

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



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

Enforcement

TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF LISTED TREE SPECIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.79 and 18.80 on *Enforcement*, as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

18.79 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding, convene a Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, consisting of representatives of Parties affected by illicit trafficking in such specimens, ICCWC partner organizations, other intergovernmental organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), regional enforcement networks and other experts. The Task Force should work to develop strategies to combat illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, including measures to promote and further strengthen regional and international cooperation. The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of this Decision and the work of the Task Force and take into consideration any recommendations made by the Standing Committee.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.80 *The Standing Committee shall review the Secretariat's report called for in Decision 18.79 and make recommendations as appropriate.*

3. As reported to the 17th (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016) and 18th (CoP18, Geneva, 2019) meetings of the Conference of the Parties, illegal trade in CITES-listed tree species continues to be a matter of great concern. The World Wildlife Crime reports produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in cooperation with International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) partners; case studies on rosewood contained in the threat assessment report on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa presented at CoP18; data collected from CITES annual illegal trade reports submitted by Parties; the results of the Thunder series of global law enforcement operations; and other documents prepared for the present meeting indicate large-scale illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species across Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Implementation of Decision 18.79 and 18.80

4. Funding to convene the *Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* (the Task Force) was secured thanks to contributions from the European Union, France and Monaco to the ICCWC

Strategic Programme. The Secretariat put in place arrangements for the Task Force meeting to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in March 2020, but unfortunately the meeting had to be postponed due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. In the light of the ongoing challenges posed by the pandemic the Secretariat has put in place arrangements for the Task Force meeting to be held online on 1 to 4, 7 and 11 February 2022. The working languages of the meeting will be English, French, and Spanish.
6. The Task Force will bring together Party representatives from source, transit and destination countries affected by illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, as well as wildlife enforcement networks, ICCWC partner organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other experts.
7. Due to the large number of CITES-listed tree species, the number of Parties concerned, and to make the online Task Force meeting as practical and constructive as possible, the Secretariat initiated a process of prioritization to identify Parties for participation in the Task Force, and to determine the species most affected by illegal trade for the Task Force to focus upon. Matters considered included:
 - a) CITES-listed tree species mostly found in illegal trade based on available illegal trade data (seizure quantities; volume; weight);
 - b) source, transit and destination countries most affected by this illegal trade;
 - c) Parties affected by illegal trade concerning more than one CITES-listed tree species;
 - d) ongoing CITES processes including the Review of Significant Trade, CITES Article XIII processes, tree species-specific trade suspensions, and CoP18 Decisions related to CITES-listed tree species.
8. Based on the considerations above, the following CITES-listed tree species and Parties were identified:

CITES tree species: *Cedrela odorata* (Cedar); *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* (Siamese rosewood); *Dalbergia latifolia* (Indian rosewood); *Dalbergia sissoo* (North Indian rosewood); *Dalbergia* spp. (Populations of Madagascar) (Rosewood); *Diospyros* spp. (Populations of Madagascar) (Ebony); *Gonystylus* spp. (Ramin); *Guibourtia demeusei*, *Guibourtia pellegriniana*, and *Guibourtia tessmannii* (Bubinga); *Pericopsis elata* (African teak); *Pterocarpus erinaceus* (West African rosewood, Koso); *Pterocarpus santalinus* (Red sandalwood); *Pterocarpus tinctorius* (Mukula, African padauk); *Swietenia macrophylla* (Mahogany).

Parties: Argentina; Austria; Bangladesh; Belgium; Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Brazil; Burkina Faso; Cambodia; Cameroon; Central African Republic; China; Congo; Côte d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Ecuador; European Union; France; Gabon; Gambia; Germany; Ghana; Guatemala; Guinea; Guinea Bissau; Honduras; Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China; India; Indonesia; Italy; Kenya; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Madagascar; Malawi; Malaysia; Mali; Mexico; Mozambique; Namibia; Netherlands; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Nigeria; Norway; Pakistan; Panama; Papua New Guinea; Paraguay; Peru; Poland; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Serbia; Sierra Leone; Singapore; Solomon Islands; Spain; Sri Lanka; Thailand; United Arab Emirates; United Republic of Tanzania; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Viet Nam and Zambia.

9. Invitations to the Task Force meeting were sent to the Parties mentioned and other stakeholders in December 2021, and at the time of writing (early January 2022) the registration of nominated representatives was in progress.
10. Upon conclusion of the online Task Force meeting, the Secretariat will prepare an addendum to the present document and present its outcomes to the Standing Committee in accordance with Decision 18.80.

Recommendations

11. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee:
 - a) note the present document; and

- b) in accordance with the provisions of Decision 18.80, consider the outcomes of the online *Task Force meeting on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species* to be presented in an addendum to the present document.