



Africa Regional Workshop

Electronic CITES Permitting Systems

9 - 10 October 2024
Nairobi, Kenya (in-person only)

Salehin Khan, CITES Secretariat

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



Outline

- Mandate
- Advantages
- Approach to implementing electronic CITES permitting systems
 - Feasibility assessment
 - Project management
- Tools and guidance



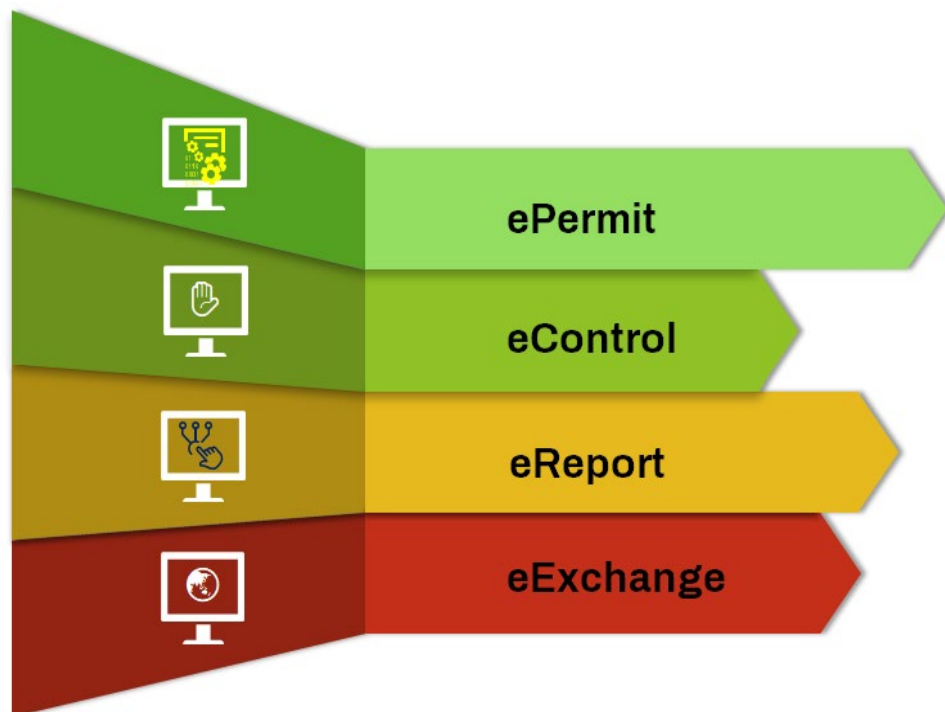
eCITES permitting system

- ***What is eCITES permitting system?***

The scope of eCITES includes electronic application and issuance of CITES permits, control and authentication of CITES permits, reporting as well as exchange of permits between the Parties.

- ***Objective***

To improve the implementation of the Convention by using modern Information and Communication Technologies to simplify compliant trade and to combat illegal trade.



Mandate

- **Standing Committee**

- Working Group on electronic systems and information technologies

- [Res Conf. 12.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on *Permits and certificates*

- [Res Conf. 11.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on Compliance and enforcement

- [Dec. 19.150-19.152](#) on *Electronic Systems and Information Technology*

Standards for EPIX, alternatives of endorsement, traceability systems, use of HS codes, capacity development of MAs.

- [Dec. 19.153-19.155](#) on *Risk assessment and analysis for border control*

Risk bases analysis and inspection



How does it help the Parties?

Legality:


Origin & sourcing, (inter-) national legislation

Sustainability

Non-detriment findings

Traceability

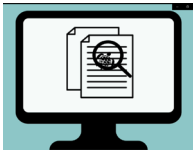
Trade data & transaction details

 CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA		PERMIT/CERTIFICATE No. _____ <input type="checkbox"/> EXPORT <input type="checkbox"/> RE-EXPORT <input type="checkbox"/> IMPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____		Original 2. Valid until: _____										
3. Importer (name and address): _____ 4. Exporter/Supplier (name, address and country): _____ Signature of the applicant: _____														
5. Country of origin: _____ 6. Special conditions: _____ <small>For live animals, this permit is valid only if the transport conditions comply with the Convention on the Transport of Live Animals by Air (CITA), or the rules of air transport, or the CITA/FAO Live Animals Regulations.</small>		7. Name, address, national authority and country of Management Authority: _____												
8a. Purpose of the transaction (see article 3): _____ 8b. Security stamp no.: _____														
9a. Scientific name (genus and species) and common name of animal or plant: _____ 9b. Description of specimens including identifying marks or numbers (signature & date): _____		10. Appendix no. and serial (see article 3): _____ 11. Quantity (including unit): _____		12. Total export/import: _____										
13. Country of origin: _____ Permit no.: _____ Date: _____ 14. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____		15. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____ 16. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____		17. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____										
18. Country of origin: _____ Permit no.: _____ Date: _____ 19. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____		20. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____ 21. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____		22. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____										
23. Country of origin: _____ Permit no.: _____ Date: _____ 24. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____		25. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____ 26. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____		27. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____										
28. Country of origin: _____ Permit no.: _____ Date: _____ 29. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____		30. Country of re-export: _____ Certificate no.: _____ Date: _____ 31. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____		32. No. of the operation: _____ or date of acquisition: _____										
33. Countries in which the specimens were taken from the wild, based on captivity or artificially propagated (only in case of re-export): _____ 34. Date the specimens or Appendix I species listed in captivity or artificially propagated for commercial purposes: _____ 35. Date the permit/certificate is issued by: _____														
Place: _____ Date: _____ Security stamp, signature and of host and: _____														
36. Export endorsement: _____ 37. List of Listing for restricted number: _____														
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Batch</th> <th>Quantity</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Batch	Quantity	A		B		C		D	
Batch	Quantity													
A														
B														
C														
D														
Date of export: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____ Official stamp and title: _____														

Advantages of E-cites



Simplifies
and automat
es trade
processes



Increases
transpare
ncy



Provides
legal
acquisition,
non-
detriment
and
traceability
information



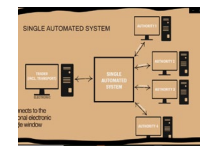
Prevents
the use of
fake or
forged
permits.



Allows for
quick and
easy
exchange of
information



Allows for
electronic
risk
management
for targeted
inspections,
based on the
trade and
transaction
information



Connects
to the
national
electronic
single
window.

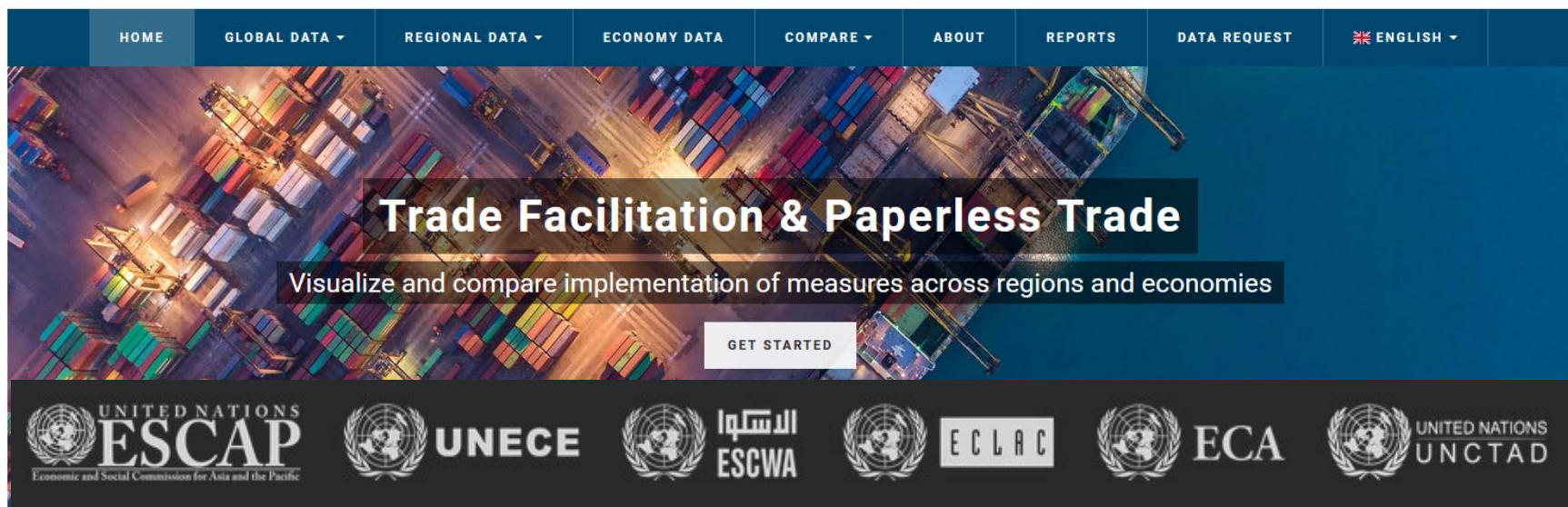


Automaticall
y generates
statistics, for
example, in
Annual
Reports for
CITES

Current status of eCITES implementation - New Survey Tool

- The United Nations Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation 2023 (biennial)
- New Question on Wildlife Trade Facilitation –
 - Electronic Application, Issuance and Exchange of CITES Permits/Certificates

UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation



HOME GLOBAL DATA REGIONAL DATA ECONOMY DATA COMPARE ABOUT REPORTS DATA REQUEST ENGLISH

Trade Facilitation & Paperless Trade

Visualize and compare implementation of measures across regions and economies

GET STARTED

UNITED NATIONS ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

UNECE

ESCWA

ECLAC

ECA

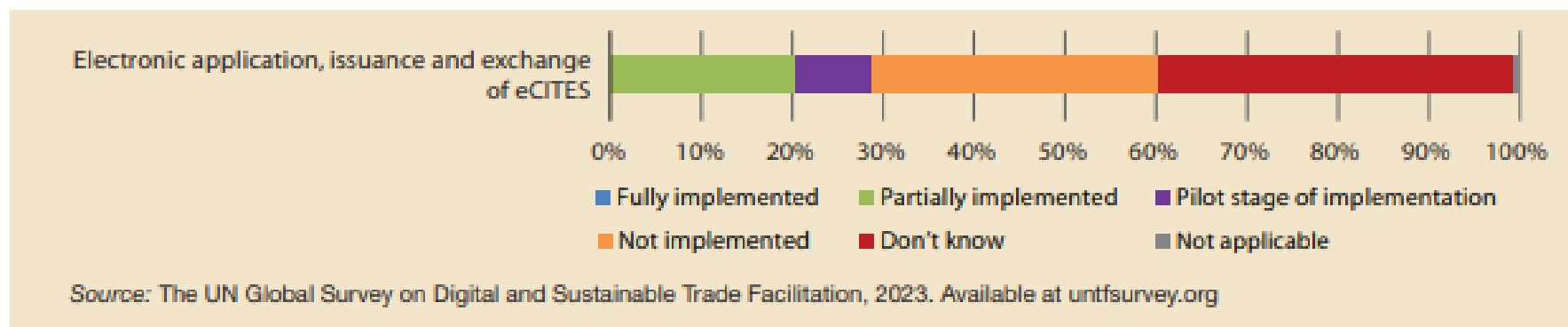
UNITED NATIONS UNCTAD



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Current status of eCITES implementation – 2023 Survey Results

- Only less than 30 percent of respondent Parties have implemented this measure – www.untfsurvey.org



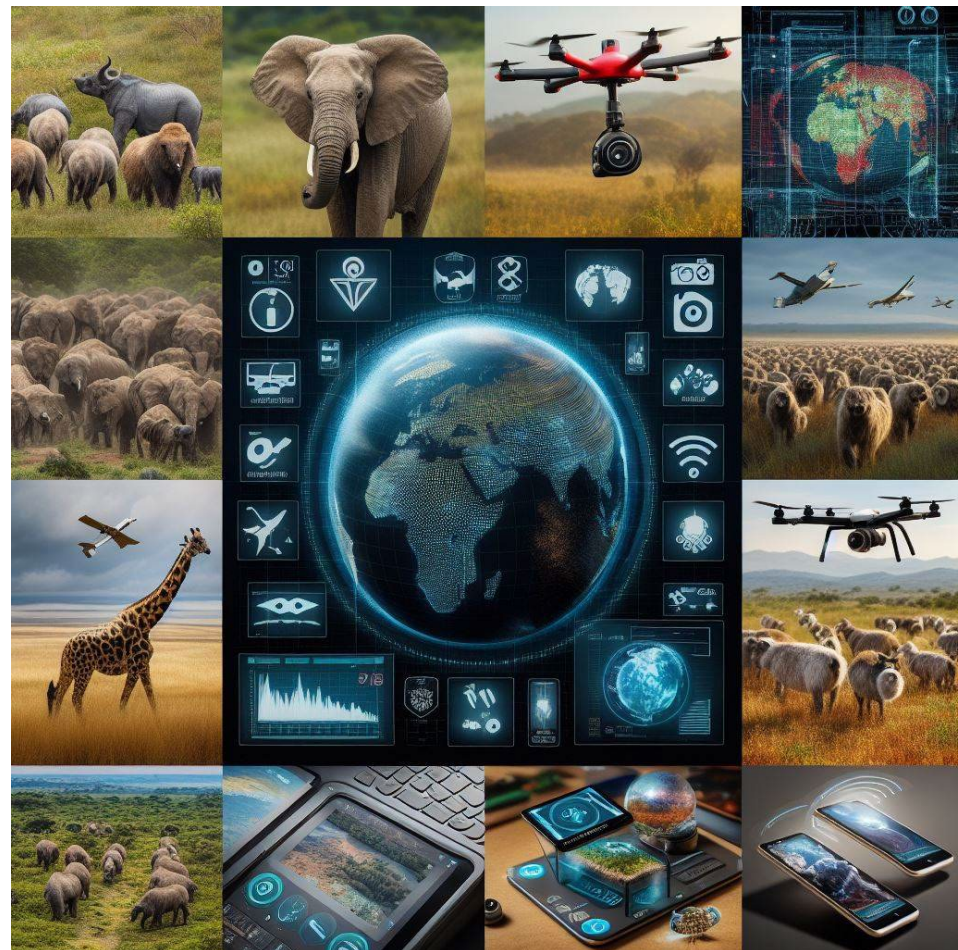
Electronic application, issuance and exchange of eCITES

x

Afghanistan	Not implemented	Albania	Do not know
Andorra	Do not know	Antigua and Barbuda	Partially implemented
Argentina	Partially implemented	Armenia	Partially implemented
Australia	Partially implemented	Austria	Do not know
Azerbaijan	Partially implemented	Bahrain	Do not know
Bangladesh	Not implemented	Belarus	Do not know
Belgium	Partially implemented	Belize	Not implemented
Benin	Not implemented	Bhutan	Do not know
Bolivia, E.P.	Planning stage	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Do not know
Botswana	Not implemented	Brazil	Planning stage
Brunei Darussalam	Do not know	Bulgaria	Not implemented
		Burkina Faso	Not implemented
		Cabo Verde	Not implemented
		Cameroon	Partially implemented
		Chile	Partially implemented
		Colombia	Not implemented
		Congo	Do not know
		Cote d'Ivoire	Do not know
		Cuba	Not implemented
		Czech Republic	Partially implemented
		Dominican Republic	Partially implemented
		Egypt	Do not know
		Equatorial Guinea	Do not know
		Ethiopia	Not implemented
		Finland	Do not know
		Burundi	Do not know
		Cambodia	Do not know
		Canada	Do not know
		China	Do not know
		Comoros	Do not know
		Costa Rica	Partially implemented
		Croatia	Planning stage
		Cyprus	Not implemented
		Democratic Republic of Congo	Do not know
		Ecuador	Partially implemented
		El Salvador	Planning stage
		Estonia	Partially implemented
		Fiji	Not implemented
		France	Partially implemented

How to approach electronic CITES permitting systems?

- **Not a computer programme or software only.**
- **Tool to implement the Convention and to enable transparency, collaboration, efficiency in the way trade is conducted.**
- **Systematic approach to its implementation so that systems are user-friendly and can be used for long-term.**
- **Holistic view – national or regional or even global**



How to approach electronic CITES permitting systems?

- **Compliance?**
- **Traceability?**
- **Enforcement?**
- **Scientific Evidence?**
 - **Reporting?**



• **DATA**



Electronic Data for risks assessment and control

- Access to data related to
 - CITES permits/certificates
 - trade trends
 - traders
 - species
 - quota
 - trade routes
 - legal acquisition findings
 - non-detriment findings



- Targeted inspections
- species identification
- detections
- confiscation
- statistics

Assessment of the Current (as-is) and future contexts (to-be)

Process analysis

- What is the application procedure, centralized or decentralized?
- Who does what?
- What documents are required?
- How are NDF and LAF checked?
- How much time is required to issue permit?
- How is the payment done?
- How is permit data exchanged with customs/border authorities/importing country/exporting country?

Legislation review

- Is there a provision for eCITES? Does it need a revision? Can eCITES be implemented without the revision?



Assessment of the Current (as-is) and future contexts (to-be)

Technical assessment

- What is the technical capacity in the MA?
- What kind of infrastructure is available?
- If there is a legacy system – what can be done with it?
- Locally-sourced solution
- Externally-sourced solution
- Data storage
- Data security and technologies involved

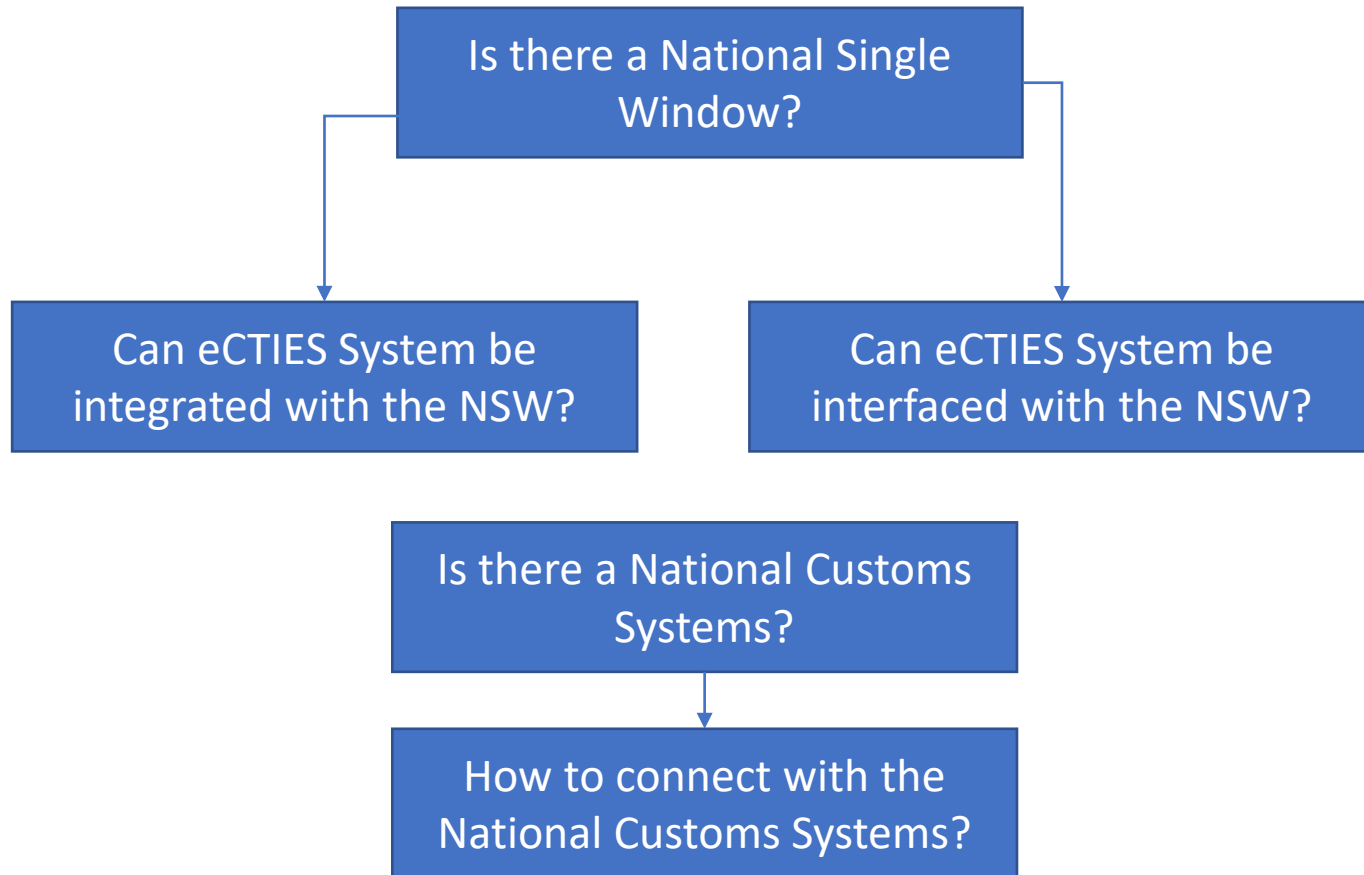
Cost-benefit analysis

- Cost of the solutions and business model (fee based, donor-supported etc.)
- Potential benefits of the solution (legal trade, transparency, efficiency, impact on biodiversity, conservation etc.)

Implementation plan/recommendations



Assessment of the Current (as-is) and future contexts (to-be)



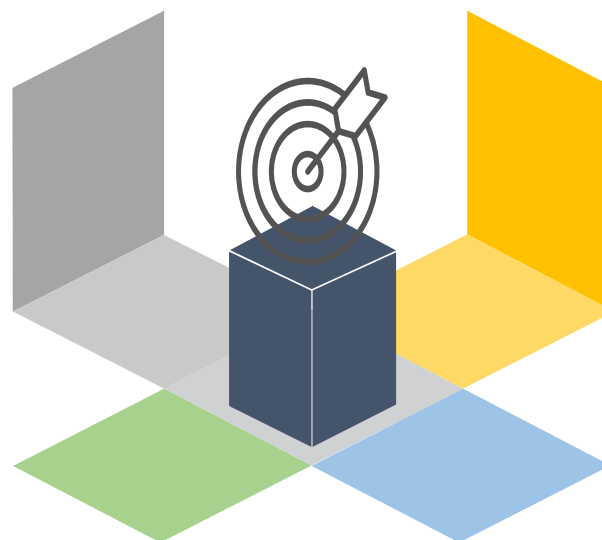
eCITES Project

Scope and objective

Simplify and automate business processes and establish collaboration of stakeholders through exchange of electronic information for an improved implementation of the CITES Convention.

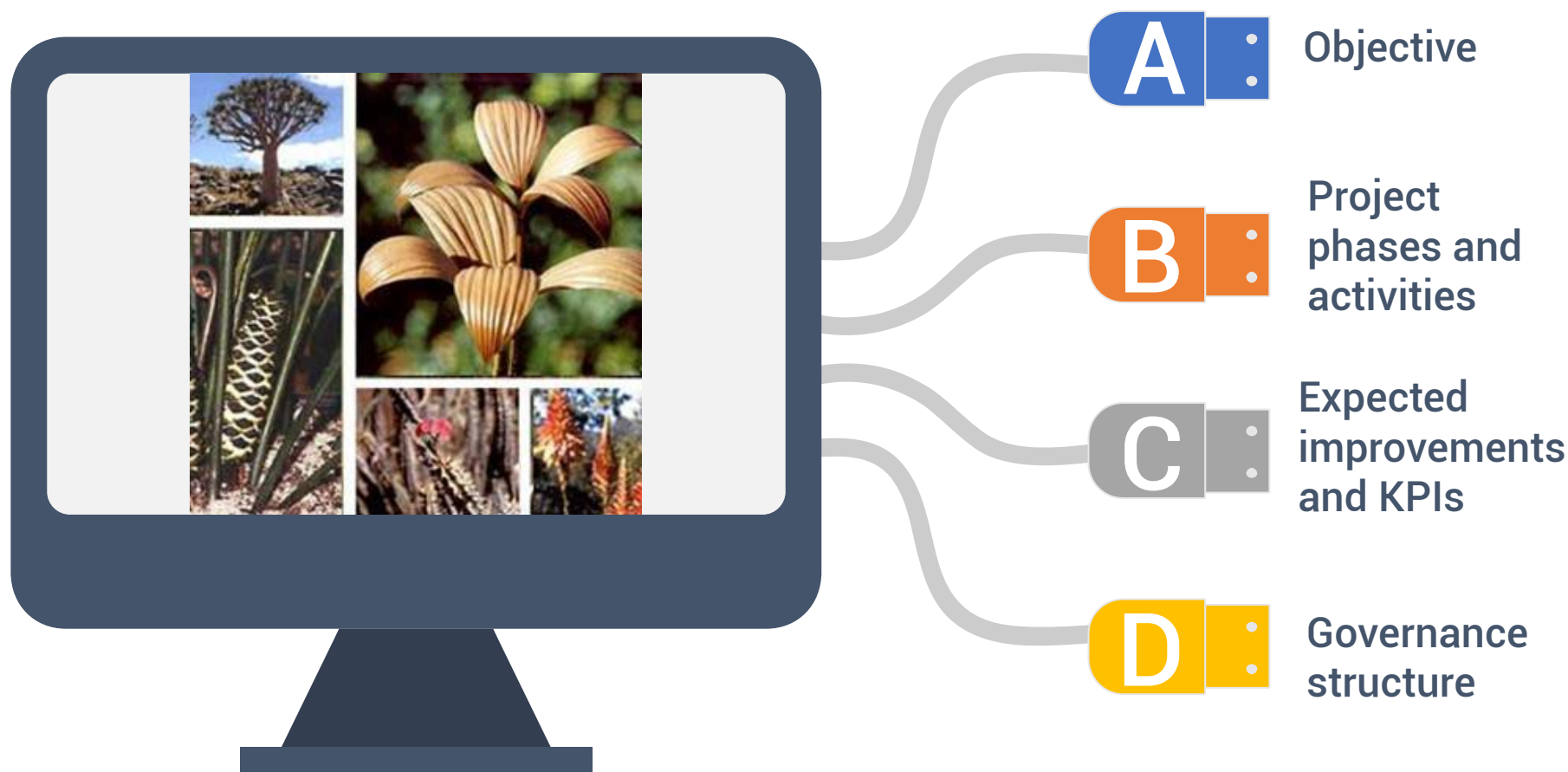
Beneficiaries

CITES Management Authorities, Border Control Agencies (Customs) and Traders (Exporters and Importers), other government agencies.

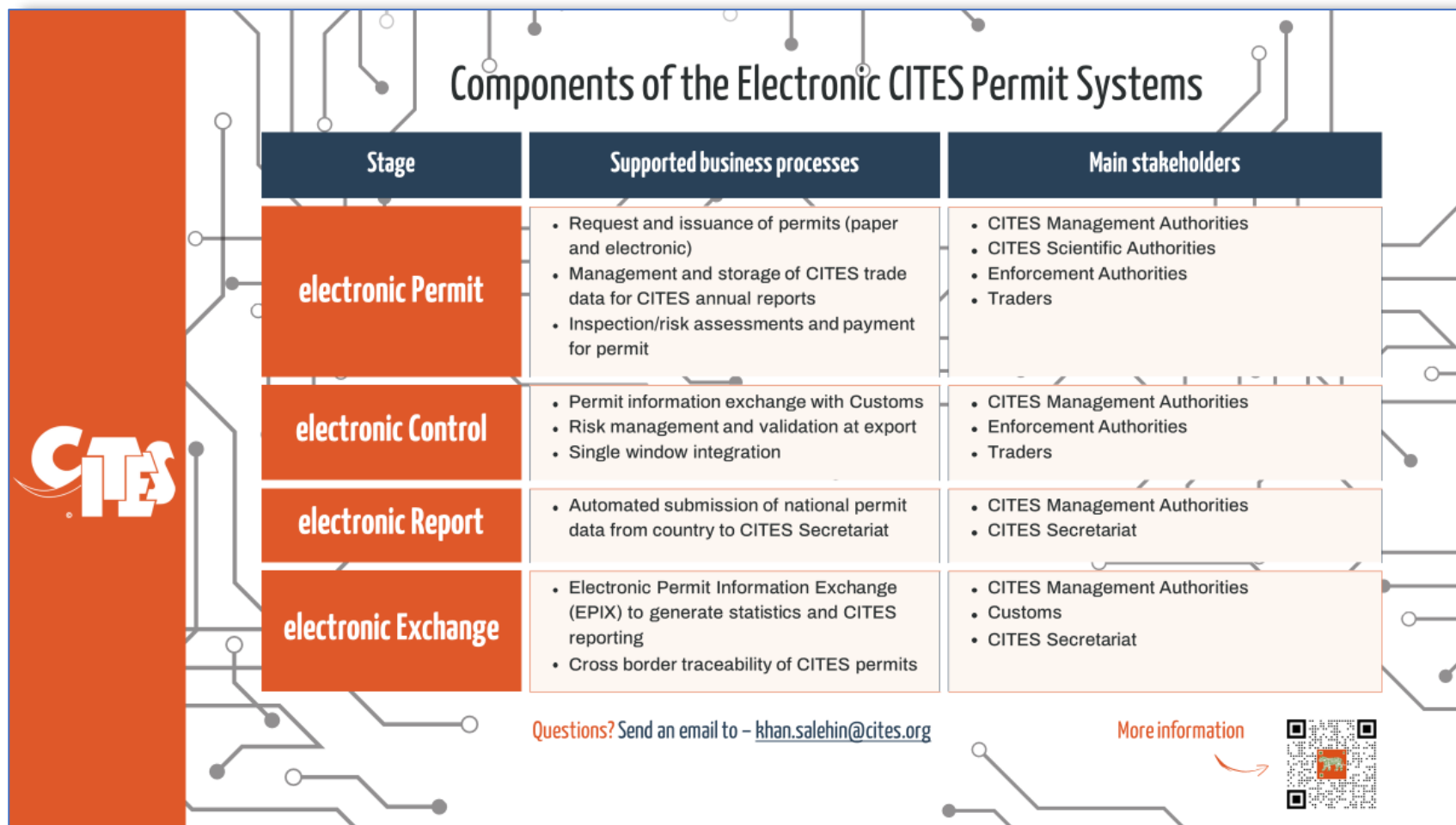


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High-level Project Plan



Four stages – phased implementation



Key aspects to keep in mind

- **Interoperability** – Can the eCITES system exchange data with customs and NSW?
- **International standards** – Use the CITES Toolkit for the international semantic standards. What if the permit information needs to be exchanged with other Parties?
- **Project governance and cooperation** – Keep the relevant agencies in the project preparation and execution. Cooperation with border agencies (customs, law enforcement authorities etc.)
- **Phased implementation** – Pilot eCITES with a parallel paper system, then fully into a fully paperless application, issuance and control system. Finally, eExchange.
- **Implementation model** - National systems vs regional systems.
- **Financial model** - Cost of implementation vs trade volume vs trade value vs biodiversity/conservation impact.



Key challenges (and opportunities)

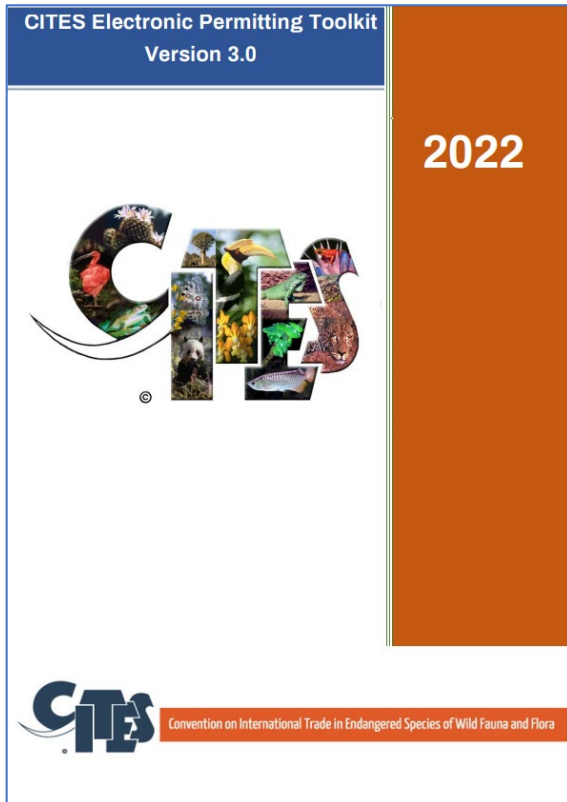
- Exchange of permit information between national agencies and Parties and interoperability.
- Possible alternatives to physical endorsements of permits (digital signatures, barcodes).
- Risk management of CITES specimens and use of HS codes for controls.
- Resources and capacity of Management Authorities
- Cooperation with border agencies (customs, law enforcement authorities etc.)
- Cost of implementation vs trade volume vs trade value.
- Lack of financial resources for implementing eCITES across the regions.



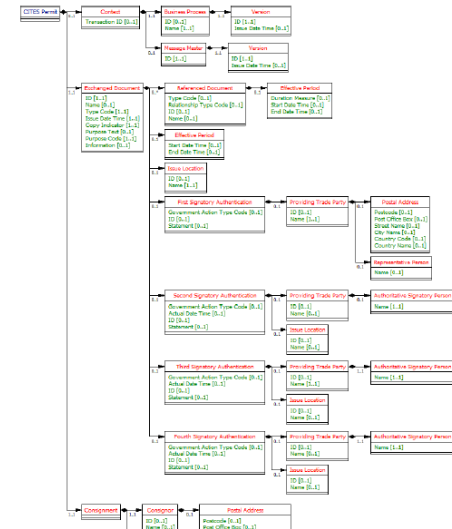
Resources – CITES Electronic Permitting Toolkit

Version No. 3

Published February 2023



5.2.1.1 Class Diagram



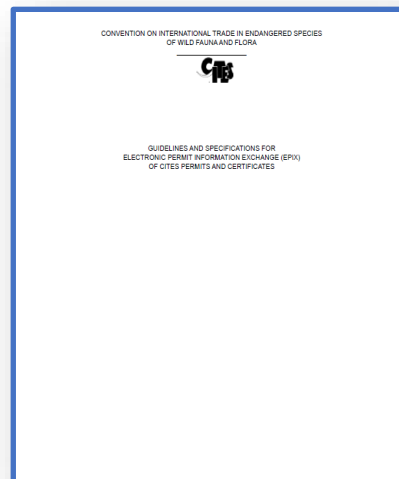
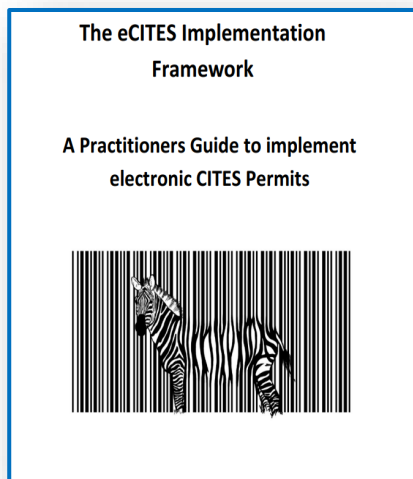
5.2.1.2 Message Structure

Element/Attribute	UN ID	Annotations
UN/CEFACT Permit		
Context	UN01003540	0..1
Transaction ID	UN01003541	0..1
Business Process	UN01003542	1..1
ID	UN01004853	0..1
Name	UN01004854	1..1
CITES Form Reference(s) Business Process Context Value This element shall be used with the indicated value "CITES PERMITTING". It is recommended to use this value as a trigger for the further processing of received data as required by the business or administrative process if neither the communication information nor the root element information nor the combination of both is considered to be sufficient. This value should not be used to trigger the technical processing of received CITES permit data.		
Version	UN01004855	1..1
ID	UN01003591	1..1
CITES Form Reference(s) Business Process Context Value This element shall be used with the indicated value (Currently 1). It is recommended to use this value together with parameter value text as a trigger for the further processing of received data as required by the business or administrative process if neither the communication information nor the root element information nor the combination of both is considered to be sufficient. This value will be changed whenever the eCITES data will incorporate more or other process capabilities. This value should not be used to trigger the technical processing of received CITES permit data.		



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Resources - Other Guidelines



International Standards and Best Practices



The eCITES
Implementation
Framework (General
guidance for project
implementation)

Guidelines and
Specifications for
Electronic Permit
Information Exchange
(EPIX) of CITES Permits and
Certificates

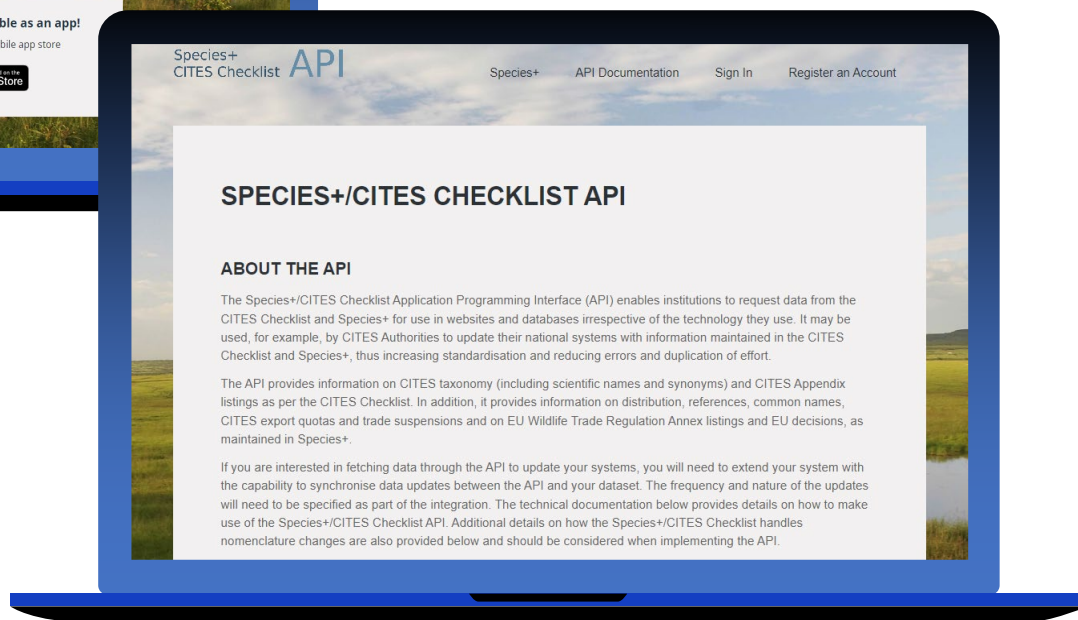
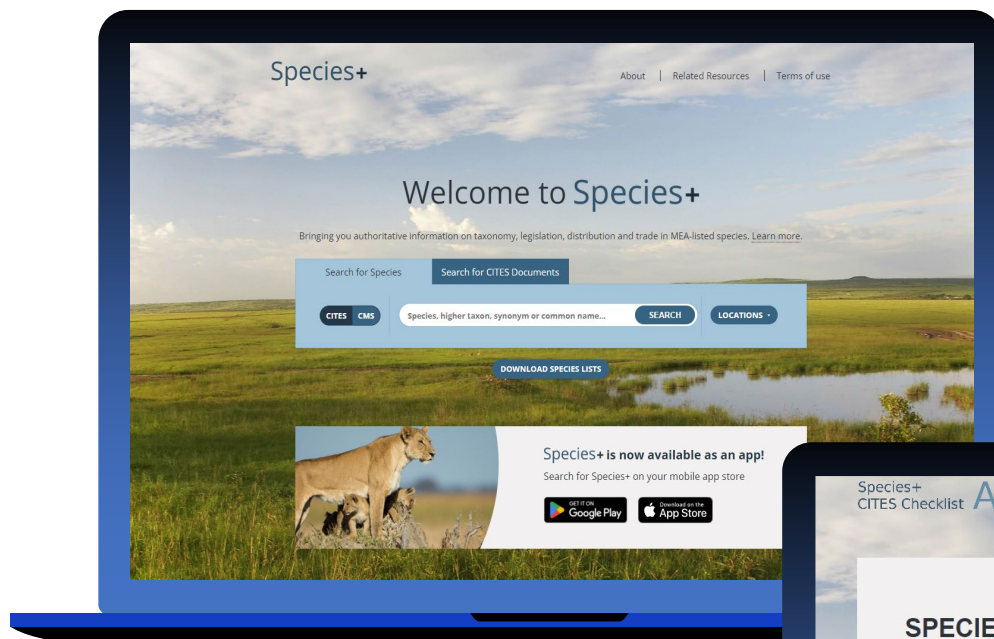


<https://cites.org/eng/prog/eCITES>



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Species+ API - <https://speciesplus.net/>



Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

eCITES webpage – www.cites.org/eng/prog/eCITES



What is eCITES?

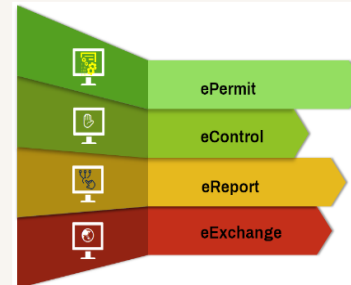
Electronic CITES includes electronic application and issuance of CITES permits, control and authentication of CITES permits, reporting as well as electronic exchange of permits (permit information) between the Parties.

Objective

The objective of electronic CITES or eCITES is to improve the implementation of the Convention by using modern Information and Communication Technologies to simplify compliant trade and to combat illegal trade. It is important to note that digitalization of procedures and electronic information exchange is not an objective in itself, but rather a tool to simplify and improve the work of Management Authorities and other agencies to implement the Convention.

Why is it needed?

The electronic permits together with simpler and automated trade procedures help government agencies to better target their inspections and identify those actors that break the law. Implementation of eCITES facilitates collaboration and electronic information exchange with Customs and other border control agencies for efficient control of CITES trade. Parties will benefit from increased transparency, prevention of fraudulent permits, faster and more robust reporting and better data to decide on non-detriment findings. Finally, simplified and automated procedures could create new business opportunities for compliant traders and rural communities.



Recent Notifications

[THAILAND: E-permitting for terrestrial animals](#)

[THAILAND: E-permitting for plants](#)

[BAHRAIN: E-permitting](#)

UNCTAD ASYCUDA eCITES Solution

Off-the-shelf solution:

- ePermit, eControl, eReport, eXchange
- Powerful functions: Web access, user profiles, controls & checks, risk management, electronic payment, work flow support ..
- Solution can be configured to national requirements and extended by the country
- Supports international trade and eBusiness standards : WTO, WCO, UNECE, ISO, ..
- Easy integration with any Customs and Single Window system: electronic permit exchange and validation, integrated Customs Risk Management, eSPS,..



ASYCUDA eCITES, worldwide (leaflet)

<https://ecites.asycuda.org>



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Partners



Thank you

Salehin Khan

Email: khan.salehin@cites.org

