resolution under Option 1

**19.AA Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall:

- a) monitor the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.XX on *CITES and forests*, including by issuing a Notification to the Parties requesting information relevant to its implementation; and
- b) report on the progress of the implementation of this Decision and make recommendations at the meetings of the Standing Committee, and the Plants and Animals Committees, as appropriate.

**19.BB Directed to Parties**

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) submit information relevant to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.XX on *CITES and forests*; and,
- b) share information related to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.XX on *CITES and forests*, drawing upon the information and experiences reported upon by Parties in response to the Notification to the Parties issued under Decision 19.AA, paragraph b).

**19.CC Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees**

The Animals and Plants Committees shall:

- a) consider any report from the Secretariat relating to the implementation of Decision 19.AA;
- b) develop recommendations regarding the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.XX *CITES and forests* in its first iteration; and
- c) request the Secretariat to include in its reporting to the Standing Committee any recommendations developed under paragraph b) supra.

**19.DD Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) consider any report by the Secretariat relating to the implementation of Decisions 19.AA to 19.CC; and,
- b) submit any resulting recommendations for consideration by the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including possible revisions of the provisions of Resolution Conf. 19.XX on *CITES and forests*.



Option 2: Draft decisions agreed by the Plants Committee

**19.AA *Directed to the Plants Committee***

The Plants Committee shall consider the value of developing a possible new strategic resolution on *CITES and forests*, as outlined in document PC25 Doc. 12 and document PC25 Doc. 12 Addendum; prepare an overview of the issue from a technical and scientific perspective; and provide its recommendations for consideration of the Standing Committee.

**19.BB *Directed to the Standing Committee***

The Standing Committee shall consider the report and recommendations of the Plants Committee under Decision 19.AA and develop recommendations, including identifying existing Resolutions that would need to be revised or repealed, and provide its report for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.