

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 23 May – 3 June 2019

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL FOR AMENDMENT OF APPENDICES I AND II

A. Proposal

Amendment of the annotation to the listing of *Pericopsis elata* in Appendix II.

Expand the scope of the annotation (currently #5) to include plywood and transformed wood as follows:

"Logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, plywood, and transformed wood<sup>1</sup>."

B. Proponent

Ivory Coast and the European Union<sup>2</sup>

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

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| 1.1 Class:   | Angiospermae   |
| 1.2 Order:   | Fabales  |
| 1.3 Family:  | Leguminosae (Fabaceae)   |
| 1.4 Genus, species or subspecies, including author and year: | <i>Pericopsis elata</i> (Harms) van Meeuwen  |
| 1.5 Scientific synonyms:                                     | <i>Afromosia elata</i> Harms   |
| 1.6 Common names:  | English: African Teak, Afromosia, Satinwood, Yellow Satinwood<br>Spanish: Afromosia, Teca Africana<br>Aboriginal languages: Kokrodua, Awawai, Assamela, Obang<br>French: Afromosia, Assamela, Teck d'Afrique<br>Trade names: Afromosia, African Teak |

<sup>1</sup> Whereby transformed wood is defined by HS code 44.09: Wood (including strips, friezes for parquet flooring, not assembled), continuously shaped (tongued, grooved, v-jointed, beaded or the like) along any edges, ends or faces, whether or not planed, sanded or end-jointed

<sup>2</sup> 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.

## 1.7 Code numbers:

## 2. Overview

The intent of this proposal is to revise the current annotation #5 applying to the listing of *Pericopsis elata* in Appendix II and to expand its scope to also include plywood and transformed wood, in the following manner: "Logs, sawn wood, veneer sheets, plywood, and transformed wood"<sup>3</sup>.

Based on discussions within the Standing Committee Annotations Working Group on the extent and scale of cases where the listing was circumvented, a need to revise the annotation for *Pericopsis elata* has been identified. In accordance with the guidance included in Resolution Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP16) on *Use of annotations in Appendices I and II*, the revision is intended to ensure that CITES controls cover those commodities that first appear in international trade as exports from range States and to include those commodities that dominate the trade and the demand for the wild resource.

At its eighth meeting (CoP8, Kyoto, Japan 1992), the Conference of the Parties to CITES agreed to the inclusion of the Afrormosia population (*Pericopsis elata*) in Appendix II, with an annotation #5 restricting the listing to "Logs, sawn wood and veneer sheets"<sup>4</sup>.

The intent of the listing was to cover the major products in trade that pose a conservation threat to the species in the wild. Already in 1986, *Pericopsis elata* was endangered in parts of its geographical range according to an FAO assessment. Since 1998, *Pericopsis elata* has been listed as "endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species assessment.

The species has one of the most highly valued tropical timbers on the market (EUR 800-1000 per m<sup>3</sup> in 2012) and faces ongoing demand in trade. The EU has always been one of the big importers of timber from this species. There are seven range states (Central African Republic, Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Republic of Congo, but only the last three export on a commercial level.

Trade in *Pericopsis elata* has been subject to the CITES Review of Significant Trade regularly. The latest review showed that the species meets a high volume trade threshold for globally threatened species (2011-2015) and demonstrated a sharp increase in trade in 2015.

Furthermore, a review of the trade data from the CITES database shows variations in some years due to CITES decisions which impacted trade (e.g. trade bans, difficulties with quotas etc.). Therefore, traders questioned more and more whether sawn wood with a minor transformation would fall outside the scope of CITES. Concerns have been expressed regarding declarations that timber has gone through a secondary processing step only to circumvent the listing as annotated in #5 without adding any value to the wood. A clear case was found in one EU Member State where wood was imported without CITES documents from a range State and investigation showed that the transformation of the wood was very superficial and without any purpose or added value. This case demonstrates how a loophole is used to circumvent the CITES system.

The significant progress made by range States of *Pericopsis elata* in improving their management of this species has been widely acknowledged. Several range States have domestic legislation regulating the harvest and export of the species. A lot of progress has also been made in the development of sound non-detriment findings resulting in science-based export quota. However, different interpretations of the current annotation have led to exports falling outside the scope of CITES and thus also outside the accepted annual quota, which undermines the spirit of CITES.

Amendments to annotations may be necessary when clarification is required as to the intent of the annotation, when trade patterns shift, or when annotated listings do not appropriately regulate the products in trade that are of conservation concern. Expanding the scope of annotation #5 as currently applied to *Pericopsis elata* to include plywood and transformed wood would address the current loophole.

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<sup>4</sup> Original wording: "Designates saw-logs, sawn wood and veneers", amended in 2007 to current wording.

### 3. Consultations

The amendment to the annotation is proposed in accordance as a follow up to the discussions in the Standing Committee Working Group on Annotations.

A consultation letter was distributed by the European Union to all range States (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Nigeria) in October 2018, and range State responses are summarized in Annex 1.

**Annex 1: Summary of range State reponses**

<b>Range State</b>	<b>Response</b>
Cameroon	Consulted on 29/10/2018, no response received
Central African Republic	Consulted on 29/10/2018, no response received
Republic of Congo	Support
Côte d'Ivoire	Support to co-sponsor
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Consulted on 29/10/2018, no response received
Ghana	Consulted on 29/10/2018, no response received
Nigeria	Consulted on 29/10/2018, no response received