CITES Supports Legal and Sustainable Trade

CITES recognizes that, for some species, sustainable trade can itself contribute to the survival of a species by providing value and therefore economic incentives for its continued existence. Such enterprises can employ many people in developing countries who might otherwise turn to more destructive practices like shifting agriculture which may completely clear the land of trees. The work of **CITES** authorities in both importing and exporting countries can help to assure producers, exporters, importers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers of wood products that **CITES**-regulated trade is being legally and sustainably conducted. A **CITES** listing is not a ban or a boycott and should not be misconstrued as such. On the contrary, documentation that can demonstrate legal acquisition and sustainable production could serve as a positive marketing tool in these times of environmental awareness in consumer purchasing.

CITES is not a ban, or a boycott

The *Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* **(CITES)** is an international treaty whose terms and conditions have been agreed-to by 150 member nations. It was negotiated and signed in 1973 and went into force in 1975. The business of the Convention is accomplished primarily through regular meetings of the Plants Committee, the Animals Committee, the Standing Committee (which handles administrative functions), and biennial Conferences of the Parties (COP's). Official participants in these forums are delegates from the governments of the member nations. However, the meetings are generally open to interested and accredited observers who have a stake in, or who follow the work of the Convention. Observers can interact freely with delegates and can have a great influence on proceedings.

CITES is administered by the **United Nations Environment Program**.
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UNEP

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What You Should Know

CITES Conserves Resources

The *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* **(CITES)** regulates the international trade in wild animals and plants and their products when it is determined that this trade does, or potentially could, threaten their continued survival in the wild. After thorough scientific study and open debate at the Conference of the Parties of a proposal by a member State, a species can be included in Appendix I or II if the proposal obtains a 2/3 majority. Shipments of species included in the **CITES** appendices require **permits** or **certificates**. An **export permit** may only be issued after the Management and Scientific Authorities of the exporting country have determined that the shipment was legally obtained and that its export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. These requirements assure exporters, importers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers that properly-documented products of **CITES**-listed species come from legal sources and are produced in a sustainable manner. In addition, certain countries have taken stricter measures by requiring an **import permit** for Appendix II species.

CITES encourages Sustainability

CITES and... Wood Products... at a glance

CITES (*The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*) **is an international treaty that regulates trade and to ensure sustainable utilization of the species. It strives to protect certain plant and animals that are determined to be threatened by international trade. The Convention provides for three levels of protection.**

Forestry operations are inspected to make "non-detriment" and legal findings to issue documents

Inspectors identify the contents of the shipment, check accompanying documents and look for plant pests.

Appendix I

applies the most stringent controls to trade. This level of protection is reserved for those species determined to be presently threatened with extinction that are, or may be, affected by trade. Trade in listed wild specimens is not permitted for commercial purposes. Trade in artificially propagated specimens, however, is permitted. An **export permit**, issued by the Management Authority of the exporting country, is necessary to verify that these are legally obtained specimens and that the export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. An **import permit** from the destination country is also required. Timber Species currently listed in Appendix I include: *Araucaria araucana* (monkey puzzle tree), *Abies guatemalensis* (Guatemalen fir), *Fitzroya cupressoides* (Alerce), and *Dalbergia nigra* (Brazilian rosewood).

Species listed in **Appendix II** are not currently threatened with extinction, but may become so if trade is not regulated. An **export permit** from the originating country is required to certify that the trade is not detrimental to the survival of the species. Timber species in **Appendix II** include: *Oreomunnea (Englehardia) pterocarpa* (Caribbean Walnut), *Pericopsis elata* (Afrormosia), *Pterocarpus santalinus* (Red sandalwood), *Swietenia humilis* (Pacific coast mahogany), *Swietenia mahogani* (Caribbean mahogany), *Prunus africana* (African cherry), *Aquilaria malaccensis* (Agarwood), *Guaiacum officinale* (Commoner lignum vitae), and *Guaiacum sanctum* (Holywood lignum vitae).

Appendix III

includes species listed by individual countries in an effort to obtain international cooperation to control trade from their country. While these listings are country or region specific, their implementation is the shared responsibility of all exporting and importing countries. The listing country must issue an **export permit** to accompany shipments. Countries not taking a listing must issue a **CITES certificate of origin** to demonstrate that the shipment is coming from a country other than the one that has requested the listing. Four tree species are currently listed in **Appendix III,** including *Swietenia macrophylla* (Big-leaf mahogany).

Annotations

are footnotes to the listing, indicating which specific parts or derivatives of a species are subject to the provisions of the Convention. Most listings for traded species apply to only logs, sawnwood, and veneer sheets. Further processed and manufactured products, such as plywood and furniture, are mostly not covered.

Permits and Certificates:

Designated **CITES** authorities in each member country (see insert) are the only authorized issuers of these documents. Any trade in **CITES** specimens without **CITES** documents is regarded as illegal. The Scientific Authority is responsible for determining, on the basis of a scientific information, whether trade is unlikely to be detrimental to the survival of the species. There also must be a finding by the Management Authority that specimens were legally obtained and in compliance with all laws/regulations that govern the protection of plants and animals. These findings can apply to specific shipments, or can be generically applied and used to establish export quotas or limitations. These findings also could serve as valuable communication tools in addressing issues of sustainability and alleged illegal activities in the forest.

A shipment on its way to the port of embarkation in the exporting country

Documented and inspected wood products await their final destination.

Permitted trade is not Detrimental to the survival of the species

An Export Permit ensures that CITES shipments are legally obtained