

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Geneva (Switzerland), 17-28 August 2019

INFORMATION SUPPORTING PROPOSAL COP18 PROP. 51
TO DELETE *DALBERGIA SISSOO* FROM APPENDIX II

This document has been submitted by India in relation to proposal CoP18 Prop. 51.*

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D.O. No. 4-18/2019 WL

Dated: 22nd July, 2019

Dear *Secretary General,*

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, I present compliments to the CITES Secretariat and would like to clarify you about India's stand in response to observations of CITES Secretariat on the proposal for de-listing of *Dalbergia sissoo* from Appendix II of CITES.

As you would be aware that India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal have submitted a proposal (CoP 18 Prop.51) for deleting *Dalbergia sissoo* from Appendix II.

In this context, we wish to bring the following facts for consideration of the CITES Secretariat:

- a. During the CITES COP-17, the proposal for listing the entire Genus of *Dalbergia* in appendix II was based on the assessment report of UNEP-WCMC which had concluded that *Dalbergia* species of South and central America only meet the criteria of listing in the CITES appendix II. The proposal had highlighted high threats, the detrimental legal and illegal trade practices and the adverse/declining trend of habitats, population size, population structure, population trend based on the studies conducted only in central America, Africa and South East Asia for justifying the listing of whole Genus of *Dalbergia* in appendix II including the species from South Asia like *D.sissoo* which is in abundance and therefore not yet been considered for IUCN Red List. It will be worth to mention here that the proposal had highlighted high threat to the species due to detrimental legal and illegal trade practices in log and sawn timber form.
- b. India has conducted the Non-Detrimental Finding (NDF) study through the Botanical Survey of which means that the trade in species will not adversely impact the existence of species in India, (one of the designated CITES Scientific Authorities in India). The study's findings are 'positive' wild. *Dalbergia sissoo* is widely distributed and native to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Nepal Philippines, South Africa. The species has very fast growth and is found naturalised outside its wild occurrence. It is second most important cultivated timber tree of India found in agro forestry system and plantations along the roads, river beds, railway tracks, canal banks etc., almost in every part of the country. Therefore, *D.sissoo* does not fully meet the criteria laid down in Annexure 2(a) of Resolution Conf.9.24 (Rev.CoP 17).

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- c. It will be worth to mention here that export of species in log or sawn timber form is prohibited in India. Therefore, the possibility of large scale harvest to meet the demand of raw timber in the international market is very less. The products of this species are being exported from India only in handicraft form while major export of the species from other countries is in log/ sawn timber form, which is the actual cause for decline in the *Dalbergia species* in Central and Latin American countries, as was highlighted in Proposal No. 55 of COP-17 as the justification for listing of *Dalbergia* genus in Appendix II of CITES. Considering these two different forms of trade of the specimens, the possibility of difficulty in distinguishing the specimen being exported from India from those of other countries is further reduced. Therefore, *D. sissoo* does not fully meet the criteria laid down in Annexure 2(b) of the Resolution Conf. 9.24(RevCoP 17) as well.
- d. In addition, the CITES had acknowledged the fact that non-endangered *Dalbergia* species will be subject to increased control which may increase bureaucratic burden to the trade in legally harvested timber and timber products. But, it has been taken as a minor inconvenience as regards to benefits from whole Genus listing. However, unlike the observation of the proponents in their proposal for CoP17 (Prop.55), listing of *Dalbergia* Genus has resulted into severe inconveniences to the trade of the *D.sissoo*. The listing of *Dalbergia* in CITES Appendix II has adversely affected livelihood of the several poor farmers as well as artisans (over 50000) in India due to increased control of the trade. It has been observed that despite of having potential export of over Rs1000 Crores of handicraft of this species only, export of Rs. 617 crores only could take place in 2017-18 due to this increased control on trade.

In view of the above, we would like to urge the CITES Secretariat for reconsidering the opinion on the proposal for de-listing *Dalbergia sissoo* from Appendix II of CITES, while the proposal is considered during the CITES CoP-18 at Geneva, Switzerland.

with warm regards & best wishes

Yours sincerely,



(Manmohan Singh Negi)

CITES Management Authority for India.

**The Secretary General
CITES Secretariat,
Geneva, Switzerland.**