

## CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

## Other proposals

## A. PROPOSAL

Transfer of *Amazona viridigenalis* from Appendix II to Appendix I

## B. PROPONENT

Germany, Mexico, United States of America

## C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

## 1. Taxonomy

- |     |                      |   |
|-----|----------------------|---|
| 1.1 | Class:               | Aves  |
| 1.2 | Order:               | Psittaciformes  |
| 1.3 | Family:              | Psittacidae   |
| 1.4 | Genus:               | <i>Amazona</i>  |
|     | Species:             | <i>A. viridigenalis</i> (CASSIN, 1853)  |
| 1.5 | Scientific synonyms: | -   |
| 1.6 | Common names:        | English: Green-cheeked Amazon, Red-crowned Parrot,<br>Mexican redheaded Parrot<br>French: Amazone à joues vertes<br>Spanish: Cotorra Frente Roja, Amapola, Loro cabeza roja<br>German: Grünwangenamazone<br>Others: Amazzone a guance verdi |
| 1.7 | Code numbers:        | A-218.003.005.025   |

## 2. Biological Parameters

## 2.1 Distribution:

The species is endemic to the lowland plains and the low slopes of the Sierra Madre Oriental of Northeast Mexico. The distribution area ranges from the 26° degree (today rather 24°) to the 20° degree of northern latitude (COLLAR et al. 1992).

The species is and was found in the district of Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí and Veracruz.

Current recordings come from Tamaulipas and Luis Potosí (COLLAR et al. 1992).

There have been no more recordings from Nuevo León for 50 years (with the exception of a small population of captive refugees and their offspring near San Pedro, a suburb of Monterrey) and none from Veracruz for 40 years (COLLAR et al. 1992).

The species' distribution boundary in the South appears to be near Tamzunchalet (CLINTON-EITNIEAR 1986). Only small remaining areas are inhabited within the total geographical range but due to the high mobility of the species an exchange between the different parts of the population may be possible. The exact range is not sufficiently known (COLLAR et al. 1992).

In addition to the populations in the original Mexican distribution areas there are also fertile, integrated small populations in various areas of the USA, mainly in California and Florida (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Gabriel Valley, Florida Keys, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach). The birds sighted in Brownsville (Texas) could either be winter guests of the Tamaulipas population or released, smuggled animals. Further small, integrated populations also exist in Puerto Rico and Oahu (Hawaii) (COLLAR et al. 1992).

The Green-cheeked amazon inhabits dry lowland and lower crests of ridge with lush vegetation. It inhabits evergreen forests with ebony trees (*Pithecellobium flexicaule*), *Ehretia*, *Bumelia* and *Condalia*, "wet-oak/sweetgum"-forests, deciduous forests biotopes, grassland on slopes and in gorges as well as partly cultivated and deforested areas with remaining patches of forests. The species also inhabits ridge-crests covered with pine and oak woods up to altitudes of 1,200 m (CLINTON-EITNIEAR 1986, RIDGELY 1981 in COLLAR 1992). Agricultural landscapes are also inhabited by the species in low densities provided that

suitable nesting habitats with single big trees are present. The destruction of original forest has caused the species to inhabit suboptimal habitats (PÉREZ & EGUIARTE 1989).

*A. viridigenalis* covers a large range in winter (CLINTON-EITNIEAR 1986).

## 2.2 Habitat Availability

The habitat of the green-cheeked amazon has been lost for a considerable length of time to deforestation. Of particular importance is the loss of forests as a consequence of the increasing cultivation of Sorghum. More than 80 % of Tamaulipa's lowland is now deforested for agricultural use. The Las Adjuntas dam in the Rio Corona Vallley which is being built and the Presa des Espanol dam pose further severe threats to the habitat of *Amazona viridigenalis*. In addition to this, wood cutting, deforestation and leisure activities also continue (COLLAR et al. 1992).

## 2.3 Population Status

The green-cheeked amazon is today generally rare (COLLAR et al. 1992). The current population is estimated to number between 3.000-6.000 birds; the population in Monterrey is thought to consist of a couple of hundert animals (COLLAR et al. 1994). Populations size for those birds living outside their original distribution are given as follows:

Los Angeles: some hundred animals

Miami: 150 animals

Fort Lauderdale: spread out

Brownsville, Puerto Rico und Oahu: small populations

## 2.4 Population Trends

The species was formerly abundant. Flocks of some hundred birds used to cause damage to agricultural crops (SUTTON & BURLEIGH 1939 in COLLAR et al. 1992). The species was considered locally abundant up to the 1970s. 5 males per 8 ha (GEHLBACH et al. 1976) and 0.26 birds per ha were recorded in the coastal habitats of Tamaulipa (PÉREZ & EGUIARTE 1989). A (partly) rapid population decline has been noted since the 1970s (RIDGELY 1981, CLINTON-EITNIEAR 1986, 1988, NECK 1986, INSKIPP et al. 1988, PÉREZ & EGUIARTE 1989). The green-cheeked amazon is generally rare today (COLLAR et al. 1992). The current populaton is estimated to range from approximately 3.000 to 6.000 specimen. (COLLAR et al. 1992).

## 2.5 Geographic Trends

The species occurs in eight from each other isolated parts on the east coast of Mexico (ROBILLER 1990).

## 2.6 Role of the Species in its Ecosystem

## 2.7 Threats

The habitat of the green-cheeked amazon has been lost for a considerable length of time to deforestation. Of particular importance is the loss of forests as a consequence of the increasing cultivation of Sorghum. More than 80 % of Tamaulipa's lowland is now deforested for agricultural use. The Las Adjuntas dam in the Rio Corona Vallley which is being build and the Presa des Espanol dam pose further severe threats to the habitat of *Amazona viridigenalis*. In addition to this, wood cutting, deforestation and leisure activities also continue (COLLAR et al. 1992).

An intensive trade in the species has developed over the last twenty years. More than 2000 birds were imported in to the USA between 1968 und 1972. Thousands more birds followed in the 1970s (1977-1980 approximately 7,452 birds). Nearly all of them were imported to the USA (COLLAR et al. 1992, ROBILLER 1990). An import ban caused the illegal trade in the species to increase. This can be seen by the documented number of captures in the country of origin. Even in protected areas, 30% of the birds are caught (COLLAR et al. 1992). Illegal trade and a lack of adequate protection continues (COLLAR et al. 1994).

Threat status according to COLLAR et al. (1994): Endangered: A1a,b,c;A2b,c;C1;C2a

The species meets the following criteria in accordance with the "Criteria for Admendment of Appendices I and II, Annex 1": A i, v, B i, iii, iv, C i, ii.

### 3. Utilization and Trade

#### 3.1 National Utilization

#### 3.2 Legal International Trade

An intensive trade in the species has developed over the last twenty years. More than 2000 birds were imported in to the USA between 1968 und 1972. Thousands more birds followed in the 1970s (1977-1980 approximately 7,452 birds). Nearly all of them were imported to the USA (COLLAR et al. 1992). Commercial trade is forbidden since September 20th, 1982.

List of CITES permits (INSKIPP et al. 1988):

1981: 586

1982: 1,727

1983: 99

1984: 2

Further trade data (ROET et al. 1981):

October 1979 - June 1980 from Mexiko to U.S.A.: 3,279

CITES-reported trade between 1980-1992, total of 2,897 birds

Country of Origin	1980-1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	Sum
Argentina			6							6
Brazil	1									1
Canada				2			1	1		4
Switzerland					1		1		1	3
Germany	1	1					2			4
Denmark	72									72
Great Britain						2		1	1	4
Guatemala	1									1
Guyana	29									29
Mexico	2,482	1	2	7	4	1	1	2		2,500
Nicaragua				101						101
Netherlands	1				74		2	13	9	99
Philippines		1					10	1		12
Sweden									1	1
USA				3	10	1	1	3	2	20
South Africa			10							10
Zimbabwe	2									2
unknown	11	2		2	1	7	1	2	2	28
Sum	2,600	5	18	115	90	11	19	23	16	2,897

WCMC CITES Trade Database Output User-Guide Version 3.0, 8 December 1995

Year	Country of Import	Country of Export	Country of Origin	Import Number	Export Number	Purpose	Source
1990	Germany	Switzerland			1	P	
1990	U.S.A.	Sweden	Mexico	1			unknown
1990	U.S.A.	USSR	unknown	1			unknown
1991	Austria	Germany	Mexico		2	T	O
1991	Switzerland	Canada			1	P	unknown
1991	U.S.A.	Canada	U.S.A.		1	P	O
1991	U.S.A.	Canada	unknown	1			unknown
1991	U.S.A.	Netherlands	unknown	1			unknown
1992	Switzerland	U.S.A.	unknown	1		P	unknown
1992	Germany	Switzerland	unknown		1		O
1992	France	Sweden			1	P	
1992	France	Sweden	Great Britain		1	P	
1992	Great Britain	Great Britain		2			
1993	France	Sweden			1	P	
1993	France	Sweden	Great Britain		1	P	
1993	Netherlands	Turkey	unknown	1		P	O
1993	U.S.A.	Mexico		7			W
1993	U.S.A.	Mexico		1		T	W
1994	South Africa	Great Britain		1		P	

Purpose Codes:

P Personal

T Commercial Trade

Source Codes:

O Pre-Convention specimens

W specimens taken from the wild

Number of Green-cheeked amazons traded in Germany between 1984 and 1993 (Source: BMU, CITES annual reports):

Year	Number	Import	Export	Exporting Country /Destination	Country of Origin
1989	4	x		Switzerland	U.K.
1989	1	x		USA	USA
1989	2		x	Switzerland	U.K.
1990	1	x		Switzerland	Switzerland
1991	1	x		USA	USA
1991	2		x	Austria	Mexico
1993	11	x		Philippines	Philippines

### 3.3 Illegal Trade

Increased illegal trade occurred after an import ban had been implemented. This can be seen by the documented number of captures in the country of origin. The birds have suffered a 30% decline even in protected areas. Illegal trade and a lack of adequate habitat protection continues (COLLAR et al. 1994).

### 3.4 Actual or Potential Trade Impacts

### **3.5 Captive Breeding for Commercial Purposes (Outside Country of Origin)**

The species is often kept in the USA as a pet. The Bird Breeding Program in the San Diego Zoo registered 87 birds in 1982. The species is successfully bred in captivity on a regular basis.

## **4. Conservation and Management**

### **4.1 Legal Status**

#### **4.1.1 National**

Commercial trade was declared illegal on September 20th, 1982.

#### **4.1.2 International**

CITES Appendix II Listing

### **4.2 Species Management**

#### **4.2.1 Population Monitoring**

A research project is currently underway in the field of ecology and reproductive biology of the species. Moreover, the extent of the habitat fragmentation is meant to be analyzed with the help of satellite pictures. The project is supported by WWF-US, TRAFFIC-US and the US Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the Universidad Autonoma de Tamaulipas and the Mexican authorities (LAMBERT et al. 1993).

#### **4.2.2 Habitat Conservation**

Only small breeding areas are protected by private measures. One forest area at the Río el Naranjo is protected by the armee (COLLAR et al. 1992).

#### **4.2.3 Management Measures**

The Center for the Study of Tropical Birds (CSTB) is currently supporting an environmental education campaign for the protection of *A. viridigenalis* in conjunction with the installment of nesting-boxes on the Colorados Ranch, Tamaulipas. This project is also carried out in cooperation with the Universidad Autonoma de Tamaulipas as well as with the Mexican authorities (LAMBERT et al. 1993).

### **4.3 Control Measures**

#### **4.3.1 International trade**

Commercial trade was declared illegal by Mexico on September 20th, 1982.

#### **4.3.2 Domestic Measures**

## **5. Information on Similar Species**

There are a number of similar amazonas species, in particular *Amazona finschi*, *Amazona autumnalis* (both CITES Appendix II) and *Amazona pretrei* (CITES Appendix I).

## **6. Other Comments**

Although contacted in October 1996 no comments have been received by the CITES Management Authority from Mexico.

## **7. References**

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- NECK, R.W. (1986): Expansion of red-crowned Parrot, *Amazona viridigenalis* into southern Texas and change in agricultural practices in northern Mexico. *Bull. Texas Orn. Soc.* 19: 6-12.
- OWRE, O.T. (1973): A consideration of the exotic avifauna of southeastern Florida. *Wilson. Bull.* 85: 491-500.
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- WCMC: WCMC CITES Trade Database Output User-Guide version 3.0, 8 December 1995

## CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

## Other proposals

A. Proposal

Transfer of the green-cheeked Amazon (*Amazona viridigenalis*, Cassin, 1853) from Appendix II to Appendix I. This proposal is made with reference to Resolution Conf. 9.24 and Resolution Conf. 9.20 in order to prohibit international trade in specimens of *Amazona viridigenalis* captured in forests, owing to a decrease in populations throughout its range, and at the same time to regulate trade carried out by the Units for Conservation, Management and Sustainable Use established by Resolution Conf. 8.15.

B. Proponent

Mexico and cosponsored by Germany and the United States of America.

C. Supporting Statement1. Taxonomy

- 1.1 Class: Aves
- 1.2 Order: Psittaciformes
- 1.3 Family: Psittacidae
- 1.4 Species: *Amazona viridigenalis* Cassin, 1853
- 1.6 Common names:
- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| English: | Green-cheeked Amazon, Red-crowned parrot,<br>Mexican red-headed parrot |
| French:  | Amazone à joues vertes   |
| Spanish: | Cotorra frente roja, Amapola, Loro cabeza roja                         |
| German:  | Grünwangenamazone  |
| Italian: | Amazzone a guance verdi  |
- 1.7 Code numbers: A-218.003.005.025

2. Biological Parameters

## 2.1 Distribution

The species is endemic to the lowland plains and the low slopes of the Sierra Madre Oriental of Northeast Mexico. The distribution area ranges from the 26° degree (today rather 24°) to the 20° degree of northern latitude (Collar *et al.*, 1992).

The species is and was found in the district of Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí and Veracruz and recently a small population of 25 birds was found in the state of Querétaro (Personal communication from Navarro).

In addition to the populations in the original Mexican distribution areas there are also fertile, integrated small populations in various areas of the USA, mainly in California and Florida (Los Angeles, San Diego, San Gabriel Valley, Florida Keys, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach). The birds sighted in Brownsville (Texas) could either be winter guests of the Tamaulipas population or released, smuggled animals. Further small, integrated populations also exist in Puerto Rico and Oahu (Hawaii) (Collar *et al.*, 1992). This has happened because of illegal trade in this species and because of a lack of knowledge primarily about its distribution, but also about its behaviour and reproduction at the time of its introduction.

The following types of vegetation are found in this species's range: deciduous scrub forest, foothill matorral, scrub thorn forests, palm woodlands, mangroves, introduced pasture land, and recently it was seen in mesophyllous montane forests (Aragón and Tapia, 1986 and personal communication from Navarro). In these environments, the following tree species are chosen for nesting during the breeding season: ébano (*Pithecellobium ebano*), higuérón (*Ficus citrifolia*), coma (*Brumelia laetivirens*), cerón (*Phyllostylon brasiliensis*) and barreta (*Helietta parvifolia*) (Aragón, 1986; Pérez, 1986). Most of the vegetation in its range has been modified and in some cases replaced with introduced pastures in which there are isolated groves and trees.

During the winter, the population of *A. viridigenalis* migrates to the southern part of its range in the states of Querétaro, San Luis Potosí and Veracruz.

## 2.2 Habitat Availability

The habitat of the green-cheeked amazon has been lost for a considerable length of time to deforestation. Of particular importance is the loss of forests as a consequence of the increasing cultivation of Sorghum.

## 2.3 Population status

The green-cheeked amazon is today generally rare (Collar *et al.*, 1992). The Mexican scientific community estimates a population of 5000 to 8000 specimens. Populations outside of Mexico are estimated to be small (personal communication, G. Gómez).

## 2.4 Population Trends

The species was formerly abundant. Flocks of some hundred birds used to cause damage to agricultural crops (Sutton & Burleigh 1939 in Collar *et al.*, 1992). The species was considered locally abundant up to the 1970s. 5 males per 8 ha (Gehlbach *et al.*, 1976) and 0.26 birds per ha were recorded in the coastal habitats of Tamaulipa (Pérez & Eguiarte 1989). The green-cheeked amazon is generally rare today (Collar *et al.*, 1992).

## 2.5 Geographic trends

## 2.6 Role of the species in its ecosystem

Owing to the adaptation of the structure of its beak, the *A. viridigenalis*, as well as most of the Psittacidae, plays an important role in the ecosystem as a dispersant of seeds of the vegetation on which it feeds. In addition, it participates in the preparation of nests for the pato pijije (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) and the coas, (*Trogon collaris*) and others (J. Pérez, 1986).

## 2.7 Threats

The habitat of the green-cheeked amazon has been lost for a considerable length of time to deforestation. Of particular importance is the loss of forests as a consequence of the increasing agriculture. In addition to this, wood cutting continues.

An intensive trade in the species has developed over the last twenty years. More than 2000 birds were imported in to the USA between 1968 and 1972. Thousands more birds followed in the 1970s (1977-1980 approximately 7,452 birds). Nearly all of them were imported to the USA (Collar *et al.*, 1992, Robiller 1990). An export ban caused the illegal trade in the species to increase.

# 3. Utilization and Trade

## 3.1 National utilization

Within Mexico, the green-cheeked Amazon is one of the three most popular parrots used as mascots because of its ready adaptation to captivity and its facility for imitating sounds. Its feathers are used in the manufacture of handicraft and also by rural populations for the fabrication of fishing and hunting articles and on a few occasions for ceremonial rites.

### 3.2 Legal international trade

Since 1982, the use and export of this species has been prohibited. In 1988, the law on ecological equilibrium and environmental protection was published. Article 87 of this law states that, "The use of wildlife species in economic activities may be authorized if the users guarantee its controlled reproduction and growth in captivity and provide a sufficient number for repopulating the species." In 1994, the official Mexican standard NOM-059-ECOL-94 was published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación listing the species and subspecies of wild terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora in danger of extinction, threatened or rare and those granted special protection and establishing dispositions for their protection.

Because of this legislation, there is no legal trade in this species, and the Units for Conservation, Management and Sustainable Use that reproduce this species have not requested its registration with CITES, although it is registered with the "Dirección General de Vida Silvestre".

### 3.3 Illegal trade

According to available information, illegal trade of this species is estimated to be the equivalent of approximately 30 percent of the number of chicks born in each breeding season. Given the steps taken by the Federal Office for Environmental Protection, illegal trade will be reduced as much as possible.

### 3.4 Actual or potential trade impacts

### 3.5 Captive Breeding for Commercial Purposes (Outside Country of Origin)

The species is often kept in the USA as a pet. The Bird Breeding Program in the San Diego Zoo registered 87 birds in 1982. The species is successfully bred in captivity on a regular basis.

## 4. Conservation and Management

### 4.1 Legal status

#### 4.1.1 National

Since September 1982 and the publication of the calendar for the capture of breeding and pet birds, the capture and the sale of this species have been prohibited. In 1988 the law on ecological equilibrium and environmental protection was published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación prohibiting its capture in the wild and its trade.

In addition, this species is protected by the official Mexican standard NOM-059-ECOL-94, published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación that lists the species and subspecies of wild terrestrial and aquatic fauna and flora in danger of extinction, threatened or rare and those granted special protection and establishing regulations for their protection. The green-cheeked Amazon is considered to be **threatened with extinction**.

#### 4.1.2 International

In 1981, the order of Psittaciformes was included in Appendix II of the CITES.

In the list of threatened animals of the IUCN, the species *A. viridigenalis* is listed as threatened.

### 4.2 Species management

At the present time, a "Programme for the Conservation of Wildlife and Production Diversity in the Rural Sector" has been established. This programme has two important aspects. The first provides for the implementation of management and conservation plans for ecosystems in various regions of the country. The second aspect provides for the implementation of programmes for

recovery, conservation, management and use of priority species such as the green-cheeked Amazon. In addition, the network of Units for Conservation, Management and Sustainable Use of Wildlife is operational and at the present time 14 units reproduce Psittacidae.

5. Information on Similar Species

There are a number of similar amazonas species, in particular *Amazona finschi*, *Amazona autumnalis* (both CITES Appendix II) and *Amazona pretrei* (CITES Appendix I).

6. Other comments

7. Additional Remarks

8. References

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