CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

Other proposals

A. Proposal

To maintain in the CITES Appendices the artisanal product called *palo de agua* or *palo de lluvia*, manufactured using Chilean and Peruvian columnar cactii in the *Echinopsis* and *Eulychnia* genera, plus other Bolivian species, with the reservation that no CITES export permit be required for quantities of up to a maximum of three specimens of the handicraft product when in the possession of a traveller.

B. Proponent

Chile

C. Supporting statement

In Chile, the manufacture of the handicraft product called *palo de agua* is based primarily on exploitation of three species of native columnar cactii: *Echinopsis chiloensis, Echinopsis skottsbergii* and *Eulychnia acida*.

The raw material, called *normata*, which is dry sections of these plants, is gathered on the ground and then used in workshops to manufacture this product, known as *palo de agua, palo de lluvia* or *palo musical*.

No evident damage to these species has so far been detected. Field observations confirm that there is currently abundant dry material that can be used. Nonetheless, this type of handicraft should continue to be regulated in order to avoid any future damage.

The three species used are especially suited for this type of handicraft because of their central cavity, which can be filled and which produces their characteristic musical sound.

No survey has yet been made of large-scale use of other species in the *Echinopsis* and *Eulychnia* genera, because the other species have a narrow central vascular cavity, making them poorly suited for this use.

According to the information provided by Peru, there are also small-scale workshops in Peru that manufacture the product *palo de lluvia*, using, like in Chile, species in the *Echinopsis* genus. Peru has given their support for the proposed amendment and, according to the most recent information, accepts the reservation exempting up to a maximum of three specimens, with the additional reservation that the exemption be per year. We feel that it is very difficult to enforce the "per year" condition (see note N° 1).

Bolivia has also informed us that several species of cactii are used in Bolivia to manufacture this handicraft. Like Peru, Bolivia has informed us of their support for the proposed amendment with the request that the exemption not exceed five specimens, a quantity once considered to be viable. Later, taking into consideration Peru's reservation plus the opinion of the Scientific Authority for Chile, CONICYT, the maximum exemption was maintained at three specimens.

Travelling with up to three specimens of this product should not be considered a commercial activity, but acquisition of a handicraft product, a souvenir for personal use. For this reason, and in contrast to large commercial shipments, the possession of up to three specimens of this product can be exempted from regulation.

D. Chilean species

a) *Echinopsis chiloensis* (Colla) Fried. and Rowl.

Scientific synonyms: *Trichocereus chiloensis* (Colla) Br. and R.

Cactus chiloensis Colla

Common name: quisco, quisca

An arborescent columnar plant, widely found between 29 and 35° south latitude. This species can grow to more than 7 metres tall. It grows straight and cylindrical, producing terminal buds, 9–10 centimetres thick, with 10 to 18 ribs, 1-3 centimetres wide. Over these, are arranged white or yellowish rings, oblong to circular, 0.8-1.2 centimetres long. The marginal thorns are arranged in groups of 9 to 12; the central thorns are 3-16 centimetres long. It has white, solitary, sessile flowers, 10-18 centimetres long. The floral tube has the shape of a trumpet. The central cavity of the *normata* that it produces can reach more than 6 centimetres in diameter. The vascular cylinder is not compact and has an aspect of laminar fibres, a feature that differentiates it from the genus *Eulychnia*.

b) *Echinopsis skottsbergii* (Backbg.) Fried. and Rowl

Scientific synonyms: *Trichocereus skottsbergii* Backbg. var. *breviatus* Backbg.

Trichocereus skottsbergii Backbg.

Common name: quisco, quisca

An arborescent species with few branches, it can reach several metres in height. It grows primarily on the western slope of the Coastal Range, from the coast up to approximately 900 metres above sea level. The northern limit is south of Tongoy Bay at 30° 19' south latitude. The southern limit is at Quebrada Honda, Region IV.

There are 16 to 21 ribs. The thorns are light coffee coloured. Those in the centre, 4 to 6, are up to 12 centimetres long. The flowers are arranged on the sides of the trunk and are approximately 10 centimetres long. The tepals are white with shades of pink. The *normata* that it produces are similar to those of *Echinopsis chiloensis*.

c) *Eulychnia acida* Phil.

Scientific synonym: *Cereus acidus* Schumann

Common name: copao, ácido

An arborescent plant which grows up to 4 metres in height and is heavily branched. It usually has a single trunk. There are 10 to 16 ribs, wide and low with slightly sunken rings. Its range is concentrated between 28° and 32° south latitude.

New thorns are light brown and later turn greyish white; those on the edges, about 12 in number, measuring about 1 centimetre in length, are sometimes absent. The main thorns, usually just 1 or 2, are usually oriented downward and are between 10 and 20 centimetres in length. The flowers, white with pink lines, are between 3 and 5.7 centimetres long and 4–6 centimetres in diameter. The floral tube is short and is 1.5–1.8 centimetres long. Its *normata* have a central cavity smaller that *Echinopsis*. It can be more than 4 centimetres in diameter. The vascular cylinder is compact.

E. Peruvian species

According to information provided by Peru, the following species are used.

a) *Echinopsis puquiensis*

An erect cactus, branched or columnar, endemic to the department of Ayacucho. This species grows in dry valleys and on rocky hills, between 3000 and 3500 metres above sea level.

b) *Echinopsis pachanoi*

An erect cactus, with branches, its distribution is in the departments of Ancash, Lambayeque, La Libertad, Lima and Piura. It grows on rocky hills, between 2000 and 3000 metres above sea level.

c) *Echinopsis cuzcoensis*

An erect cactus, columnar or branched. It is endemic to the department of Cuzco where it grows on rocky hills and scrub land between 2500 and 3000 metres above sea level. Currently, there are no studies sufficient to determine the conservation status of this species.

F. Bolivian species

No information has been provided so far about the Bolivian species of columnar cactii used for the manufacture of this artesanal product "palo de lluvia". Bolivia has provided information that there are groups of local families that use several species for small-scale manufacture of handicrafts.

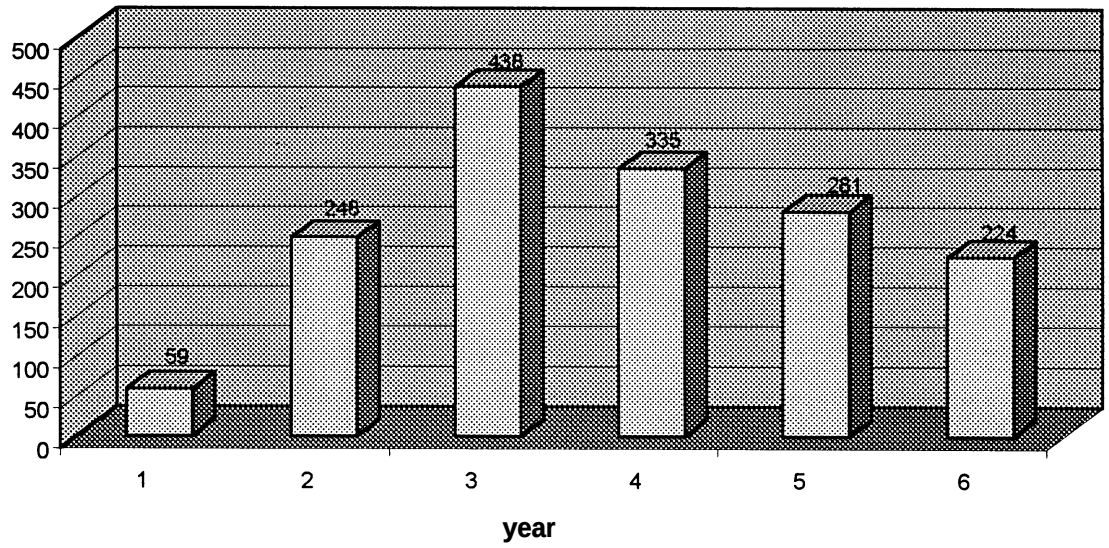
G. Conservation status in Chile

According to a preliminary study by Hoffmann and Flores (1989), the species *Echinopsis chilensis* and *Eulychnia acida* are considered to be OUT OF DANGER and *Echinopsis skottsbergii* is listed as VULNERABLE.

H. Legal international trade

In Chile, a study of the statistics for the past six years (1993–1998) shows that export of the product began to decrease in 1996 by approximately 20 per cent with respect to 1995. Later, further decline was reported for exports in 1997. In the following figure it is possible to see that exports reached their greatest volume in 1995 (number 3 in the figure) and then declined progressively in the following years.

Linea metres of "palo de agua"
exported between 1993 and 1998 (in thousands)



I. Conclusion

The small-scale manufacture of these products is an activity that uses dry portions, naturally dead of South American columnar cactii.

When considering whether to exempt this product completely from CITES regulations, the information provided by Peru and Bolivia plus the opinion of the Scientific Authority for Chile (CONICYT) and the Management Authority (SAG) for Chile were taken into account and it was felt that this product should remain in CITES Appendix II, with the unique reservation of suspending regulations in the case of transit of up to a maximum of three specimens, on condition that these be in the possession of the person who is travelling.

Heavy trade in palos de agua in Chile is carried out by firms established for these purposes. This activity is regulated by CITES and should be maintained.

As for the cases of Peru and Bolivia, information is still insufficient to determine the conservation status of these species. For this reason, it is recommended not to eliminate completely CITES regulation of this product. In addition to other considerations, this could be very risky.

The transit of several products in the possession of tourists (in this case of up to three specimens of palos de lluvia) is neither a commercial activity, nor threatens the survival of these species. As a result, it is recommended that the requirement of export permits be modified.

J. References

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Hoffmann, A. y Flores, A. 1989. El estado de conservación de las plantas suculentas chilenas: Una evaluación preliminar. In: Benoit, I. (ED). Libro Rojo de la flora terrestre de Chile, p. 111-127. CONAF, Santiago, Chile. 157 p.

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(Note N° 1) It should be mentioned that Peru has supported the proposed amendment, emphasizing that up to a maximum of three specimens per year per traveller be exempt. Chile feels that this condition, "per year" is very difficult to apply, because of the difficulty for both the CITES Management Authority in the exporting country and the enforcement agency of CITES regulations in the importing country to know the number of times that a traveller transports this product.