

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION ON *SIPHONCHILUS AETHIOPICUS* (WILD GINGER) –  
IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

1. This document has been submitted by South Africa in relation to amendment proposal CoP17 Prop. 61 on *Siphonochilus aethiopicus* (wild ginger)\*.
2. South Africa is proposing the inclusion of *S. aethiopicus* on Appendix II in accordance with Article II 2 (a) of the Convention and based on criteria A and B in Annex 2 a of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16).
3. *Siphonochilus aethiopicus* is a long-lived geophyte with a perennial rhizome and annual above ground parts that die off during the dry season. In southern Africa, it is the cleaned, fresh, unprocessed *S. aethiopicus* rhizomes that are most traded, and are fairly distinctive compared to other rhizomes sold in traditional medicine markets.
4. An identification guide has been drafted by the South African National Biodiversity Institute to assist with regulating and monitoring the trade in *S. aethiopicus*. The identification guide is presented in Annex I.

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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.

*Siphonochilus aethiopicus* – Wild Ginger

Traditional name: *Isiphephetho* (Zulu)

Description: **Light golden brown, small, bulb-shaped root with a wide, flat base (about 2 – 4 cm in diameter) and tapering top. Has slightly loose papery scales and often with dry and stringy root shoots attached to the base. Characteristic aroma of ginger.**

**Distribution: Not endemic to SA, found in Limpopo and Mpumalanga and thought to be extinct in KZN.**

**Likelihood of encountering it in the traditional medicine market: High** (The most highly sought after medicinal plant in South African traditional medicine markets. Seen at traditional medicine trade areas in Free State, Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu Natal, and Limpopo in 2015. There are increasing reports of the species being brought in from countries across the border)





*S. aethiopicus* roots/tubers as pictured at the Faraday market. Tubers are usually between 2-4 cm wide with a cone shape (Flat at the bottom and pointed towards the top). The tubers sometimes have loose papery scales and lines around the top half which give it a 'spinning-top' look.



Plants of wild ginger in the field. Tubers are buried under the ground and plants are destructively harvested.

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