



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2015/028

Geneva, 18 May 2015

CONCERNING:

Submission of annual reports in electronic format

1. When the Secretariat receives annual reports from the Parties,¹ it sends a copy to the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), which enters the statistical information into the CITES Trade Database.² UNEP-WCMC maintains this database under contract to the Secretariat.
2. The reports contain a very large volume of data. Consequently, the Conference of the Parties, in Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP17):

URGES every Party to consider whether the preparation of its national reports could be computerized and the submission of such reports made in electronic format.

3. The Secretariat requests that, if possible, the Parties submit their reports in electronic format, either by email to info@cites.org, on CD-ROM or another storage device such as a Universal Serial Bus (USB) drive. Parties that submit their reports in electronic format do not need to submit a printed version.
4. To simplify the process of uploading the data into the CITES Trade Database, Parties are requested, where possible, to submit their reports in electronic tabular form, such as tables within Microsoft Excel or Microsoft Word documents.
5. Parties are requested not to send PDF document files as these cannot be easily converted for electronic upload into the CITES Trade Database.
6. Parties are requested not to include thousand separators in their reports, and to use either a comma or a point as a decimal separator consistently throughout the report to ensure that quantities are interpreted accurately when the report is converted to the appropriate format for upload into the CITES Trade Database.
7. Any file containing a report that exceeds 10 MB should be 'zipped' before being sent by email. For large files, Parties are also encouraged to use cloud storage services and send a shared download link to the Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC.
8. To support Parties with report submission, the Conference of the Parties, in Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP16):

FURTHER URGES Parties experiencing problems with the regular preparation and submission of national reports to seek assistance from the Secretariat to produce those reports.

¹ Parties are required to submit their annual reports required under the provisions of *Article VIII, paragraph 7 (a)*, by 31 October following the year for which they are due and in accordance with the most recent version of the [Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports](#) distributed by the Secretariat.

² <http://trade.cites.org/>

Parties that are having problems with the production of their reports are invited to make direct contact with UNEP-WCMC, which has over 30 years' experience of computerizing and analyzing reports. Parties that have consulted with UNEP-WCMC in the past have, in many cases, been able to make improvements in the production of their reports and have often made savings in resources.

9. During the process of entering data into the CITES Trade Database, UNEP-WCMC often notices discrepancies in the annual reports or finds that some of the information is unclear or missing. To enable these problems to be solved quickly and efficiently, the Secretariat has suggested that, where possible, UNEP-WCMC make direct contact with the Management Authority of the Party concerned. The Secretariat would appreciate the cooperation of the Parties in responding quickly to any requests for clarification that they receive from UNEP-WCMC, so that the CITES Trade Database can be maintained as accurate and up-to-date as possible.
10. Parties that submit their reports directly to UNEP-WCMC should send to the Secretariat a copy of the note of transmission, so that the report can be considered as having been transmitted in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph 7, of the Convention.
11. Any Party that has queries about the annual report format or that is unsure of whether it is using a compatible format is urged to contact the Species Programme at UNEP-WCMC:

Species Programme
UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
219 Huntingdon Road
CAMBRIDGE CB3 0DL
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 (0)1223 277314
Email: species@unep-wcmc.org
Web: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org>

12. This Notification replaces Notification to the Parties No. 2006/005 of 12 January 2006.