

CONVENCIÓN SOBRE EL COMERCIO INTERNACIONAL DE ESPECIES  
AMENAZADAS DE FAUNA Y FLORA SILVESTRES

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Vigésimo quinta reunión del Comité de Flora  
Ginebra (Suiza), 17 y 20-23 de julio de 2020

Cuestiones específicas sobre las especies

**BOSWELLIA (BOSWELLIA SPP.)**

1. Este documento ha sido preparado por la Secretaría.

Antecedentes

2. En su 18ª reunión (CoP18, Ginebra, 2019), la Conferencia de las Partes adoptó las Decisiones 18.205 a 18.208 sobre *Comercio de Boswellia* (*Boswellia spp.*), como sigue:

**18.205 Dirigida a la Secretaría**

*La Secretaría publicará una Notificación a las Partes y, según proceda, se comunicará con los interesados directos pertinentes en la que se solicitará para solicitar la información siguiente:*

- a) *datos biológicos sobre las especies de Boswellia, tales como tamaño de las poblaciones, distribución, estado y tendencias de las poblaciones, información de identificación y su función en el ecosistema donde se encuentran;*
- b) *información disponible sobre los niveles de recolección y explotación, nombres comerciales, interesados directos cercanos a los lugares de recolección de las especies y características de la cadena de suministro para el consumo interno y el comercio internacional;*
- c) *información sobre las amenazas a estas especies, en particular en relación con las causas subyacentes de la baja capacidad de regeneración y los efectos de la recolección en estas especies;*
- d) *información sobre iniciativas para reproducir artificialmente estas especies o producir plantaciones de las mismas;*
- e) *reglamentos existentes y estructuras de propiedad en relación con las especies, su hábitat, factores impulsores de las tendencias del hábitat y medidas de gestión establecidas o en elaboración, tales como prácticas de recolección sostenible; y*
- f) *sugerencias acerca de reuniones u otros actos que podrían constituir oportunidades para colaborar o intercambiar información sobre la recolección y la gestión de estas especies.*

**18.206 Dirigida a la Secretaría**

*La Secretaría recopilará y someterá a la consideración del Comité de Flora la información recibida con arreglo a la Decisión 18.205.*

### 18.207 Dirigida al Comité de Flora

*El Comité de Flora examinará la información recibida y otra información pertinente que tenga disponible sobre el estado, la gestión y el comercio de especies de *Boswellia*, destacando las principales lagunas de información y formulando recomendaciones para fundamentar los futuros esfuerzos destinados a abordar el uso sostenible y la conservación de estas especies, e indicando si alguna de las especies cumple los criterios para ser incluida en los Apéndices de la CITES.*

### 18.208 Dirigida a las Partes

*Se alienta a los Estados del área de distribución y a las Partes que participan en la gestión, la reproducción o el comercio de especies de *Boswellia* a que proporcionen información a la Secretaría, como se requiere en la Decisión 18.205.*

#### Aplicación de la Decisión 18.205

3. El 10 de febrero de 2020, la Secretaría publicó la Notificación 2020/010 y su Anexo, con el Cuestionario sobre especies de *Boswellia* (*Boswellia spp.*). El cuestionario se elaboró en consulta con el Comité de Flora, así como con los Estados Unidos de América y Sri Lanka, como autores del documento CoP18 Doc. 66 sobre Comercio de *Boswellia spp.* (*Burseraceae*). Se diseñó de manera que abarcara todos los aspectos esbozados en la Decisión 18.205.
4. La Secretaría recibió respuestas a la notificación de 11 Partes: Alemania, Camboya, Camerún, Eritrea, Eslovaquia, Estados Unidos de América, Etiopía, Malta, Mónaco, Nueva Zelandia y Suiza, y un Estado que no es parte: Sudán del Sur. También enviaron respuestas los siguientes interesados directos: Arbor Oils of Africa (Kenya); el Centro de Estudios Ambientales y Sociales del Incienso (CFESS, Somalia); Chemiloids Life Sciences Pvt Ltd. (India); Global Frankincense Alliance (GFA); INDFRAG Biosciences Pvt Ltd. (India); Neo Botanika (Somalia); TRAFFIC; y cuatro expertos independientes que informaron acerca de *Boswellia* en la India.
5. Algunas de las respuestas enumeradas en el párrafo 4 anterior contienen amplias investigaciones de antecedentes. Alemania evaluó si cuatro especies de *Boswellia* (*B. frereana*, *B. papyphera*, *B. sacra*, *B. serrata*) cumplen los criterios de inclusión en la CITES establecidos la Resolución Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) sobre *Criterios para enmendar los Apéndices I y II*; proporcionó una visión general de los mercados alemanes de goma y resina (ProFound, Duerbeck 2015); y elaboró fichas de datos de especies sobre *B. frereana*, *B. neglecta*, *B. rivae*, *B. papyphera* y *B. sacra* que cotejan las referencias científicas recopiladas en la base de datos MAPROW<sup>1</sup> (Schippmann, 2018 a-e). El Camerún presentó un examen exhaustivo de los recursos de *Boswellia* y su utilización, las reglamentaciones nacionales sobre productos forestales no madereros (PFNM) y un plan estratégico de investigación y gestión para permitir el uso sostenible de *Boswellia spp.* Los Estados Unidos de América presentaron datos comerciales de la base de datos de zauba.com e información complementaria de la American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) relativa al uso de *Boswellia* en la industria de suplementos dietéticos de los Estados Unidos. Arbor Oils of Africa (Kenya) presentó un protocolo de recolección sostenible, un estudio documental de la cadena de valor de la goma y la resina y una evaluación sobre el terreno del estado de las especies de *Boswellia* y la comercialización del incienso en Kenya. El Centro de Estudios Ambientales y Sociales del Incienso (Somalia) presentó un informe sobre las reglamentaciones históricas y actuales, los aspectos socioeconómicos y los enfoques de gestión de las poblaciones de *Boswellia* en la región de Somalilandia de Somalia. La Secretaría también recibió algunas publicaciones científicas adicionales y otros materiales de apoyo.
6. De conformidad con la Decisión 18.205 y a fin de garantizar una amplia recopilación de información, la Secretaría también estableció enlaces con los siguientes interesados directos pertinentes: la Misión Permanente de Observación de la Santa Sede ante las Naciones Unidas y otras organizaciones internacionales con sede en Ginebra; el programa BioTrade de la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre Comercio y Desarrollo (UNCTAD); el Grupo de Especialistas en Plantas Medicinales de la Unión

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<sup>1</sup> La base de datos MAPROW (Recursos de Plantas Medicinales y Aromáticas del Mundo) fue creada por el ex copresidente del grupo de especialistas en plantas medicinales de la UICN, Uwe Schippmann. Recopila la información científica disponible sobre unas 28.000 especies de plantas medicinales y aromáticas.

Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (UICN); el Grupo Mundial de Especialistas en Árboles de la UICN y la Unión para el Biocomercio Ético (UEBT).

7. El Grupo Mundial de Especialistas en Árboles de la UICN dará prioridad a las evaluaciones actualizadas de la Lista Roja de todas las especies de *Boswellia* en su Iniciativa de Evaluación Mundial de Árboles. Se prevé que las evaluaciones actualizadas de la Lista Roja para el género estarán disponibles en 2021 o 2022. En el documento CoP18 Doc. 66 y en la respuesta de los Estados Unidos de América se presenta un examen de las evaluaciones de la Lista Roja disponibles actualmente.

#### Aplicación de la Decisión 18.206

8. La información sobre *Boswellia* que se presentó a la Secretaría es sustancial (varios cientos de páginas). Según lo dispuesto en la Decisión 18.206, la Secretaría la ha recopilado y, para facilitar su examen, la ha resumido y estructurado en torno a las seis esferas temáticas indicadas en la Decisión 18.205. La recopilación realizada por la Secretaría se presenta en los anexos del presente documento como sigue:
  - a) Anexo 1: datos biológicos sobre las especies de *Boswellia*, tales como tamaño de las poblaciones, distribución, estado y tendencias de las poblaciones, información de identificación y su función en el ecosistema donde se encuentran;
  - b) Anexo 2: información disponible sobre los niveles de recolección y explotación, nombres comerciales, interesados directos cercanos a los lugares de recolección de las especies y características de la cadena de suministro para el consumo interno y el comercio internacional;
  - c) Anexo 3: información sobre las amenazas a estas especies, en particular en relación con las causas subyacentes de la baja capacidad de regeneración y los efectos de la recolección en estas especies;
  - d) Anexo 4: información sobre iniciativas para reproducir artificialmente estas especies o producir plantaciones de las mismas;
  - e) Anexo 5: reglamentos existentes y estructuras de propiedad en relación con las especies, su hábitat, factores impulsores de las tendencias del hábitat y medidas de gestión establecidas o en elaboración, tales como prácticas de recolección sostenible; y
  - f) Anexo 6: observaciones adicionales.
9. Todas las comunicaciones originales, incluidos los materiales adicionales, se pondrán a disposición de la presente reunión en un documento informativo, en el idioma y el formato en que se presentaron.

#### Resumen y conclusiones preliminares

10. De las seis esferas temáticas indicadas en la Decisión 18.205, la Secretaría recibió información sustancial sobre los párrafos a), c), d) y e), aunque siguen existiendo algunas lagunas para varios Estados del área de distribución, y para las especies que se encuentran con menos frecuencia en el comercio internacional. En lo que respecta a la información disponible sobre los niveles de recolección y explotación, nombres comerciales, interesados directos cercanos a los lugares de recolección de las especies y características de la cadena de suministro para el consumo interno y el comercio internacional [párrafo b)], la Secretaría recibió información sobre la recolección local en determinados Estados del área de distribución, pero falta en gran medida información sobre el consumo interno y el comercio internacional de productos elaborados. En lo que respecta a sugerencias acerca de reuniones u otros actos que podrían constituir oportunidades para colaborar o intercambiar información sobre la recolección y la gestión de estas especies [párrafo f)], la Secretaría recibió sugerencias de eventos pertinentes en los que estarían presentes los interesados directos en *Boswellia*. Sin embargo, muchos de ellos fueron cancelados o pospuestos debido a la actual pandemia de enfermedad por coronavirus. Si bien en algunas zonas faltan datos o estos son escasos, de la información presentada a la Secretaría pueden extraerse varias conclusiones provisionales, en particular para las especies y los Estados del área de distribución más destacados en el comercio.

*Datos biológicos sobre las especies de Boswellia, tales como tamaño de las poblaciones, distribución, estado y tendencias de las poblaciones, información de identificación y su función en el ecosistema donde se encuentran*

11. Se ha informado ampliamente que los hábitats de *Boswellia* son suelos marginales de fertilidad limitada, a menudo calurosos, expuestos, rocosos o escarpados, en zonas por lo demás improductivas y propensas a

la desertificación. Parece haber un gradiente de humedad tolerada, desde los semidesiertos (por ejemplo, en Omán), hasta los bosques caducifolios secos (descritos para *B. serrata* en la India), las sabanas con altas precipitaciones (informadas para Sudán del Sur) y zonas agroecológicas húmedas de las tierras bajas (informadas por Eritrea). Las especies de *Boswellia* se recomiendan para el control de la desertificación, y se describe que reducen la degradación del suelo, enriquecen la fertilidad del suelo, mantienen microclimas, proporcionan cubierta vegetal, sirven de hábitat para búhos y otras especies animales, proporcionan forraje para animales y son fuentes de néctar para las abejas. Las especies son esenciales para sostener el suelo con sus sistemas de raíces y protegerlo de la erosión, especialmente cuando los pastos y las hierbas se agotan tras el pastoreo o se secan en los períodos de sequía.

12. Las poblaciones de algunas especies de *Boswellia*, en particular *B. papyphera*, han ido disminuyendo y deteriorándose durante varios decenios. Las causas son, entre otras, las siguientes: problemas de regeneración debidos a la recolección excesiva, el pastoreo excesivo y, tal vez, una vulnerabilidad intrínseca de las especies de *Boswellia*. Prácticamente se carece de gestión, supervisión o regulación formales para la recolección y el comercio de *B. papyphera*. Los planes de gestión de la recolección informales o tradicionales parecen padecer de falta de capacidad, pobreza y conflictos sociales (en particular entre las comunidades locales ancestrales y los recolectores externos o nómadas). Los tres principales Estados del área de exportación de *B. papyphera*, Eritrea, Etiopía y Sudán del Sur, confirman estas observaciones.
13. Las poblaciones de otras especies, en particular *B. serrata* y *B. ovalifoliolata* de la India, parecen más resilientes y están menos degradadas y sujetas a una gestión más adecuada.
14. Respecto a *B. serrata*, aunque está clasificada como una especie En Peligro Crítico/Casi extinta en la Lista Roja de la UICN, la información disponible sigue siendo poco clara en cuanto a si esta especie se recolecta en Sri Lanka y se comercializa internacionalmente, y en qué volúmenes.
15. El estado de conservación es menos claro en el caso de las especies nativas de África oriental y el Cuerno de África, en particular *B. sacra*, *B. frereana*, *B. neglecta* y *B. rivae*. La información disponible sugiere que puede depender del Estado del área de distribución o las características subnacionales. En el caso de Etiopía, nada indica que su estado difiera sustancialmente de aquella de *B. papyphera*. Algunas poblaciones de Somalia pueden verse afectadas por amenazas similares; sin embargo, en particular en la región de Somalilandia, esas amenazas pueden ser menos graves que en otros países de África nororiental. Fuentes locales de la región de Somalilandia afirman que las poblaciones de *B. sacra*, *B. frereana* y *B. rivae* están en gran medida sanas, y señalan que no se ha realizado ninguna investigación científica de campo en el país desde la década de 1980. Omán no presentó información. Otras fuentes sugieren que sus poblaciones de *B. sacra* y *B. frereana* pueden estar amenazadas, pero también que se despliegan importantes esfuerzos de conservación de las especies. La información es muy escasa en el caso de Kenya, pero las poblaciones de *B. neglecta* parecen ser objeto de un comercio relativamente escaso y pueden estar en una situación relativamente buena.
16. Según se informa, los comerciantes experimentados pueden identificar en el nivel de la especie los principales productos de *Boswellia* en bruto que se comercializan (es decir, gomas, resinas, extractos), basándose en el color y el sabor. Algunos estudios sugieren que al menos algunas de las especies más comercializadas también pueden ser identificadas mediante pruebas químicas. Sin embargo, sigue sin estar claro si sería factible la identificación de especies a nivel mundial por parte de personas no expertas, y si las pruebas disponibles son suficientemente fiables para identificar productos menos conocidos, altamente procesados o deliberadamente adulterados.

*Información disponible sobre los niveles de recolección y explotación, nombres comerciales, interesados directos cercanos a los lugares de recolección de las especies y características de la cadena de suministro para el consumo interno y el comercio internacional*

17. Las especies de *Boswellia* parecen ser en su mayor parte explotadas y recolectadas por coleccionistas individuales o comunidades. Sin embargo, Etiopía informa que las entidades comerciales fueron las principales instituciones que llevaron a cabo su recolección.
18. Sobre la base de la información disponible, el comercio de productos de *Boswellia* es una cadena de valor mundial grande y sumamente compleja que abarca varios sectores industriales (medicina, cosméticos y sectores religiosos y culturales, entre otros). La mayor parte del comercio internacional parece proceder de seis especies de *Boswellia* (*B. frereana* conocida solo en Somalia; *B. sacra* de Omán, Somalia y el Yemen; *B. papyrifera* de Etiopía y el Sudán; *B. rivae* de Etiopía; *B. neglecta* de Etiopía y Kenya; y *B. serrata* de la India). Entre los principales Estados del área de distribución exportadores figuran la India, Etiopía y Somalia.

Varios otros Estados del área de distribución de África septentrional, el Cuerno de África y la Península Arábiga están exportando cantidades menores.

19. Se desconoce la cosecha total anual de resina y el comercio de productos de *Boswellia* en prácticamente todos los Estados del área de distribución. Sin embargo, se sabe que es sustancial. Las estimaciones de las exportaciones anuales combinadas de la India, la región de Somalilandia de Somalia y Etiopía ascienden a un total de hasta 4.000 toneladas, e instituciones como la Iglesia Ortodoxa de Etiopía, según se informa, consumen internamente 2.000 toneladas al año. Sin embargo, aunque no resulta sumamente claro, el potencial de producción total puede ser muy elevado. Una fuente informa de un potencial de producción anual de 57.000 toneladas solo en Etiopía, aunque los supuestos en los que se basa esta estimación siguen sin resultar claros.
20. Se dispone de poca información sobre el procesamiento de la resina y el comercio internacional de productos como varillas de incienso y productos cosméticos o medicinales. Los principales países importadores de productos de *Boswellia* procedentes de Etiopía son Alemania, China, Egipto, los Emiratos Árabes Unidos y Guatemala. La Arabia Saudita, Dubái, Francia y el Yemen son grandes importadores de incienso de Eritrea. Entre los principales importadores de incienso sudanés figuran Alemania, la Arabia Saudita, China, los Emiratos Árabes Unidos, Francia e Italia. China parece ser el principal mercado de *Boswellia* para su uso en la medicina tradicional. La India parece exportar en gran medida a Trinidad y Tabago, América del Norte y Central y países europeos.
21. Sigue sin estar claro si los extractos y resinas de las diferentes especies de *Boswellia* en las cadenas de valor mundiales se consideran intercambiables. De ser así, las disminuciones observadas en la oferta mundial de productos derivados de algunas de las principales especies de *Boswellia* que son objeto de comercio, y los posibles efectos en el comercio de las inclusiones en la CITES de especies específicas pueden dar lugar a cambios en la oferta, como se ha observado en el caso de otros grupos de especies, como las maderas tropicales. Si cualquier futura inclusión en la CITES se limitara a determinadas especies de *Boswellia*, esos cambios podrían dar lugar a la exportación desde los Estados del área de distribución que actualmente participan menos en el comercio, o al comercio de especies de *Boswellia* no mencionadas en la inclusión que, por lo tanto, están más expuestas al comercio no reglamentado.

*Información sobre las amenazas a estas especies, en particular en relación con las causas subyacentes de la baja capacidad de regeneración y los efectos de la recolección en estas especies*

22. Las amenazas más conocidas para el género son la pérdida de hábitat, el pastoreo, la sobreexplotación de la resina y la madera, los incendios forestales, los daños causados por insectos y la falta de regeneración. Sin embargo, ninguna amenaza individual parece afectar a la especie por igual, y puede haber importantes distinciones entre especies, países y regiones. En particular, no resulta claro hasta qué punto los problemas de regeneración y la falta de clases de edad más jóvenes de las poblaciones de *Boswellia* se deben a la falta de vulnerabilidad biológica del género, a la reducción de la producción de semillas o a la disminución de la fertilidad de las semillas debido a la sobreexplotación de los árboles o a la destrucción de los ejemplares jóvenes por el pastoreo o los incendios. No resulta claro si la baja tasa de regeneración es el resultado de la recolección. Más bien, la baja tasa de regeneración puede ser una función de las duras condiciones ambientales en las que se encuentran estas especies, combinadas con los efectos de la recolección. También hay informes generalizados de que la reproducción vegetativa suele ser sencilla, y que al menos algunas especies y poblaciones de *Boswellia* de la India, Kenya y la región de Somalilandia de Somalia son grandes y abundantes y se regeneran adecuadamente.

*Información sobre iniciativas para reproducir artificialmente estas especies o producir plantaciones de las mismas*

23. Aparentemente, las especies de *Boswellia* se recolectan en gran parte en el medio silvestre. Sin embargo, en varios Estados del área de distribución existen iniciativas para fomentar la plantación de enriquecimiento o la reproducción artificial de especies de *Boswellia*; algunas de ellas, a una escala relativamente grande. No resulta claro si la reproducción por medio de reproducción sexual es exitosa. Por otra parte, se ha informado ampliamente que la reproducción vegetativa es fácil y sencilla. Su éxito parece depender principalmente de la protección de los ejemplares jóvenes contra la sequía, los incendios y el pastoreo.

*Reglamentos existentes y estructuras de propiedad en relación con las especies, su hábitat, factores impulsores de las tendencias del hábitat y medidas de gestión establecidas o en elaboración, tales como prácticas de recolección sostenible*

24. Las estructuras de propiedad parecen variar entre los Estados del área de distribución, y la propiedad de los recursos de *Boswellia* y los derechos de recolección parecen ser objeto de conflictos sociales en algunos Estados del área de distribución, como el Sudán y Eritrea. Algunas especies o poblaciones de *Boswellia* parecen estar protegidas a nivel local o nacional en algunos Estados del área de distribución, en particular en la India, Omán y la región de Somalilandia de Somalia. Varios otros Estados del área de distribución informan que se realizan pocas actividades de protección o de gestión.
25. Varias fuentes describen con considerable detalle las prácticas de recolección sostenible de resina para evitar la mortalidad de los árboles y la degeneración de las poblaciones de *Boswellia*. De la información disponible no se desprende claramente si los métodos de recolección sostenible pueden diferir también entre especies de *Boswellia*, climas o zonas geográficas, y en qué medida.

*Sugerencias acerca de reuniones u otros actos que podrían constituir oportunidades para colaborar o intercambiar información sobre la recolección y la gestión de estas especies*

26. Se formularon algunas sugerencias sobre los eventos pertinentes en los que los interesados directos en las especies de *Boswellia* estarían presentes para colaborar o compartir información. Sin embargo, la mayoría de estos eventos fueron cancelados o pospuestos debido a la actual pandemia de enfermedad por coronavirus.

#### *Recomendaciones*

27. Se invita al Comité de Flora a tomar nota del cumplimiento de las Decisiones 18.205 y 18.206 mediante el informe que figura en el presente documento y a establecer un grupo de trabajo entre reuniones sobre *Boswellia* spp. para lo siguiente:
  - a) examinar la recopilación de información que figura en el documento PC25 Doc. 25 y sus anexos, y otra información pertinente sobre el estado, la gestión y el comercio de las especies de *Boswellia* de que disponga o que se haya facilitado en documentos informativos;
  - b) poner de relieve las principales lagunas de conocimientos y proponer recomendaciones sobre nuevas iniciativas para abordar el uso sostenible y la conservación de esas especies, en particular si alguna de las especies cumple los criterios para su inclusión en la CITES; y
  - c) presentar los resultados de su labor al Comité de Flora para que los examine en su 26ª reunión.

Biological data on *Boswellia* species, including population size, distribution, status and population trends, identification information, and its role in the ecosystem in which it occurs  
[Decision 18.205, paragraph a)]<sup>2</sup>

1. Document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#) lists 18 species of the genus *Boswellia* (see Annex 1 to that document) and provides details on its economic importance and its role in the ecosystem (paragraph 8). *Boswellia* habitats are widely reported to be marginal soils of limited fertility, often hot, exposed, rocky or steep, in otherwise unproductive areas prone to desertification. There seems to be a gradient of tolerated humidity, from semi-deserts (e.g. in Oman), to dry deciduous woodlands (described for *B. serrata* in India), to high rainfall savannas (reported for South Sudan), and moist lowland agroecological zones (reported by Eritrea). *Boswellia* is recommended for desertification control, and described as reducing soil degradation, enriching soil fertility, sustaining microclimates, providing plant cover, as habitat for owls and other animal species, as providing animal fodder, and as source of nectar for bees. The species are vital in holding the soil with their root systems and protecting it from erosion, especially where grass and herbs are grazed down or dried out in the drought periods.
2. All provided species-specific information relates to one of two groups of *Boswellia* species: *B. dalzielii*, *B. frereana*, *B. microphylla*, *B. neglecta*, *B. odorata*, *B. ogadensis*, *B. papyphera*, *B. pirottae*, *B. rivae*, and *B. sacra* native to the African Sahel, North-Eastern Africa and / or the Arab Peninsula in one group; and *B. serrata* native to India and Sri Lanka and *B. ovalifoliata* endemic to Andhra Pradesh in India in another group.
3. Cameroon reports to be a range State to *B. dalzielii* and *B. papyphera* (Betti 2020). In addition to some local and regional studies and inventories, quantitative evidence of their population density is available from a nation-wide forest inventory undertaken in 2004 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Uniform sampling sites (2 hectares each) were designated on a rectangular grid throughout the entire country, 46 of which fell into Adamaoua, North and Far North regions recognized as *Boswellia* habitat. Average *Boswellia* stem density per hectare in these habitats was determined to be 1.1. The vast majority of individuals in the sampling sites (101 out of 102) were identified as *B. odorata*, one as *B. papyphera*. However, Cameroon regards the *B. odorata* specimen as possible misidentifications, and suggests these might be either *B. dalzielii* or *B. papyphera* (Betti 2020).
4. Comparable information was not provided for any other country. In addition to the information contained in the section on utilization and trade and Annex 1 to document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#), the following information was provided (Table 1).

**Table 1: Available information on the population status of *Boswellia* species.**

Species	Comments
<i>B. frereana</i>	Native to the Horn of Africa, in particular Somalia (Bongers 2019). An analysis by Germany (BfN 2015a) assesses the species as locally abundant, present in several habitats, but over a small geographic area. It reports an estimate of a Dubai-based company to have 100,000 <i>B. frereana</i> trees on their land alone. Reliable information on population trends for this species seems to be unavailable, but Brendler (2018) reports anecdotal evidence of declining populations. Unsustainable tapping methods are reported by Schippmann (2018d). Poor recruitment of young trees has been confirmed for habitats of <i>B. frereana</i> in “Somaliland” by one oral source. The “Somaliland”-based company Neo Botanika (2020) reports the species as of no concern, and its population trends and habitat trends to be stable. The Somaliland-based CFESS points to the lack of empirical field studies needed for long-term interdisciplinary research.

<sup>2</sup> The majority of stakeholders whose contributions is summarized in Annexes 1 to 6 refer to “Somaliland” and “Puntland”. The Secretariat notes that the sovereignty of “Somaliland” and “Puntland” is not internationally recognized.

Species	Comments
<i>B. microphylla</i>	Reported in document <a href="#">CoP18 Doc. 66</a> as synonym of <i>B. neglecta</i> , and native to Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda. Ethiopia (2020) reports population status and trends as unknown, but the habitat trend as stable. The species is reported in two districts in Kenya, with unknown population status, population trends and habitat trends (Oils of Africa 2020).
<i>B. neglecta</i>	Native to the Horn of Africa, from Somalia and Ethiopia to the Kenyan – Tanzanian border region (Bongers 2019). Ethiopia (2020) reports population status, and population and habitat trends as unknown. The Kenya-based company Oils of Africa (2020) reports it to be of no concern, and as widespread in East Africa, with unknown total population and habitat trends. It also reports the species to be locally dominant, with recorded population densities of 25 to 662 specimen per hectare and a total collection area of 895,250 hectares. In one single collection area with 50,000 hectares, the population estimate is 12 million specimens. Schippmann (2018a) reports it as locally common in Kenya, and unknown for rest of the range.
<i>B. ogadensis</i>	Native to Ethiopia ( <a href="#">CoP18 Doc. 66</a> ). Ethiopia (2020) reports population status, and population and habitat trends as unknown.
<i>B. papyphera</i>	Has a disjunct distribution between North-East tropical Africa (Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda) and West tropical Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Nigeria) (Schippmann 2018b). Eritrea (2020) considers its population to be endangered and describes it as fragmented remnants separated by vast plains and riverine areas in two regions, while relatively large areas of intact <i>B. papyrifera</i> woodlands were found in at least one other region. Visits were undertaken to 64 villages throughout two administrative regions in which <i>B. papyphera</i> is known to occur. Among these, <i>B. papyphera</i> was found present in 21, had disappeared in 15 and was absent from 28 villages. In a third region, <i>B. papyrifera</i> was and is present in about one third of the villages. South Sudan (2020) reported its population status as unknown. Both countries reported population and habitat trends to be decreasing. Ethiopia (2020) reported population status, population trends and habitat trends as unknown. According to the BfN, the total population is unknown, but likely to still be large. It is assessed as locally abundant in several habitats and over a large geographic area. Yet, it is also reported as having declined in the past and likely continuing to decline at present (BfN 2015b). Declining regeneration and spatial shrinkage of <i>B. papyrifera</i> woodlands have been observed in much of the natural range: More than 76% of <i>Boswellia</i> trees in northern Ethiopia have a breast height diameter greater than 30 cm. As a result of declining populations in Eritrea, frankincense export dropped from 2,000 tons in 1974 to 400 tons in 1998 (Schippmann 2018b). Comparing the 1955 and 1996 national forest inventories of Sudan reveals that <i>B. papyphera</i> distribution in its habitat reduced from 25% to 15.7% (BfN 2015b). Bongers (2019) sampled <i>B. papyphera</i> populations in 23 sites (two in Sudan, five in Eritrea, 16 in Ethiopia). They identified severe regeneration failures despite high germination rates and local abundance of seedlings, since seedlings did not transition to saplings (>1 cm stem diameter) in most populations. Based on population dynamic models and taking into account that <i>B. papyphera</i> currently supplies two thirds of the global frankincense production, they predict fast collapsing <i>B. papyphera</i> populations and halving of frankincense harvest in 20 years. If current practices continue, other studies predict a 90% decline in the size of both tapped and untapped <i>B. papyrifera</i> populations in Ethiopia within 50 years and a 50% decline in frankincense yield within 15 years. By 2040, the stem density of <i>B. papyrifera</i> populations in two districts of Ethiopia would be reduced to 3% and 11% of their current size (BfN 2015b).
<i>B. pirottae</i>	Native to Ethiopia ( <a href="#">CoP18 Doc. 66</a> ). Ethiopia (2020) reports population status, and population and habitat trends as unknown.
<i>B. rivae</i>	Native to Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya ( <a href="#">CoP18 Doc. 66</a> ). Ethiopia (2020) reports population status and trends as unknown, but the habitat trend as stable. The Kenya-based company Oils of Africa (2020) reports population status, and population and habitat trends as unknown. Species-specific scientific literature for Somalia seems unavailable (Schippmann (2018e), but the “Somaliland”-based company Neo Botanika (2020) reports the species as of no concern, and its population trends and habitat trends to be stable.



Species	Comments
<i>B. sacra</i>	Native to the Horn of Africa, Yemen and Oman (Bongers 2019). The populations are assessed as locally abundant in a specific habitat over a large geographic area. Information on population trends seems contradictory and populations in remote or inaccessible areas of, such as cliffs, may be less affected. Schippmann (2018) reports large and dominant population sizes in some places, but severely deteriorating gum and resin producing vegetation in most producing countries. He suggests that perhaps one half of the <i>Boswellia</i> population in Somalia is to some degree damaged. Yet, the “Somaliland”-based company Neo Botanika (2020) reports the species as of no concern, and its population trends and habitat trends to be stable. It states that the resource base in “Somaliland” was massive, while areas of overtapping were limited and not posing a risk to the populations. Neo Botanika also points out that harvest in some populations is FairWild certified. The “Somaliland”-based CFESS (2020) points out that no research has been conducted in Somaliland since 1981 and suggests that some studies were based on dubious approaches and sources, and very little on-the-ground research. Other reports would extrapolate their findings in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan to “Somaliland” without considering local specificities. Long-term interdisciplinary research was needed. In Oman, the tree is reported as so heavily browsed that it rarely flowers or sets seed (Schippmann 2018). BfN (2015c) reports that the Environment Society of Oman (ESO) estimated the number of “fully-grown” <i>B. sacra</i> trees at 400,000 to 500,000 trees in 2009. While not all trees were being tapped, in some areas the trees had almost completely vanished (BfN 2015c).
<i>B. ovalifoliolata</i>	Endemic to small areas of Andhra Pradesh in India. Responses from India describe the population as available (Suthari 2020), vulnerable (Venugopal 2020) or endangered (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020, Hemadri 2020, Pullaiah 2020). The population trend was reported as stable (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020, Pullaiah 2020, Venugopal 2020) or increasing (Suthari 2020). All responses agree that habitat trends were stable.
<i>B. serrata</i>	Native to India and Sri Lanka. It is critically endangered and possibly extinct in Sri Lanka, and listed as rare in the Indian Red Data Book, and in some Indian States considered as vulnerable ( <a href="#">CoP18 Doc. 66</a> , Brendler 2018). However, Venugopal (2020) reports the species to occur in 16 Indian States. Based on a recent survey in about 100 forest ranges in Madhya Pradesh, he reports population densities of 40-100 trees per hectare in most surveyed forests, with an estimated total population of 20 million trees in 23 forest divisions of Madhya Pradesh. He also informs that similar surveys in the 15 remaining Indian States are due. Brendler (2018) confirms that populations were still large. Unlike <i>B. papyrifera</i> , where quantitative studies showed that populations in African range States have been in decline for decades, there was no comparable quantitative evidence for <i>B. serrata</i> . The populations are unambiguously described as of no concern by six responses from India (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020, INDFRAG 2020, Suthari 2020, Hemadri 2020, Pullaiah 2020, Venugopal 2020). The population trend was described as stable (Hemadri 2020, Pullaiah 2020, Suthari 2020) or increasing (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020, INDFRAG 2020, Venugopal 2020). Five responses described habitat trends as stable, and one as increasing (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020). Venugopal (2020) suggests that the predominant presence of vast stretches of <i>B. serrata</i> in many Indian states proves that it is abundant, uncountable in numbers, forms its own forests, and that there was no indication of it being endangered.

- The identification of *Boswellia* products is described as potentially complex, not the least since there was taxonomic confusion over valid versus outdated names. No identification materials were provided to the Secretariat. Yet, AHPA (2020) reports that industry routinely uses various chromatographic analyses to identify products in trade, and DNA fingerprinting may also be available. Extracts that are standardized to specific levels of boswellic acid could be analyzed with available reference standards. Chemical analyses are also described as capable to distinguish the taxonomic origin of extracts, gums and resins from at least some species (BfN 2015b). BfN (2015d) refers to differences in composition and colour, and states that differentiation of the species and evidence for adulteration is possible through application of modern analytical tools and methods. A high-performance liquid chromatography based on three chemical indicators was able to identify any *B. serrata* extract. Similarly, frankincense from *Boswellia papyrifera*, *B. serrata* and *B. sacra* could be clearly distinguished from one another (BfN 2015b, c). Since *B. sacra* resin was bitter,

while *B. frereana* resin was not, these two species could be distinguished even without sophisticated chemical analyses (BfN 2015a). Oils of Africa (2020) states that the white tar of *B. neglecta* resin can be easily distinguished from the white resins of *B. sacra* and *B. papyifera*. The United States of America (2020) state that it was unclear to what degree chemical variation can distinguish *Boswellia* commodities to the species level. In addition, there was a potential for adulteration using other lesser-valued *Boswellia* species. The United States of America also report that products on the U.S. market legally require the species names be used on the product labels. They further suggest that for live plants, variation in leaf shape, number and size of leaflets can be used to distinguish among the East African species (*B. papyrifera*, *B. rivae*, *B. neglecta*, and *B. microphylla*), even though *Boswellia* trees are deciduous and leafless for much of the year. For more detailed information, the United States of America suggest three sources on chemical identification of *Boswellia* products (Brendler et al. 2018, Mathe et al. 2004, Meins et al. 2016), and two sources on morphological distinction of *Boswellia* specimens (Mugah et al. 1997, Thulin & Warfa 1987).

Available information about harvest and exploitation levels, trade names, stakeholders close to the harvest of the species and supply chain characteristics for domestic consumption and international trade

[Decision 18.205, paragraph b)]

1. The information received suggests that the vast majority of *Boswellia* use and trade is sourced from wild harvest. Stakeholders close to harvest and ownership structures vary by country.
  - a) In India, many forests are owned by the government (Chemiloids Life Sciences 2020), but the recent Forest Act, Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) (PESA) Act and Biodiversity Act are ensuring the ownership of the resource by local communities (Venugopal 2020). The majority of *B. serrata* produce is harvested by tribal people in areas with special legislative arrangements classified as Scheduled Tribe territories (Brendler 2018). AHPA (2020) reports varied ownership and land tenure structure, that include government ownership, community ownership, or community-based land tenure, as well as private ownership in which trees are inherited or gifted to a bride and groom during marriage. Individual tribal collectors of *B. serrata* were inherited or been assigned by their communities a certain number of trees which they tap, harvest, and maintain. Under existing Indian government acts, only tribal populations living in the forest areas can tap and collect the gum and non-tribal outsiders do not have access to these activities. According to Venugopal (2020), *B. serrata* provides subsistence to over 20,000 tribal families in India. The company INDFRAG (2020) reports 2,000 to 3,000 collectors in Madhya Pradesh alone.
  - b) The Kenyan constitution, Section 63(1), transfers land ownership to communities that are identified on the basis of ethnicity and that manage or use community forests and grazing lands, and whose boundaries are clearly defined, for example through riverbeds or mountains. In one district, communities have committees such as gum collection committees, that determine the management and use of the land and its resources (Oils of Africa 2020). Oils of Africa (2020) reports that it has 2,000 registered collectors and that their operations are organic certified and were also FairWild certified in 2013 and 2014. The gums and resins value chain desk study (Mercy Corps 2020) reports that, in general, harvest was conducted mostly by local people through traditional means, and often using equipment that was not up to technical standards to maintain quantity and quality of the product. On local and regional levels, there was a lack of access to market information; no collective bodies or associations exist; and there were no conflict resolution mechanisms in place. The system benefitted in particular traders.
  - c) Ethiopia (2020) reports that several problems arise in relation to access to and management of the resource base. In some areas, communities own and manage the resource, whereas in others local communities' access to the resource is severely restricted. Only commercial producers with adequate capital are allowed to collect and sell gums and resins. These companies are given licenses to exploit an area for only one year. There are no forest management plans, nor is there any monitoring system to ensure that gum collecting and exporting companies are managing the forest responsibly. Schippmann (2018b) suggests that forestry is a long-term investment and requires secure ownership, clearly defined property rights, and a policy environment that grants local communities rights to access and benefit from dry forests. Yet, according to BfN (2015b), all land in Ethiopia belongs to the State. Balancing tapping and land rights with prices that are high enough to provide incentives to reduce the unsustainably high frequency and intensity of tapping were key issues. In one of the production areas in Ethiopia, no local villagers were involved in the collection or processing of frankincense. Instead, labour migrancy had occurred, with about 1,300 daily labourers coming from another region. Bongers (2019) states that state ownership in combination with lack of management and monitoring favours exploitative harvesting practices focused on short-term gain.
  - d) In Somalia, the right to tap *B. frereana* and *sacra* trees belongs to families, while the right to tap *B. rivae* trees belongs to tribes (statement valid for "Somaliland", Neo Botanika 2020). CFESS (2020) describes *Boswellia* specimens in "Somaliland" as owned by families through a complex ownership system registered under a Gums and Resins Registration System. An estimated 5,000 kg of dry gum resin, 300 kg of essential oil and 2,400 kg of annual hydrosol harvest are FairWild certified, (Neo Botanika 2020, TRAFFIC 2020). Estimations of the number of persons involved in gums and resins production

and trade as a source of income vary between 10,000 in Somalia (BfN 2015a, c) and 70,000 to 100,000 in “Somaliland” alone (CFESS 2020). It is unclear to what degree these statements are valid for areas of Somalia other than “Somaliland”. For example, BfN (2015a) reports Somali collectors were predominantly nomads. While, in the past, *B. frereana* trees were reportedly managed through a system of customary ownership that was well-known, tenure and tapping rights are now unclear and overexploitation is common. Due to political disturbances in the region, there had been major migrations both from and to Puntland from other parts of Somalia, disturbing traditional land tenure systems and collection protocols. *B. frereana* management was also affected by disputes over land and the uncertainty this causes for land and tree tenure. Some parts of the Sanaag region, one of the best areas for *B. frereana*, were claimed by both “Somaliland” and “Puntland”.

- e) In Eritrea (2020), family ownership, village ownership and state ownership have coexisted for many years, varying from place to place. A land law issued in 1994 has officially replaced the three traditional land tenure systems, but in practice, the situation has not changed.
  - f) South Sudan (2020) reports that the state owns land and resources in protected areas, while communities own resources in other areas. It also suggests that there are conflicts over local resources between communities and their local harvesters and outsiders, including migrant harvesters.
  - g) Surveys in Oman indicate decline in frankincense collection. In 2000, there were only 43 harvesters extracting frankincense inside the 45,000 km<sup>2</sup> Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve compared to about 2,000 before the 1970s (BfN 2015d).
2. Multiple local, common and trade names for the various species, products and quality levels in various languages are contained in the responses. Many names that commonly appear in international trade, or are used in scientific literature, or national and international legal and regulatory documents, are searchable in the [web portal](#) of the Medicinal Plant Names Service (MPNS). In addition, the United States of America (2020) report that there are legal labelling requirements pertaining to the use of trade names, and which differ depending on whether the material will be consumed. Under U.S. law, the use of common names for botanical ingredients in dietary supplements labeling must follow the guidance included in the publication *Herbs of Commerce*, and cosmetic labeling must follow the International Cosmetic Ingredient (INCI) Dictionary and Handbook. Accordingly, for dietary supplements, U.S. law dictates that the common name “frankincense” may only legally be used on labels of products containing *B. sacra* as a component ingredient. Similarly, for cosmetic ingredients, *B. carteri*, *B. frereana*, *B. sacra* and *B. serrata* are included in the naming guidelines for product labels under the International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients (INCI) system that is followed by the fragrance, cosmetic, and personal care products industries in many major markets, including the United States of America, Canada, Europe, China, Japan, and many other countries (see additional details and a table of IPNI names in section 4k of the response of the United States of America).
  3. Estimations of the yield per harvested tree vary. Schippmann (2018 a, b, c) estimates yields of 0.07-1 kg per tree per year, but also refers to estimations as high as 3 kg per tree per year. Ethiopia (2020) reports 500g annual yield per tree (mainly *B. papyphera*). For “Somaliland”, the CFESS (2020) estimates that one to four kg of resin is collected from a tree per season at an initial market value between USD 3-6 per kg. Oils of Africa reports annual yields of 80g per harvested *B. neglecta* individual (Oils of Africa 2020). Some additional information can be found in document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#), paragraph 10. Schippmann (2018) and Bongers (2019) remark that local harvesters tend to be exploited and disadvantaged in comparison to middle-men and traders.
  4. Schippmann (2018a, b, c) reports that there are six commonly traded *Boswellia* species: *B. frereana* known only from Somalia; *B. sacra* from Somalia, Yemen and Oman; *B. papyrifera* from Ethiopia and Sudan; *B. rivae* from Ethiopia; *B. neglecta* from Ethiopia and Kenya; and *B. serrata* from India. *B. ogadensis* is reported by Ethiopia (2020) as in trade. Trade in *B. ovalifoliolata*, which is endemic to India, is reported by the United States of America (2020). The India-based company Chemiloids Life Sciences (2020) states that there was gum tapping in this species prior to 2000-2002 in some tribal areas, but this was discontinued since the species was now under wildlife protection.
  5. Trade data suffers from the lack of species or genus-specific customs codes in most countries. In the UN COMTRADE database, HS130190 ‘Natural gum, resin, gum resin, balsam’ and HS330741 ‘incense sticks’ are quoted (BfN 2015d). Brendler (2018) provides a table of national HS codes applicable for *Boswellia* products (Table 2). Most of the HS Codes shown in Table 1 are a result of rulings and are thus not species-specific, but rather are determinations made by customs authorities as to which ‘other’ code to place an article that is Not Elsewhere Specified or Included. The exceptions are codes specifically assigned to frankincense in the columns for Indian Trade Classification (ITC), Oman Customs (OC) and Saudi Customs

(SC). Brendler (2018) also remarks that, according to the zauba.com database, Indian companies use several different general or 'other' tariff codes for export shipments of essential oil of frankincense including HS 33011990, HS 33012590, HS 33012911, HS 33012950, HS 33012990, HS 33013099, HS 33019079, HS 33019090, HS 33029012, and HS 33029019. China's 8-digit tariff code HS13019020 includes *Boswellia spp.*, *Commiphora spp.*, *Daemonorops spp.*, and *Dracaena spp.*, among other gums and resins (BfN 2015d).

**Table 1: Selection of national HS codes applicable for *Boswellia* products, according to Brendler (2018).**

Traded form	BTI	CCCCS	CROSS	ITC	OC & SC
Dried resin	1301.90.0000	1301.9020	1301.90.9090	1301.9032	1301.90.7000
Essential oil	3301.29.41		3301.29.5050; 3301.29.5150		
Extract	1302.19.7000				
Food supplement	2106.90.9260				
Incense sticks	3307.41.0000		3307.41.0000		

BTI: Binding Tariff Information rulings of the European Commission Taxation and Customs Union.

CCCCS: Commodity Classification for China Customs Statistics (PRC).

CROSS: Customs Rulings Online Search System (U.S. Customs & Border Protection).

ITC: Indian Trade Classification.

OC: Oman Customs, Sultanate of Oman, Directorate General of Customs.

SC: Saudi Customs, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Central Department of Statistics & Information.

- Extensive trade information is available for *B. serrata* from India as the only known producing and exporting range State, which also has ample in-country processing capacity (Venugopal 2020, INDFRAG 2020). Venugopal (2020) reports the approximate annual harvest from India to be 1,000 tons from about 340,000 trees. Annual yield per tree was about 3 kg resin. Approximately equal shares of the harvest went to domestic market and were exported. Other sources do not fully reflect this amount but might possibly underreport, since they only analyse one particular HS code (see Annex 2, paragraph 5 above). Based on a survey of herb trading markets and international trade data, Brendler (2018) estimates domestic *B. serrata* gum trade to be greater than 100 tons per year, and annual frankincense exports at 100 tons (Table 3). In 2015-2017, the main destination for Indian frankincense was Trinidad and Tobago, followed by Germany. Upon cross-checking imports of Trinidad and Tobago (HS130190 in the UN COMTRADE database), it appears that Trinidad and Tobago is indeed a major importer of natural gums from India. However, the same database shows exports of only 7.5 tons for the years 2012-2015. Other major importers of Indian frankincense include Guatemala, Mexico, and the United States of America. The Secretariat did not receive information from Sri Lanka, but database excerpts provided by the United States of America show numerous entries of *B. serrata* extracts imported to the United States from Sri Lanka. It is unclear to what extent these are re-exported specimens harvested in India.

**Table 2: Indian exports of frankincense (HS code 13019032) in 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 (Brendler 2018).**

Country	Values in US\$ Million			Quantity in Metric Tons (MT)		
	2015-2016	2016-2017	%Growth	2015-2016	2016-2017	%Growth
TRINIDAD	0.06	0.05	- 10.26	39.00	24.00	- 38.46
GERMANY	0.03	0.07	154.09	5.00	13.00	160.00
GUATEMALA		0.01		0.00	12.00	
MEXICO	0.02	0.02	37.58	27.00	6.00	- 77.78
USA	0.01	0.01	- 1.37	3.03	4.00	32.23
BELGIUM		0.02		0.00	3.50	
FRANCE	0.01	0.02	185.25	2.60	3.35	28.77
UK	0.00	0.00	92.31	1.00	2.00	100.00
LEBANON	0.01	0.00	- 76.47	4.00	2.00	- 50.00
CANADA		0.01		0.00	1.51	
MAURITIUS	0.02	0.00	- 83.04	7.60	1.10	- 85.53
SRI LANKA DSR	0.00	0.00	100.00	1.00	1.00	0.00
AUSTRALIA	0.01	0.01	36.70	0.56	0.56	0.72
SOUTH AFRICA		0.00		0.00	0.50	
ITALY	0.00	0.00	- 55.00	0.10	0.03	- 75.00
NEW ZEALAND	0.00	0.00	700.00	0.03	0.01	- 60.00
DJIBOUTI	0.01			0.85	0.00	
OMAN	0.01			1.83	0.00	
NETHERLAND	0.01			0.20	0.00	
ARGENTINA	0.01			2.00	0.00	
MOROCCO	0.02			7.00	0.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.24</b>		<b>102.8</b>	<b>74.56</b>	

7. Demand for *B. neglecta* products seems to be stable or perhaps even decreasing (Schippmann 2018a). The market for this species in northern Kenya is reported to be underdeveloped and fetching low prices. Annual purchase records for frankincense of this species in one Kenyan district are reported to vary between 75 kg (2013) and 21,817 kg (2018), while the potential harvest in a single collection area of 50,000 hectare would give an estimated potential yield of 288 tons and was estimated for one district to total 1,800 tons (Oils of Africa 2020).
8. The Horn of Africa is the world's prime production area for various *Boswellia* species, but data is relatively scattered and imprecise. Puntland, Somalia, is the world's largest production area of frankincense from *B. sacra*, followed by exports from "Somaliland". Further species harvested in Somalia include *B. frereana* and *B. rivae* (Neo Botanika 2020). CFESS (2020) reports that "Somaliland" exported about 1,000 tons of frankincense in 2017. Most exports go to China, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Europe and the United States of America. However, no data existed on regional trade, which was a lot more significant than exports beyond the Horn of Africa region. The company Neo Botanika (2020) estimates annual harvest from *B. frereana* and *B. sacra* to a total of 500 tons (from 60,000 trees) each, and *B. rivae* harvests at 50 tons (6,000 trees) annually. Eight trading companies were active, with a single domestic processing facility, and local consumption was minimal in comparison of export. These local estimates seem higher than estimates in available literature. According to BfN (2015a, d), estimates of frankincense production in "Somaliland" vary between 200 to 700 tonnes per year with more than 99% destined for export. The estimated total production potential is reported between 1,000 and 2,500 tons of frankincense and other resins combined, of which an estimated 40% was *B. frereana* (BfN 2015a). Main high-quality exports are reported to go to the European Union and the United States of America, while the Middle East, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Eritrea were importing lesser quality specimens. The last available data from Oman reports 66,707 tons of imports in 2008. Saudi Arabia reported a total of 871 tons of imports from Somalia in 2011-2013. Import statistics into Yemen for 2011-13 total 863,199 tons, but use HS130190, which may include products of other taxa. Of these imports, 44% are from Puntland, Somalia, 29% from "Somaliland", and the balance from other North African countries. It is not known what portion of China's imports of HS13019020 are comprised of *Boswellia* resin, but 2013 imports totalled 1,721 tons, mainly from Ethiopia and Sudan, and in lesser volumes from Kenya, Somalia, Nepal and India (BfN 2015d). Some additional data is contained in document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#).
9. Extensive information is available on *B. papyphera*, which is mainly produced and exported in Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and possibly Sudan (BfN 2015b). Other countries, such as Cameroon (Betti 2020), seem to not be active in frankincense production and to mainly use *Boswellia* for domestic, mainly local medicinal purposes. Eritrea (2020) reports the range of the species in its country to be 2,1982 km<sup>2</sup> and annual production of 300 tons (in 1995). Most frankincense was used domestically, thanks to domestic processing facilities, with annual frankincense exports of 35-50 tons. Ethiopia (2020) reports that *B. papyrifera* is the most widely used species for frankincense production but *B. neglecta*, *B. rivae*, *B. ogandensis* and *B. microphyla* are used to a lesser degree. Total harvest and export volumes are reported as unknown. Ethiopia reports eight trading companies, but in-country processing is reportedly inexistent. South Sudan (2020) reports harvest and export volumes as unknown, with no known in-country processing. Schippmann (2018 a, b, c) reports estimates of potential production area and potential annual frankincense production in Ethiopia at 2,284,000 ha and 57,100 tons. The production and trade volumes of gums and resins in Ethiopia have been increasing since the 1990s. Between 1998 and 2007, Ethiopia exported about 25,192 tonnes – on average 2,519 tonnes per year, with an average annual increase of 12% – with a total value of USD 34,138,670. According to BfN (2015b), annual frankincense production from *B. papyrifera* in Eritrea is estimated at 450 tonnes. In Sudan, the majority may be consumed domestically. BfN cites a study by the Ministry of Foreign Trade of Sudan and the European Commission, according to which exports declined from 1,726 tons (2001) to 76 tons (2007). Table 4 displays export data for frankincense from these three countries from 2010-2013, using the general tariff code HS130190. Additionally, there is COMTRADE data for Ethiopia (but not Eritrea or Sudan) for export of "incense sticks" under tariff code HS330741, amounting to a total of 22,106 kg between 2010 and 2013 (BfN 2015b). It is not known what percentage of these natural gum and resin and incense stick export volumes are from *B. papyrifera*. Some additional data is contained in the section on utilization and trade of document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#).

**Table 3: Reported trade values and exports of products in HS code HS130190 from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan in 2010-2013.**

Year	Exporter	Trade Value (US\$)	Quantity (kg)
2010	Eritrea	Not reported	Not reported
	Ethiopia	\$12,023,242	3,558,403
	Sudan	\$1,540,882	1,432,300
2011	Eritrea	Not reported	Not reported
	Ethiopia	\$11,312,680	3,445,980
	Sudan	\$2,603,764	2,373,070
2012	Eritrea	Not reported	Not reported
	Ethiopia	\$10,246,654	2,740,192
	Sudan	\$13,727,252	Not reported
2013	Eritrea	Not reported	Not reported
	Ethiopia	\$12,184,560	3,268,647
	Sudan	Not reported	Not reported

10. According to BfN (2015b), the Ethiopian Orthodox Church uses about 2,050 tonnes of frankincense per year, with an additional 440 tons per year used for cultural reasons at people's homes in Addis Ababa alone. The major importing countries for exports from Ethiopia are China, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Egypt and Guatemala (Ethiopia 2020). France, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Dubai are major importers of frankincense from Eritrea (Eritrea 2020). Main importers of Sudanese frankincense include the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, China, France, Germany, and Italy (BfN 2015b). According to Schippmann (2018a, b, c), China is the largest market mainly for use in traditional medicines. In Europe and Latin America, substantial amounts of frankincense are used by the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches (about 500 tonnes in 1995, BfN 2015b). Similar quantities were imported into North African countries where it is used for chewing. About 50 tonnes are used in Europe (including Germany, France, Netherlands, and Italy) for the production of essential oils and extracts for use in cosmetic, food and pharmaceutical products. According to the section on utilization and trade of document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#) (paragraphs 18 and 19) and Cameroon (Betti 2020), international demand might be rising, due to novel research into pharmaceutical *Boswellia* properties, and increased appreciation of the taxa in personal care products.
11. Among importing States;
- Germany (2020) reports that 68 domestic companies are active in trade in frankincense or processed products or do processing of frankincense raw materials in Germany, 35 of which classified as wholesalers. The country plays an important role in processing and distributing gums and resins to other European countries. Between 2010 and 2014, the value of Germany's exports of gums and resins increased by 3.2 % annually on average to EUR 30 million. Most imports are only cleaned and graded before they are exported to Germany. Most value addition by processing takes place in Germany by a small group of importers. These processors have complex industrial production systems for processing gums and resins. The importers receive requests from very diverse buyers, such as manufacturers of food products, aromatherapy products and flavourings and fragrances. Main imports were from Somalia and Ethiopia, but there was no data available about species or traded volumes.
  - New Zealand (2020) reports that it is not a range State, importing, exporting or re-exporting State of *Boswellia* live specimens. There are no known species of *Boswellia* grown in the country, and import of this genus as seeds, live plants or seedlings is prohibited under New Zealand's Biosecurity Act.
  - Slovakia (2020) reports to have found two imports of essential oils explicitly labelled as *Boswellia* or frankincense between 1 January 2018 and 19 March 2020. The countries of export were Switzerland (with country of origin Somalia) and India. Slovakia also reports various online offers in domestic trade for products ranging from dietary supplements for dogs to hemorrhoid gel.
  - Switzerland (2020) reports imports of *B. serrata* and *B. sacra* and provided an overview of its trade in 2018 (using a general HS code that also includes products of other taxa). Incense constituted 51% of all imports, followed by medicine, food supplements, cosmetics and essential oils. Import volumes across these categories totalled 2,795 kg, while re-exports totalled 6,417 kg.
  - The United States of America (2020) indicated to mainly import *B. serrata* and *B. sacra*. The primary market in the United States is reported to be for dietary supplements. Based on data provided by four

of its member companies that likely represent the largest share of *Boswellia* imports in the US dietary supplements market, the American Herbal products Association (AHPA 2020) reports that the United States do not do in-country processing of *Boswellia* products, only the manufacturing of value-added finished products from imported *B. serrata* material from India. It reports that approximately 88 tons of *B. serrata* gum resin were imported from India in 2017, and 126 tons in 2018 for this particular market alone. This report seems to put into question the global trade information provided by Brendler (2018), which reports only seven tons of exports of *B. serrata* from India to the United States in 2015-17 (Table 2). An excerpt from the database zauba.com for '*frankincense*' shows very substantial imports volumes. Due to a legally binding definition of the term frankincense in the United States, it seems that imports registered under this term should derive from *B. sacra* and thus be additional to the volumes reported by the AHPA. In an equivalent excerpt for '*Boswellia*', many of the registered *B. serrata* imports seem to originate in India, or to be re-exports from non-range States, in particular the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. However, the excerpt for '*Boswellia*' also contains numerous entries for *B. serrata* extracts imported from Sri Lanka, where this species is assessed as critically endangered / near extinct. The United States of America assume that these imports originate in India and were then re-exported by Sri Lanka. No response by Sri Lanka was received in response to an inquiry by the Secretariat. As the United States of America are still in the process of compiling trade information, they announced an update at the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee.






12. Very limited information was received on finished products in consumer markets containing *Boswellia* specimens. However, AHPA (2020) reports that a search for the term "*Boswellia*" on 28 March 2020 at the Dietary Supplement Label Database maintained by the US Office of Dietary Supplements and the National Library of Medicine (<http://www.dsld.nlm.nih.gov/dsld/>) identified 620 individual products as containing this ingredient (all *B. serrata*). This database search also lists products as separate if they only differ in size and form of packaging, includes some duplicates, and does not allow any inference on the amounts *Boswellia* specimens contained in these products. It nevertheless illustrates potential challenges for product tracing and CITES implementation for these value chains, similar to other taxa groups used in pharmaceutical and cosmetic markets (see document PC25 Doc. 30 on *Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species*).



Information on threats to these species, especially as it pertains  
to the underlying causes of poor regeneration capability  
and the impact of harvest on these species  
[Decision 18.205, paragraph c)]

1. Substantial information on threats to *Boswellia* populations is contained in document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#) (paragraphs 6 and 23-26). Bongers (2019) collated a summary table of reported threats to the five most commonly traded *Boswellia* species (Table 1), which suggests that the species are affected by habitat loss, grazing, overexploitation of resin and wood, fire, insect damage, and lack of regeneration. All these threats are widely confirmed in responses to Notification No. 2020/010. However, Table 1 also illustrates that no single threat affects all five of these species equally, and that there may be important distinctions between species, countries, and regions. In particular, reports of regeneration problems and lack of younger age classes of *Boswellia* populations abound throughout the available information, but it seems unclear to which degree this is caused by the biological vulnerability of the genus, reduced seed production or reduced seed fertility due to overtapping the trees, or due to sapling destruction through grazing or fires. As summarized by the United States of America (2020), literature seem to suggest that the main threats are habitat destruction, insect damage, and overexploitation leading to shifting harvest. It unclear whether low regeneration is the result of harvest, but rather it would appear that low regeneration is a function of the harsh environmental conditions in which these species are found, combined with the impacts of harvest. However, there are also widespread reports that vegetative reproduction, for example through cuttings, or coppicing of *Boswellia* trees was often easy (Neo Botanika 2020, Oils of Africa, Brendler 2018, Bongers 2019, BfN 2015b), and that at least some *Boswellia* species and populations in India (Brendler 2018, Venugopal 2020), Kenya (Oils of Africa 2020), and “Somaliland” (Neo Botanika 2020) were large, bountiful and well-regenerating.

**Table 1: Threats to five *Boswellia* species (Bongers 2019).**

	 <i>B. frereana</i>	 <i>B. neglecta</i>	 <i>B. papyrifera</i>	 <i>B. sacra</i>	 <i>B. serrata</i>
Trade (ton yr <sup>-1</sup> )	200	100–300	3,500–4,000	1,400–2,000	~100
Habitat loss	some	yes	yes	some	yes
Grazing	no	yes	yes	no	yes
Over-exploitation resin	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Over-exploitation wood	no	yes?	yes	no	yes
Fire threat	no	no?	yes	no	yes
Insects	yes	no	yes	yes	no?
Lacking regeneration	no	no?	yes	no?	yes

2. Responses for *B. serrata* and *B. ovalifoliolata* in India suggest limited threats. The company Chemiloids Life Sciences reports some threats due to urbanization, cash crop farming, and firewood collection, but in very limited areas. Two individual experts see no threats (Suthari 2020, Pullaiah 2020). While regeneration was poor in some places, previously unsustainable harvesting methods had been improved through state regulation and capacity-building among harvesters, and *B. ovalifoliolata* was no longer harvested. Venugopal (2020) confirms that land encroachments, street expansions and grazing are affecting *Boswellia* habitats in some places, but states that a recent survey in 100 forests of Madhya Pradesh had shown plentiful regeneration with individuals of all age groups. Similar surveys were due in 15 other Indian States. Harvests would occur only in less than 10% of the trees throughout India and did not generally pose a threat to the trees' survival due to sustainable harvesting methods. In contrast, Brendler (2019) suggests that population assessments had been regional and showing highly variable results from healthy populations to clear signs of decay, and that multiple factors (poor seed set, plus grazing and browsing of young trees, coupled to lopping and tapping of larger trees) all compounded each other. According to Brendler, pollinated *B. serrata* only have 10% seed set, and even untapped *B. serrata* trees produce relatively few fruits, probably due to the limited availability nutrients during the flowering period when leaves are absent. Seed viability was poor,

and storage time was limited to six to nine months under dry conditions. However, the biggest long-time concern was habitat loss through farming, poor recruitment of young *B. serrata* trees due to grazing by livestock and reduced seed production due to tapping. Many of India's dry deciduous forests had been degraded to thorny scrub, remaining forests were highly threatened by urbanization, cash crop farming, firewood collection and overgrazing, industry (mining and hydroelectric power production) and population movements (resettlement camps). Brendler also remarks that vegetative tree propagation is possible and practiced, and Venugopal (2020) adds that the plant is known for propagation through seeds, root suckers and pole plants in patches, with observed 80% success rates in some forest divisions.

3. Among the African species, there are very varying descriptions:

- a) For *B. neglecta*, Oils of Africa (2020) is pointing out that, in contrast to other *Boswellia* species, tapping could not induce the trees to produce resin, it was only due to the activity of a borer beetle larvae, which stimulated the tree to produce resin. Harvesting of *B. neglecta* resins is thus from natural exudation. The resins drip down, dry and are usually collected from the ground. The harvesting method of *B. neglecta* thus had no negative effect on the sustainability of *Boswellia* populations as there was no tapping of the trees. Yet, it seems unclear whether the described non-invasive harvesting method applies to all *B. neglecta* harvest. Schippmann and colleagues (2018a) report as threats for this species continuous tapping through the year with no rest periods; grazing of livestock; and cutting branches for fodder in times of drought. Severe droughts also affect the trees directly. Schippmann remarks that it may be inferred from *B. papyrifera* that propagation from rooted cuttings and the production of root suckers are possible.
- b) For *B. frereana*, BfN (2020a) reports that very low rate of germination (<8%) even in hormone treated seeds has been observed. *B. frereana* was, however, easy to propagate from cuttings, with a survival rate between 75-80% of transplanted cuttings observed over a seven-year period. In the Sanaag region where the majority of "Somaliland" and "Puntland" *Boswellia frereana* is found, the main causes of land degradation is reported to be charcoal production (31% of the cases), overgrazing (26%) and other natural causes such as invasive species (24%). Although it was widely accepted that *Boswellia* trees needed three to four years of rest to recover from a full season of tapping, continuous tapping has been observed. Schippmann cites recent field observations and interviews in "Somaliland" pointing out that desperate and irresponsible harvesters are reported as making too many cuts on the trees to drain resin as well as cutting in ways that can and does kill the trees. However, Neo Botanika (2020) considers overtapping in "Somaliland" as being limited to small areas affected from unexperienced tappers. CFESS (2020) suggests that a lack of any recent fieldwork prevents evidence-based conclusions.
- c) For *B. sacra*, Schippmann (2018c) and BfN (2015c) cite four major processes of over exploitation: clearing and conversion of woodlands to arable farming or gravel mining; excessive wood harvesting for fuelwood; overgrazing by livestock, primarily camels, affecting both flowers and seeds and resulting in low germination rates (less than 8%); and improper harvesting and tapping procedures to enhance short-term resin yield, including too many or excessively deep cuts that risk infection of the tree or invasion by parasitic insects, continuous tapping without resting times, and burning off the tree's bark. As for *B. frereana*, Neo Botanika (2020) and CFESS (2020) voiced doubt of the evidence-based validity and generalizability of these statements for "Somaliland", which they report to be largely healthy, with easily successful vegetative regeneration. Private ownership of the trees represented protection, since owners and harvesters were conscious that their future livelihoods depend on the trees' survival. Consequently, areas of overtapping were limited and did not constitute a threat to the *B. frereana* and *B. sacra* populations in "Somaliland".
- d) The least controversial evidence base is available for *B. papyphera*. Eritrea (2020) reports habitat transformations for agriculture and grazing, and excessive and inappropriate tapping by unskilled labourers that causes low production of non-viable seeds and negatively affects the regeneration capacity of *Boswellia*. Ethiopia (2020) reports that *B. papyrifera* is very sensitive to natural or human interferences and can be damaged easily. The most common factors were windfall, insect attack, termites, fire, improper tapping, clearing and cutting branches by local farmers and trampling and browsing by cattle. No forest management plan was in place; tapping was uncontrolled; and enrichment planting was uncommon. Harvest was considered to affect strongly the sustainability of the populations; and the regeneration profiles of most species were poor because of the open access nature of the forests. Ethiopia made no statement as to whether the observed threats also apply to other *Boswellia* species in its territory. South Sudan (2020) reports a high rate of ecosystem degradation and rapidly declining *Boswellia* populations. There was no supervision of production areas and no management or protection activities. The decline was attributed to ecosystem degradation caused by drought, excessive fuelwood harvesting and overgrazing, land conversion, improper resin tapping methods and insect

damage. Tribal leaders and local community members on the one hand, and outsiders or migrant harvesters were blaming each other for excessive and improper tapping procedures. Cameroon (Betti 2020) reports bark removal for local medicine as the only known use, but also observes regeneration problems, low density of juvenile trees or saplings, and high seed infertility rates. While some populations showed high rates of bark removal, it would not endanger the resource. Literature adds that, in contrast to other *Boswellia* species, lack of regeneration seems to already have started five decades ago. Untapped trees produced three times more viable seeds than tapped trees, but recruitment of young trees into the population was still poor, commonly due to the effects of grazing. Yet, vegetative propagation from root cuttings and root suckers was easy (BfN 2015b, Schippmann 2018c). BfN (2015d) reports that illegal harvest was rampant, since young people sneak in during the harvesting season and take the resin before the legitimate harvesters reach it. Illegal harvesters were collecting resin by making additional cuts onto the bark after the five-month legal harvesting season has ended. Desperate and irresponsible harvesters are reported as making too many cuts on the trees for too long and cutting in ways that kill the trees.

Information on any initiatives to artificially propagate these species  
or produce plantations of them  
[Decision 18.205, paragraph d)

1. The vast majority of *Boswellia* harvest seems to be wild, but no biological challenges to vegetative propagation of *Boswellia* species were reported, and some relevant information on artificial propagation was already provided in paragraphs 4, 7, and 20 of document [CoP18 Doc. 66](#).
2. Eritrea (2020) reports that seedlings of *B. papyrifera* are produced in nurseries and that reforestation efforts through hillside closures, establishment of plantations and planting trees at community and household-levels have been undertaken for the last three decades. Every year, thousands of trees of the species are propagated in nurseries and planted. However, due to overgrazing by livestock, survival rate was minimal. The problem was that there was no follow up of the planted saplings. These statements are confirmed by Bongers (2019), who states that tissue culture techniques are being developed to produce *B. papyrifera* saplings. Planting of branch cuttings was promising – especially when latex of *Euphorbia abyssinica* was applied to speed up root growth – and had been partly successful when applied in livestock enclosures. Enrichment planting with seedlings and small saplings had not been successful so far, possibly due to slow growth, prolonged dry seasons, and livestock grazing, but might be effective if protected from livestock and fire.
3. Venugopal (2020) reports that some artificial propagation initiatives have been put in place by the Indian State Forest department, including seed nurseries, root suckers, stem cuttings and patch plantations, with observed 80% success rates in some forest divisions. These statements are confirmed by Brendler (2018), who also provides some detailed information on pre-treatment of seed, fruit, root, and branch propagules. As of 2020, resin collector groups are entrusted with the collection of seeds for large scale propagation of *B. serrata*. Earmarked plantation areas of 50 ha in each of about 100 designated forests in 23 forest divisions was underway (Venugopal 2020). The company INDFRAG (2020) reports to have planted hundreds of trees in 2019 and that *Boswellia* branches can be easily cut and planted in the soil during the rainy season. The AHPA (2020) reports that one of its members companies obtains *B. serrata* gum resin both from wild populations and from artificially propagated plantations, some of which are 20 years old.
4. In Somalia, first plantations of *B. sacra* were reportedly established in 1982. More recently, preliminary research to establish *in vitro* plant tissue culture for *B. sacra* had been carried out (BfN 2015c). Furthermore, CFESS (2020) reports that *Boswellia* specimens were cultivated in farms, and Neo Botanika (2020) reports that some initiatives had begun but were still at very small scale.
5. Oman has reportedly developed guidelines for sustainable production and harvest, research on frankincense genetics and chemistry, vegetative propagation, plantations, and ground-water-fed frankincense farms. Preliminary results of agronomic initiatives are said to be promising (Bongers 2019).
6. The Secretariat received anecdotal suggestions that *Boswellia* species, presumably in particular *B. papyphera*, were included the ongoing [African Great Green Wall Initiative](#). This initiative was initiated by the African Union and is supported by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. It aims to counteract soil degradation and desertification in the Sahel zone through the restoration of woodlands. So far, the Secretariat was unable to validate this information.

Existing regulations and ownership structures pertaining to the species, and their habitat, drivers of habitat trends and management measures in place or under development, including sustainable harvest practices  
[Decision 18.205, paragraph e)

1. Available information on ownership structures pertaining to the species and their habitat is included in the description of stakeholders close to the harvest (Annex 2, paragraph 1). Drivers of habitat trends are included in the section on threats in Annex 3.
2. Sustainable harvest practices depend on the sourced commodity. It is not clear from the available information whether and how sustainable harvesting methods might also differ between *Boswellia* species. Several sources describe elements of sustainable harvesting practices for *Boswellia* resins to avoid tree mortality and degeneration of *Boswellia* populations.
  - a) The importance of resting periods, rather than continuous annual tapping, is repeatedly emphasized. According to BfN (2015a), *B. frereana* trees should be tapped only once every three years. Schippmann (2018b) cites a study stating that the original thickness of *B. serrata* was regained three years after tapping was stopped and recommends resting periods of three to five years after trees are tapped for a couple of years. He also cites another study according to which a healing period of between four and 14 years is advisable in order to attain the full potential for viable seed production in Eritrea. To avoid premature death and poor-quality seeds that are unable to regenerate, Schippmann (2018a, c) states that trees should be rested every five to six years, ideally tapping should not span more than 3 consecutive years. However, in most cases, *Boswellia* trees were repeatedly tapped for up to seven or more years.
  - b) Tapping techniques seem to be of crucial importance. Schippmann (a, b, c) quotes manifold studies describing improper tapping techniques that hurt trees or cause fungal or insect infections, including even cases of branch chopping, bark burning, or even tree felling. According to Brendler (2018), a relationship exists between the girth size and gum yield, concluding that for optimum yield of gum, a girth size of above 86 cm for *B. serrata* should be selected so that the gum tapping practices shall not affect the survival status of the species in the natural forest. He also reports that the Indian National Medicinal Plants Board provides detailed guidelines for gum resin collection and post-harvest practices. For example, “Only a few small longitudinal incisions should be made to collect the exudates and the exposed parts should be treated appropriately to avoid any fungal or bacterial infestation after the exudates has been collected. Incisions, too close to the ground, easily approachable by the cattle and wild animals, should be avoided. The collection container should be designed in a way to prevent rain, bird droppings and any other such possible contaminations”. The best time for gum inducer injection treatment for *B. serrata* trees would be the dry season. BfN (2015b) reports a recommended tapping intensity of six tapping spots per *B. papyrifera* tree for trees of < 20 cm breast height diameter, a total of 12 spots (three spots on each of the four sides) for trees of 20–30 cm breast height diameter and a total of 16 spots (four spots on each of the four sides) for trees > 30 cm breast height diameter.
  - c) Muga and colleagues (2014) contains a template for developing sustainable wild harvesting protocols for other indigenous non-timber forest product species in Kenya and East Africa.
  - d) Other responses report that locally appropriate tapping techniques were traditionally transmitted from generation to generation in “Somaliland” and India (AHPA 2020, Neo Botanika 2020, CFESS 2020), and that systematic continuous capacity building was provided to tribal people by Indian forest authorities or licensed large vendors (Venugopal 2020, AHPA 2020).
  - e) Oils of Africa (2020) mentions non-invasive collection of naturally exuding *B. neglecta* resin in Kenya. It is unclear whether such collection would be biologically and economically feasible for other *Boswellia* species, but responses also suggest that these products might fetch lower market prices.
3. Some *Boswellia* populations are protected in nature protection areas, or species-wide protection, or subject to national management strategies.

- a) Forest Authorities in India seem to be heavily engaged on *B. serrata* population inventories, establishing harvesting protocols, and artificial propagation or enrichment planting strategies (Venugopal 2020). The Secretariat notes that India has several conservation programmes for other species, and some *Boswellia* populations could be found in Indian national parks and nature reserves of various kinds.
- b) *B. sacra* populations in Oman are covered by endangered species legislation (BfN 2015b). According to BfN, Oman is planning a conservation programme that has recently started with the mapping and monitoring of the populations. DNA sequencing of wild stands of *B. sacra* have been undertaken and *ex-situ* and *in-situ* conservation activities begun in some areas. In 2009, the Oman Environment Society concerned about the rapid decline of *B. sacra* launched a five-year project to assess the status of the frankincense population and to measure the impact of tapping on the health of frankincense trees. Experiments have clearly shown that if damaged trees are fenced off from herbivores they recover rapidly in terms of biomass and young plant regrowth. A 850 hectare frankincense park and 1,263 hectare buffer zone have been designated a UNESCO world heritage site. The establishment of the 4,500 km<sup>2</sup> Jabal Samhan Nature Reserve (JSNR) and its status as a conservation area with Arabia's largest population of Arabian leopards also enable *B. sacra* habitat to be maintained and if a management plan is implemented, to be restored.
- c) CFESS (2020), and BfN (2015a) both report that *Boswellia* value chains in Somalia used to be heavily regulated through state monopolies before the civil war, virtually wiping out the private sector. According to BfN (2015a), the breakdown of this system and of State authority in general had fostered competition, driven prices down and enabled unsustainable practices, and the whole issue of sovereignty called into question any attempt to enforce any regulations. Nevertheless, BfN (2015a) cites the draft of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Somalia, which set out clear goals for sustainable management of the country's frankincense resources to be achieved by 2020. It aims at adequately assessing non-timber forest resources; elaborating and implementing sustainable management plans, and, by 2020, putting in place reseedling, exploitation, and marketing strategies, protected pricing mechanisms, and gene and seed banks. However, it does not contain information on the implementation of the plan. BfN (2015a) also states that the private sector in "Somaliland", that has tenure over large areas of *Boswellia* woodlands, has instituted a range of measures to develop and expand sustainable cultivation techniques. CFESS (2020) adds that "Somaliland" has enacted the law on Prevention of Deforestation and Desertification, which specifically applies to frankincense trees. The law prohibits the commercialization or the cutting of plants, with the exception of the commercialization of thirty species, including frankincense trees, subject to the authorization of the Ministry of Environment. Violators are subjected to penalties of 6-9 months imprisonment and/or fines equivalent to 25-125 USD. *Boswellia* ownership was registered under a Gums and Resin Registration System.
- d) According to BfN (2015b), *B. papyrifera* is not covered by any endangered-species legislation, but there are populations that are protected inside forest reserves and conservation areas. Outside of these areas, there is a major gap between existing policies and on-the-ground practice of conservation and sustainable use of *B. papyrifera* in all three range States that are commercial exporters of frankincense. These statements seem confirmed by reports from Eritrea, Ethiopia, and South Sudan (all 2020).
- e) Cameroon (Betti 2020) reports that the non-timber forest products (NTFP) sector was comprehensively regulated, permitting community members to access them through traditional usufruct rights. However, current processing of *Boswellia* did not follow any established management standard, since the species were not included in the list of 487 regulated NTFPs. Once included in this list in the future, permits would need to be allocated to operators and exporters for this type of product.

### Additional observations

1. According to several stakeholders, the possible inclusion of one or more *Boswellia* species in the Appendices of CITES may create implementation challenges for Somalia, including its Somaliland and Puntland regions, whose independent sovereignty is not internationally recognized, and who are therefore not CITES Parties. The Horn of Africa is the centre of diversity of the genus, and Somalia is among the most important exporting countries for several commercially exploited *Boswellia* species (*B. frereana*, *B. sacra*, *B. neglecta* mentioned in Bongers et al. 2019, *B. rivae* additionally mentioned by Neo Botanika). The natural gum industry is among the most important sources of foreign exchange through exports, and harvest and trade in *Boswellia* are of high traditional and economic importance to many small-holders. Estimations of the number of persons involved in gums and resins production and trade as a source of income vary from 10,000 for Somalia (BfN 2015a, c) to 70,000 to 100,000 in “Somaliland” alone (CFESS 2020). *Boswellia* populations in Somalia may be affected by threats and suffer from lack of management, but no specific information is available for the Puntland region. The limited information available for “Somaliland” suggests that compared to other areas in North-East Africa, its *Boswellia* populations may be better maintained, and ownership and harvesting protocols may be better established and respected, while species management may benefit from higher regulatory capacity. Some of the harvest from “Somaliland” was recently FairWild certified and could be considered a successful case study of sustainable trade in biodiversity (Neo Botanika; TRAFFIC oral communication; see also document PC25 Doc. 30 on *Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species*). Somalia is subject to a long-standing trade suspension in all CITES-listed species for lack of national implementing legislation ([Notification No. 2019/35](#)). Certain stakeholders expressed concerns that even if trade from Somalia was maintained, such as for example by means of improved national legislation and a lifting of the trade suspension, internal frictions and sovereignty disputes would render the collaboration between Authorities of Somalia and “Somaliland” unlikely (NeoBotanika, 2020, oral communication). They questioned whether such a listing would be of benefit to *Boswellia* populations in Somalia and feared that it might lead to the creation of an entirely new sector of illegal international wildlife trade (Neo Botanika, 2020, oral communication).
2. CITES-imposed trade suspensions are also in force for Djibouti since 2004 ([Notification No. 2011/010](#), [Notification No. 2018/015](#)), but the Secretariat did not receive information on whether a potential CITES-listing of *Boswellia* species would create concerns such as those expressed by stakeholders in Somalia.

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