



SUMMARY OF THE 13TH MEETING OF THE CITES PLANTS COMMITTEE: 12-15 AUGUST 2003

The 13th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC-13) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 12-15 August 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting drew together some 75 participants representing governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Delegates at PC-13 met in Plenary throughout the week to discuss 27 agenda items on a range of topics, including, *inter alia*, follow-up of decisions from CITES' 12th Conference of the Parties (COP-12), review of the Appendices, checklists and nomenclature, strategic planning, regional reports, and significant trade. Several working groups were set up to address specific issues, including: prioritizing the working programme for the period until COP-13; clarifying language and terms used in resolutions on registration of nurseries exporting artificially propagated specimens of Appendix I species, and on regulation of trade in plants; the terms of reference and schedule for the review of criteria for amending the Appendices I and II; evaluating the Significant Trade Review; implementing the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; and improving communication between regional representatives and Parties.

Despite a heavy agenda, the Plants Committee managed to get through its work, but due to time constraints not every agenda item was given the attention it deserved and many issues will be revisited at the Committee's next meeting early in 2004.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CITES

CITES came into being as a response to growing concerns that over-exploitation of wildlife through international trade was contributing to the rapid decline of many species of plants and animals around the world. The Convention was signed by representatives from 80 countries in Washington, DC, on 3 March 1973, and entered into force on 1 July 1975. There are currently 163 Parties to the Convention.

The Convention's aim is to ensure that the international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival. Parties to CITES regulate wildlife trade through controls and regulations on species listed in three Appendices. Appendix I lists species endangered due to international trade. Trade of such species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Species listed in Appendix II require strictly regulated trade based on quotas and permits to prevent their unsustainable use, and controls aimed at maintaining ecosystems and preventing species from becoming eligible for Appendix I. Appendix III species are subject to domestic regulation by a Party that requests the cooperation of other Parties to control international trade in that species. In order to list a species, a Party needs to submit a proposal for COP approval, with scientific and biological data on population and trade trends. The proposal must be supported by a two-thirds majority vote of Parties present at a COP. As the trade impact on a species increases or decreases, the COP decides whether or not the species should be shifted between or removed from Appendices. There are approximately 5,000 fauna species and 25,000 flora species protected under the three CITES Appendices.

CITES also regulates international trade of species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens enter or leave a country. Each Party is required to adopt national legislation and to designate a Management Authority responsible for issuing these permits and certificates based on the advice of a designated Scientific Authority. These two national authorities also assist with CITES enforcement through cooperation with customs, police, or other appropriate agencies. Parties

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of CITES	1
Report of the Meeting	2
A Brief Analysis of PC-13	9
Things to Look For Today	10

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Mark Schulman, Silke Speier, and Elsa Tsioumani. The Team Leader is Mark Schulman <mark@iisd.org>. The Editors are Chris Spence <chris@iisd.org> and Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA, DFAIT and Environment Canada), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs - DEFRA), the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of Germany (through the German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2003 is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Swan International, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI), and the Ministry for Environment of Iceland. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-212-644-0217 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.



maintain trade records that are forwarded annually to the CITES Secretariat, the sum of which enables the Secretariat to compile statistical information on the world volume of trade in Appendix species.

The operational bodies of CITES include its Standing Committee (SC), as well as scientific advisory committees: the Animals Committee (AC) and the Plants Committee (PC); and their subcommittees, the Nomenclature Committee and the Identification Manual Committee. As scientific and technical support bodies, the role of both the AC and PC is to: undertake periodic reviews of species to ensure appropriate categorization in the CITES Appendices; advise when certain species are subject to unsustainable trade, and recommend action; and draft resolutions on animal and plant matters for consideration by the Parties.

TENTH MEETING OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE: PC-10 met in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, US, from 11-15 December 2000. The Committee addressed: follow-up of COP-11 decisions; technical and species proposals for COP-12, such as the definition of “artificially propagated,” standard exemptions for derivatives of plant species and definitions of technical terms used in annotations for medicinal plants; significant trade in plants; and review of Appendices.

ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE: PC-11 met in Langkawi, Malaysia, from 3-7 September 2001. Participants considered: follow-up to COP-11 decisions; species and technical proposals for COP-12, such as harvesting of *Galanthus*; medicinal plants; guidelines for transport in live plants; tree species evaluation; and trade in Mexican cacti.

TWELFTH MEETING OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE: PC-12 met in Leiden, the Netherlands, from 13-16 May 2002, to consider a number of items, including: technical and species proposals for COP-12; significant trade in plants; medicinal plants; review of the Appendices; strategic planning; and evaluation of certification. Participants also discussed de-listing artificially propagated orchid hybrids.

CITES COP-12: COP-12 convened from 3-15 November 2002, in Santiago, Chile. Delegates considered 60 proposals and over 60 resolutions on a range of topics, including, *inter alia*, strategic and administrative matters, implementation of the Convention, and consideration of proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II. This included the listing of seahorses, basking and whale sharks and Bigleaf mahogany in Appendix II, and rejection of the proposals to downlist populations of minke and Bryde’s whales from Appendix I to Appendix II. A proposal for an Appendix I listing for all African elephant populations was withdrawn. Instead, the COP decided to allow three African nations – Botswana, Namibia and South Africa – to sell a limited and strictly controlled amount of their registered ivory.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Participants attending PC-13 met Tuesday morning, 12 August, at the International Conference Center in Geneva. Following a closed session of PC members and Parties, CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers opened the meeting, stressing the need for prioritizing the workload resulting from COP-12. He emphasized that the success of the PC, as well as the AC and SC, depends on the role of regional representatives and the support they

receive within their own regions. He also noted the need for the AC and PC to interact and work together on specific issues in order to move forward in the same direction. He added that the Secretariat was in the process of hiring a new scientist and scientific support unit chief. He then thanked the Swiss Government for hosting the CITES Secretariat in Geneva for the past 30 years and for offering to host every second meeting of the AC and PC.

CITES PC Chair Margarita Clemente (Spain) welcomed delegates, particularly new regional representatives. Noting the numerous decisions directed to the PC from COP-12, Chair Clemente stressed the need to prioritize key issues, such as significant trade, review of appendices and heavily traded non-CITES species. She also expressed the need to work with the AC on issues of mutual interest.

Following brief introductory remarks, delegates adopted the Rules of Procedure (PC13 Doc. 2 (Rev.1)), with changes agreed in the closed session, including the need to: submit documents to the Secretariat for PC consideration at least 60 days before the meeting; allow intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) to attend closed sessions; and prepare a summary record 60 days after a meeting. The meeting’s agenda (PC13 Doc. 3.1 (Rev. 6)) was also adopted, as amended, to include: addressing master scores under training initiatives; deleting the evaluation of certification schemes under the item on production systems involving CITES-listed species; and adding an item on artificially propagated *Tillandsia xerographica*. Delegates then adopted the meeting’s working programme (PC13 Doc. 3.2) and admission of observers (PC13 Doc. 4).

This report of the 13th meeting of the CITES PC is organized based on the official meeting agenda.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION ON THE OPERATION OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE

Chair Clemente outlined the operations of the PC (Decision 12.16), highlighting the PC’s terms of reference (TOR) that include providing guidance to Parties, acting upon decisions taken by the COP, and submitting proposals for consideration at the COP. Stressing the role of the Committee’s regional representatives in coordinating the work of the PC, she listed the current PC regional representatives as: John Donaldson (South Africa) and Quentin Luke (Kenya) for Africa; Enrique Forero (Colombia) and Fátima Mereles (Paraguay) for Central and South America and the Caribbean; Patricia Dolores Dávila Aranda (Mexico) for North America; N.P. Singh (India) and Irawati (Indonesia) for Asia; Margarita Clemente (Spain) and Giuseppe Frenguelli (Italy) for Europe; and Greg Leach (Australia) for Oceania. Chair Clemente then outlined decisions taken at COP-12 that require actions by the PC, including: implementation of the PC work programme; establishing a list of taxa in Appendix II that are significantly affected by trade and evaluating such trade; and the continuation of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group. She stressed that tasks in the Strategic Plan will need to be re-prioritized for the period leading to COP-13.

REGIONAL REPORTS AND DIRECTORIES

On Tuesday, 12 August, regional representatives presented their regional reports (PC12 Docs. 6.1.1 - 6.6.1). Chair Clemente noted that updated electronic versions of North America’s,



Europe's and Oceania's directories could be found on the CITES website, as well as older versions of directories for Africa, and Central and South America and the Caribbean.

AFRICA: An African representative presented his region's report (PC12 Doc. 6.1.1), stressing that communication and coordination between Parties remain a problem. He noted little to no regional capacity-building activity, but added that TRAFFIC had obtained funding for a capacity-building programme in southern Africa. He also explained that the second African representative had been unable to carry out his duties as PC Vice-Chair due to a lack of financial support, and intended to tender his resignation. PC Chair Clemente voiced her concern regarding the lack of funding, but did not accept his resignation. The Secretariat said the issue would be raised in the SC, and stated that it would support the Vice-Chair in his duties.

ASIA: Two representatives for Asia – one speaking for East Asia and the other for West Asia – introduced the report for the region (PC13 Doc 6.2.1 (Rev.1)), with both citing communication problems between Parties in the two sub-regions. The East Asian representative noted that the Management and Scientific Authorities of Indonesia will conduct a CITES awareness-raising programme later this year.

CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: The regional representative presented the report (PC13 Doc. 6.3.1), highlighting a botanical meeting held in Colombia that informed the scientific community about CITES activities. He noted that communication between regional management and scientific authorities needs to be improved.

EUROPE: The European representative outlined the report (PC13 Doc. 6.4.1), highlighting many regional activities, particularly with regard to significant trade. He added that two regional meetings were being organized to improve communication between Parties. While communication did not appear to be as weak as in other regions, he noted communication difficulties in eastern European countries.

NORTH AMERICA: In presenting the region's report (PC13 Doc. 6.5.1), the North American representative highlighted Canada's involvement in non-detrimental findings, work undertaken by the US on American ginseng and Bigleaf mahogany, and Mexico's focus on cactaceae and other succulent plants.

OCEANIA: Oceania's representative presented the report (PC13 Doc. 6.6.1), emphasizing that plant species are often neglected in the region due to a focus on marine issues, but that endangered orchids in Papua New Guinea and cycads receive attention. He also highlighted a New Zealand initiative to improve CITES and plant awareness through community involvement and voluntary compliance.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates addressed communication problems and lack of Party participation. The Netherlands noted varying levels of participation between different Parties and said that the PC can only function with proper input from everyone. Others stressed the need for more local involvement as a means to improve communication, and for financial support to carry out certain PC tasks. Chair Clemente established a contact group to address ways of improving regional communication.

On Friday, 15 August, Chris Schürmann (the Netherlands), Chair of the contact group on improving regional communication, reported on the group's findings, suggesting, *inter alia*, the need for: manuals for regional representatives and Parties to help inform each of their duties; fixed communication periods in which parties have information exchanges; alternative regional representatives to play a more important role; more informal exchanges between regional Parties; and NGOs to assist in improving communication between Parties in the region.

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

On Tuesday, 12 August, Chair Clemente presented the outcome of the 49th meeting of the SC, held in April 2003. She highlighted discussions on how to tackle Decision 12.97 regarding the review of criteria, and on how to involve countries of origin in the review of the appendices. The Secretariat then introduced a document on the SC's working group on technical implementation issues (AC19 Doc. 7.1), noting that the PC is invited to provide recommendations on how it could assist the SC in offering advice on such issues. Introducing a document on the SC's export quota working group (AC19 Doc. 7.2), he said that, according to a COP decision, the group would focus on the practical aspects of managing quota permits and reporting, and that the PC Chair is invited to participate.

TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

On Thursday, 14 August, delegates addressed technical implementation issues. The Secretariat suggested forming a group of individuals with experience on implementation, enforcement and management issues to provide input to the SC. Chair Clemente then established a "Friends of the Chair" group to identify topics in which the PC could contribute, so that the SC's working group Chair could be informed. The group will work intersessionally and report back to the Chair.

EXPORT QUOTA WORKING GROUP

On Thursday, 14 August, delegates addressed the document on the export quota working group. The Secretariat said that the SC had agreed to the TOR of the working group and its composition. He noted that the working group is focused on management and technical aspects related to export quotas. AC Chair Thomas Althaus (Switzerland), who attended the PC meeting for two days, said that he could not participate in the SC working group, but asked to be kept informed on its progress.

PC WORKING PROGRAMME UNTIL COP-13

On Tuesday, 12 August, the Secretariat introduced the working programme for the PC until COP-13 (PC13 Doc 8.1), which lists resolutions and decisions directed or related to the PC. He stated that the decision on the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group is not included as it is not directed to the PC, and indicated that the working group plans to reconvene in October 2003 in Brazil, before the Appendix II Bigleaf mahogany listing comes into effect the following month. The Committee established two working groups to consider the resolutions and decisions directed to it. The first working group was asked to prioritize the PC work programme. The second working group looked at ways of clarifying technical language on registration of nurseries exporting artificially propagated specimens of Appendix I species (Resolution



Conf. 9.19) and on regulation of trade in plants (Conf. 11.11), to make it more understandable to customs authorities and other stakeholders.

On Friday, 15 August, Luke Quentin (Kenya), Chair of the working group on prioritizing the PC work programme, presented the group's decision to rank resolutions and decisions directed to the PC until COP-13 based on high, medium and low priority. Decisions identified as high priority include, *inter alia*: joint regional meetings; review of significant trade in specimens of Appendix II species and its evaluation; review of the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II; and annotations for medicinal plants in the Appendices.

On Friday, 15 August, Javier Alvarez (US), Chair of the working group on reviewing the language and terms used in Resolutions Conf. 9.19 and Conf. 11.11, noted that the group had convened briefly to establish the TOR for the review. He said that a request will be sent to members for suggestions and a draft prepared for revision and consideration by PC-14.

FOLLOW-UP OF COP-12 DECISIONS

HARPAGOPHYTUM SPP.: On Wednesday, 13 August, participants discussed implementation of decisions relating to *Harpagophytum* spp. (Devil's Claw) (PC13 Doc. 9.1.1) and implementation of decisions in Namibia (PC13 Doc. 9.1.2). The Secretariat outlined COP-12 decisions and progress with implementation, noting that, as a non-CITES listed species, *Harpagophytum* spp. may not be a major priority for the PC and resources to address the issue may not be available. Namibia presented a national Devil's Claw situation analysis, which included resource, socioeconomic and market surveys of the species. She reported on increasing exports and sustainability concerns, and indicated that national harvesting quotas will be set.

The representative of Africa noted that there seemed to be greater activity for Devil's Claw than for listed species in southern Africa and, with the International Wildlife Management Consortium-World Conservation Trust (IWMC), stated that there was a misleading press release on the CITES website about the status of the species. Germany commended Namibia's efforts and noted that a sustainable system can be achieved with or without a CITES listing. Noting that Germany is the only importer, he underscored support for projects in Namibia on a national survey and on sustainable collection. He stressed loss of income for African collectors if cultivation efforts undertaken by German industry succeed and highlighted contacts with a company willing to market the wild material. TRAFFIC said the importing and consumer side was not transparent, with little information on import amounts, and agreed with Germany that cultivation can adversely affect the livelihood of local people in Namibia. The European Commission (EC) noted regulatory developments to monitor import levels in the European Union. Fauna and Flora International announced a study on trade in Devil's Claw that looks at increasing gains for harvesters. Austria highlighted the issue as an example of where CITES can collaborate with the CBD. Delegates agreed to a suggestion by Chair Clemente that the case be used as a model, as it incorporates involvement of the range States and the consumer country, as well as cooperation of regional representatives and industry.

GUAIACUM SPP.: On Wednesday, 13 August, the Secretariat introduced a document on *Guaiacum* spp. (lignum vitae or tree of life) (PC13 Doc. 9.2), recalling the COP-12 decision to include *Guaiacum* in Appendix II and requesting the PC to assess its status in the wild and its trade status. Mexico noted its work on a *Guaiacum* study project (PC13 Inf. 2) and Cuba requested financial support for a study project it intends to conduct (PC13 Inf. 7). Mexico added that its project would help examine the feasibility of harvesting wild species. He noted, *inter alia*, that: the project is co-financed by different national and foreign institutions; specimen records and potential distribution maps have been produced; and further studies are needed on wood anatomy to enable their identification and the improvement of control measures. Mexico stressed its willingness to exchange information with Cuba. The Secretariat said the Mexican study could serve as a pilot study for other range States.

AQUILARIA SPP.: On Wednesday, 13 August, the Secretariat introduced the progress report on *Aquilaria* spp. (agarwood) (PC13 Doc. 9.3), containing information on progress achieved on six related COP-12 decisions, as well as the status assessment of agarwood producing species for improved conservation and non-detrimental use (PC13 Inf. 3). TRAFFIC introduced the status assessment, with a number of actions to be undertaken, including: collecting up-to-date information; assessing the species' global status; undertaking field assessments on species with limited information; and finalizing guidelines for standard monitoring of the status of *Aquilaria malaccensis*. He added that the budget only covers baseline fieldwork in Indonesia, and that additional funds are required to conduct fieldwork in Malaysia. He also cited research undertaken by TRAFFIC and WWF-South Pacific on the economic assessment of agarwood trade in Papua New Guinea. A representative of Oceania stressed the need for action, noting that the quantity and quality of material coming from Papua New Guinea is declining, and called for a discussion on a potential Appendix III listing for the Papua New Guinea species. He suggested that an agarwood conference to be held in Vietnam later in 2003 would provide an excellent opportunity for CITES' promotion and involvement in agarwood trade.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTION CONF. 9.24: On Wednesday, 13 August, Chair Clemente introduced: Decision 12.97 on the review of criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II (PC13 Doc. 9.4.1); the text of the Chair of Committee I Working Group on Criteria (CWG12) (PC13 Doc. 9.4.2); and a proposal of the TOR and schedule on the issue (PC13 Doc. 9.4.3), including a proposed limited list of taxa for the taxonomic review (Annex I). Chair Clemente recalled that Decision 12.97: requests the AC and PC to coordinate an open and broadly consultative process to consider further revision of the CWG12 Chair's text; and indicates that the process should include reviews of selected taxa to ensure that the applicability of the criteria and guidelines to a broad array of taxa is assessed. She also noted that the SC requested the AC and PC to submit a progress report on the review of criteria at its next meeting, focusing on finalizing the CWG12 Chair's text, and to apply the criteria on a limited number of taxa.



On the proposed TOR, Chair Clemente proposed first working on the annexed list of taxa, followed by further revision of the CWG12 Chair's text. She indicated that the list represents a range of major taxonomic groups which are geographically varied, have diverse life histories, are involved in trade to different degrees and forms, and whose biology, distribution, conservation status, population trends, and trade are well documented. She stressed that controversial or "emotionally loaded" species should be excluded from the list.

Chair Clemente added that the review of selected taxa would be conducted intersessionally until the next PC meeting, and suggested holding a one-day joint meeting of the PC and AC in February 2004 to analyze the results of the taxonomic reviews and to discuss revisions to the CWG12 Chair's text. She said that, for this process, one or two PC Parties should conduct a coordinated review of a single species, and an intersessional working group would work towards completing the taxonomic review. She suggested that, from February to April 2004, Parties should submit comments on proposed changes to the CWG12 Chair's text, with a final report being produced in April 2004.

Several Parties, including Australia, the US and Mexico, said the AC and PC should follow similar processes. AC Chair Althaus noted that the AC is likely to further revise the CWG12 Chair's text, and then review the applicability of criteria, and not vice versa, as suggested by Chair Clemente. The UK, supported by Australia, the US, Mexico, the EC and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) said that the process suggested by Chair Clemente was more efficient. Delegates adopted the mechanism as proposed by Chair Clemente, who said she would recommend to the AC to follow the same process. Some Parties then volunteered to conduct coordinated reviews of species, and a working group was formed to agree upon a timetable and list of species for the taxonomic review (PC13 Doc. 9.4.3).

On Friday, 15 August, Javier Alvarez (US), Chair of the working group, presented the results of the working group on the proposed TOR and schedule for the criteria review. Delegates discussed the list of taxa and selected species, concluding that nominated participants will test the following listed species:

- snowdrops (*Galanthus elwesii*) from the Amaryllidaceae taxa (bulbs);
- American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) from the Araliaceae taxa (rhizomes);
- monkey-puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*) from the Araucariaceae taxa (gymnosperm timber);
- tillandsia (*Tillandsia xerographica*) from the Bromeliaceae taxa (epiphytes);
- cactus (*Strombocactus disciformis*) and cactus (*Turbincarpus pseudomacrolele*) from the Cactaceae taxa (succulents);
- cycad (*Zamia furfuracea*) from the Zamiaceae taxa (gymnosperms);
- tree fern (*Cibotium barometz*) from the Dicksoniaceae taxa (fern);
- Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*) from the Droseraceae taxa (carnivorous);
- Afromosia (*Pericopsis elata*) from the Leguminosae taxa (tropical timber);
- aloe (*Aloe ferox*) from the Liliaceae taxa (Aloaceae -

medicinal);

- dendrobium (*Dendrobium nobile*) from the Orchidaceae taxa (orchids);
- desert cistanche (*Cistanche deserticola*) from the Orobanchaceae taxa (parasitic);
- a species to be determined from the Palmae taxa (Palms); and
- Africa cherry (*Prunus africana*) from the Rosaceae taxa (timber bark);

The list also includes the non-listed species, aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) from the Salicaceae taxa (temperate timber – clonal reproduction), and Western yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) from the Taxaceae taxa (temperate timber medicinal), as well as the non-listed fungi morel fungus (*Morchella* sp.).

On the proposed time schedule, the US suggested that the taxonomic reviews be completed by the end of October 2003; that a table on the reviews' results be compiled and posted on the CITES website by 5 December 2003; and that Parties provide comments on the table through their regional representatives by PC-14. He said that a joint PC and AC working group could be established to analyze the results of the taxonomic reviews, with the aim of drafting a revised resolution. The draft resolution would then be submitted at the next SC meeting and posted on the website in accordance with the COP deadline.

Delegates agreed to the proposed schedule, stressing the need for a broadly consultative process and suggesting ways to ensure that all Parties are given the opportunity to submit comments. They stated that the approved document would be communicated to the AC and added that Chair Clemente and the Secretariat would coordinate the process.

TECHNICAL PROPOSALS FROM COP-12

DEFINITIONS OF THE TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN THE ANNOTATIONS OF MEDICINAL PLANTS:

On Wednesday, 13 August, Germany presented on definitions of the technical terms used in annotations of CITES-listed medicinal plants. He noted that the Convention makes a clear distinction between entire plants and animals, and their specimens and derivatives, but that there are many Appendix II-listed plants without annotations, such as Madagascar palm species, that cause interpretation problems. He called for: a decision on what parts and derivatives need to be controlled to ensure that trade is at sustainable levels; identification of the major trade commodities of CITES medicinal plants; clearer definitions; and a COP amendment proposal with new annotations for parts and derivatives for CITES medicinal plants.

IWMC noted that many Appendix II-listed plant species are not annotated to include parts and derivatives and that these annotations should be revised. The EC cautioned that any revised guidelines could broaden the scope of COP decisions. TRAFFIC noted slow progress on finalizing annotations, adding that important information was missing from annotations regarding medicinal plants. He said that TRAFFIC could be contracted to work on clarifying the definitions. Austria stressed the need for focused work on definitions and harmonization of annotations of medicinal plants. The EC added that definitions need more elaboration for potential application in a court of law. Chair Clemente proposed clarifying



annotations for COP-13, and agreed that TRAFFIC or IUCN could be contracted to clarify annotations on CITES medicinal plants, with a PC working group to supervise their work.

DETERMINATION OF THE DEFINITION OF *SWIETENIA MACROPHYLLA* PLYWOOD: On Wednesday, 13 August, the US presented its proposal on the determination of the definition of *Swietenia macrophylla* (Bigleaf mahogany) (PC12 Doc. 10.4), recommending the use of an interim definition based on the World Customs Organization's tariff classifications, which define plywood as "consisting of three or more sheets of wood glued and pressed one on the other and generally disposed so that the grains of successive layers are at an angle." The US also proposed that plywood containing *Swietenia macrophylla* be measured in square meters for effective monitoring. The Secretariat directed delegates to an information document (PC13 Inf. 1) that indicated that the thickness of each individual ply would not exceed six millimeters. On Friday, 15 August, delegates agreed to use the US proposal as an interim definition with the understanding that modifications can be discussed at an upcoming meeting of the Bigleaf Mahogany working group.

ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED ORCHID HYBRIDS: On Wednesday, 13 August, Chair Clemente opened discussion on artificially propagated orchid hybrids, noting an annotation adopted at COP-12, which excludes hybrids within the genus *Phalaenopsis* from CITES provisions. She highlighted the annotation's complexity and the burden of having thousands of artificially propagated orchids in the appendices. Mexico recalled that the orchids family was listed to avoid complications at border points, and suggested waiting for the identification material currently under preparation by the US and the American Orchid Society. The Secretariat drew attention to the document on artificially propagated plants traded in large quantities (PC13 Doc. 13.2), which contains references to orchids, and agreed that time is required to evaluate the exemption's effects.

SPECIES PROPOSALS FOR COP-13

ANNOTATIONS FOR CERTAIN ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED ORCHID HYBRIDS: On Wednesday, 13 August, Switzerland introduced its proposal (PC13 Doc. 11.1), aimed at complementing the annotation to exempt artificially propagated orchids within the genus *Phalaenopsis*, which was adopted at COP-12. The proposal calls for exempting all artificially propagated orchid hybrids of *Orchidaceae* spp. in Appendix II when the specimens are flowering, professionally processed for commercial retail sale, and show no similarity to wild-collected specimens of botanical species.

Belgium supported the Swiss proposal, stating that there is no reason to protect hybrids. The EC said the proposal would reduce the administrative burden associated with hybrid orchids, but suggested its consideration by enforcement authorities. The US said it might tentatively support the proposal, but suggested that exemptions should apply to specimens that are traded in high volume. Mexico suggested waiting for the results from exempting the *Phalaenopsis* genus before further discussion. China expressed concern that the exemption of artificially propagated hybrids may lead to increased smuggling of wild species. TRAFFIC also

expressed concerns, citing insufficient information on enforcement data. Chair Clemente encouraged Switzerland to incorporate some of the Parties' comments.

SPECIMENS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNDER EXEMPTION: On Thursday, 14 August, Switzerland introduced its proposal on specimens in international trade under exemption (PC13 Doc. 11.2). He recalled that several exemptions allow international trade without permits in live plant specimens of CITES-listed species, but that such specimens may be re-exported and cease to qualify for the previous exemption. Switzerland proposed including language in Resolution 11.11 on plant trade emphasizing that the country of origin of specimens that legally entered international trade under exemption shall be the country in which the specimen ceased to qualify for exemption. The UK, Mexico, Germany, Austria and the EC noted that the proposed wording may still allow detrimental trade, and Switzerland agreed to revise its proposal in time for PC-14.

PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE *CAESALPINIA ECHINATA* IN THE APPENDICES: On Thursday, 14 August, Germany informed delegates that they were considering proposing an Appendix II listing for *Caesalpinia echinata* (Pernambuco or Pau Brazil). He said that the German government is consulting with the Brazilian authorities and that an official proposal may be submitted for discussion at the next PC meeting. The Confederation of Craftsmen and Users of Natural Resources (Comurnat) introduced the International Pernambuco Conservation Initiative (PC13 Inf. 4), highlighting, *inter alia*: species' significance for bow makers and string instrument makers; users' involvement in *Caesalpinia echinata* conservation; the initiative's aim to implement a sustainable use strategy; and the development of a partnership between professionals and Brazilian authorities, resulting in funding a five-year action plan in Brazil.

Switzerland, supported by Chile, the US and the IWMC, said *Caesalpinia echinata* would not meet the criteria for an Appendix II listing if threats to the species are local rather than related to international trade. The US stressed the need for information on the proportion of export trade in relation to domestic use, and recalled the annotation problems associated with Brazilian rosewood, a listed wood used in musical instruments. Malaysia highlighted the importance of consulting the Brazilian authorities, while Chile noted the sensitivity of dealing with timber species in CITES.

PLANT COMMITTEE STATEMENT

On Thursday, 14 August, the representative for Oceania read a statement expressing the PC's concern over the COP-12 approval of proposals to amend the Appendices that were not based on the best scientific information available and that were not presented in the format provided for in Resolution Conf. 9.24. He urged Parties to provide proposals based on the most reliable scientific data available and to submit draft proposals to the AC and PC in a timely manner to allow for additional comments.

SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN PLANTS

On Thursday, 14 August, the Secretariat reported to delegates on the revised Review of Significant Trade (RST) process, noting that the review process had evolved to assure that the provisions of CITES Article IV on the regulation of trade in specimens of Appendix II-listed species are being met and that trade in



Appendix-II listed species is sustainable and not detrimental to its survival. He said that both the PC and AC have a mandate to identify Appendix II-listed species that are subject to significant levels of trade, and noted the following species that were selected for review at PC-11 and PC-12: *Cycads*, *Pericopsis elata*, *Aquilaria malaccensis*, *Aloe*, and *Prunus africana*. He added that trade in plants from Madagascar was the first country-based RST and that if it proved to be a more efficient mechanism than the taxa-based approach, a standardized approach for the process could be developed.

EVALUATION OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE: On Thursday, 14 August, the Secretariat introduced a document on the evaluation of the RST (PC13 Doc. 12.1), together with an annexed draft of the RST's TOR. He noted that Decision 12.75 requests the AC and PC to draft the TOR for an evaluation to be considered at COP-13, and that the evaluation should be prepared prior to COP-14. He highlighted the RST's contribution by pointing out that only a few species have been transferred from Appendix II to I. Oceania, supported by the Netherlands, stated that the TOR should assess the possible effects of the RST's measures not only on CITES-listed species, but also on affected non-CITES species. Chair Clemente mentioned a lack of reliable data on non-listed species, and the Secretariat pointed to budget implications if the scope of the evaluation was broadened. A working group was formed to consider the draft TOR.

On Friday, 15 August, Javier Alvarez (US), Chair of the TOR working group, reported that the group had found the evaluation premature because the RST is still in an early phase, and the country-wide review process is still new. He stated that, although the TOR should be ready in time for COP-13, the evaluation should only be carried out after COP-14. Regarding the TOR, the group noted that: assessing the effects on non-CITES species still needs to be addressed; the PC and AC should play more direct roles in overseeing the process; range States should play a greater role; plants should be treated in a similar way to animals in species selection; and the AC and PC need to raise funds for the evaluation. The TOR will be revised in time for consideration at COP-13. Delegates decided that the UK will represent the PC in the coordination process between the AC and PC on preparing a revised draft TOR.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION CONF. 12.8: Trade in Plants from Madagascar: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced an update on Madagascar's RST (PC13 Doc. 12.2.1). He outlined the key steps of the RST, including a consultation process with Madagascar and a review of information of trade in Appendix II plants and animals from the country. He noted that recommendations are being prepared and that the implementation phase, including an evaluation and monitoring exercise, will commence after the recommendations have been prepared. He reported on workshops organized in the country and region, and outlined the elements of an action plan to be ready soon. The Secretariat indicated that, in spite of recent political strife in Madagascar, there had been considerable support from local authorities and stakeholders.

The UK presented a report on the RST of plants in Madagascar, conducted by the Kew Royal Botanic Gardens (PC13 Inf. 8). He said the project aimed to carry out an analysis of trade in plant

species from Madagascar and to provide recommendations on the sustainable trade in wild-collected plants and on the commercial propagation of species with horticultural interest. The US praised the project of the RST in Madagascar for its holistic approach, and requested information on the suspension of the issuance of permits for plants and animals. The Secretariat explained that no export permits were issued at the time the document was drafted, and Austria added that the ban was lifted in October 2002. The African representative observed that no effort was made to include regional representatives in the RST-related meetings in Madagascar. Austria highlighted the collaborative work of Austrian and Malagasy institutions on CBD aspects, including the assessment of population data of native orchids.

Cycads: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced a document on cycads, including the annexed interim report on CITES RST of Cycads, prepared by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa (PC13 Doc. 12.2.2). The IUCN-Species Survival Commission (SSC) Cycads Specialists Group introduced TRAFFIC's interim report, noting the progress of planned activities and the work programme. He drew attention to a good response from range States and stated that the report will be available for PC-14 consideration.

TAXA FOR REVIEW: Prunus Africana: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced the document on *Prunus africana* (red stinkwood) which will be reviewed under the RST (PC13 Doc. 12.2.3.1). He said that a suitable candidate will be contracted in the near future to conduct the review and that the Secretariat will provide a progress report at PC-14.

Aquilaria malaccensis: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced the document on *Aquilaria malaccensis* (agarwood) (PC13 Doc. 12.2.3.2). TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, which has been contracted to conduct the research phase of the review, said it would provide a report in September 2003.

Pericopsis elata: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced the document on *Pericopsis elata* (African teak) (PC13 Doc. 12.2.3.3), stating that Fauna and Flora International has been contracted to conduct the research phase of the review. Fauna and Flora International outlined its progress and noted that it would provide a report by September 2003.

Aloe Species from East Africa Used as Extract: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced the document on *Aloe* species from East Africa used as extracts (PC13 Doc. 12.2.3.4), stating that Fauna and Flora International has been contracted to conduct the research phase of the review. Fauna and Flora International reported on progress and indicated that it would provide a report by September 2003.

REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES

TIMBER SPECIES AND ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED PLANTS TRADED IN LARGE QUANTITIES: On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced documents on timber species (PC13 Doc. 13.1) and artificially propagated plants traded in large quantities (PC12 Doc. 13.2), noting that Decision 12.11 requests the PC to continue the review of Appendices with priorities on both. Regarding timber species, he said that *Aquilaria malaccensis*, *Prunus Africana* and *Pericopsis elata* are included in the RST. Chair Clemente noted that Parties are encouraged to work



further on these issues, but added that the PC will not act because a low priority has been attributed to them, new review criteria will be developed after COP-13, and the AC and PC are currently developing more harmonized evaluation processes for reviews.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF ANIMAL AND PLANT TAXA IN THE APPENDICES: On Thursday, 14 August, delegates addressed the periodic review of animal and plant taxa in the Appendices (PC13 Doc. 13.3). The US outlined Decision 12.96 requesting the SC to develop mechanisms to involve range States in the periodic review. He noted the SC recommendation requesting the AC and PC to share their experience and establish a schedule for the review, and to list the species they propose to review between COP-13 and COP-15. He indicated that a contact group established by the AC is working on guidelines for the review of Appendices, and highlighted the aim of information sharing between the AC and the PC on the adoption of standard guidelines, the list of taxa to be reviewed, and the schedule for completion of those reviews. Chair Clemente called for the establishment of a review mechanism and suggested focusing on drafting guidelines by enriching the AC's contact group with PC participants. AC Chair Althaus urged range States to be involved from an early stage and recalled time-consuming COP proposals that had to be withdrawn because of lack of involvement.

Delegates agreed to nominate three PC participants for the contact group on the review of the Appendices. Chair Clemente noted that if the guidelines are finalized by the next PC meeting, then they could be applied immediately to establish the list of species for review.

On Friday, 15 August, the US, Chair of the contact group on the review of Appendices, said that the group would work intersessionally to draft common guidelines that could be used by both the PC and AC when reviewing the Appendices.

REVIEW OF HEAVILY TRADED NON-CITES SPECIES

On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced the review of heavily traded non-CITES species (PC13 Doc. 14.1). Noting that this is a high priority issue, he said the PC may wish to consider whether it should formalize a process for such a review. He suggested that, if it decided to do this, the PC could develop a review process to identify "heavily traded" species. The PC took note of the document and Chair Clemente invited Parties to submit proposals for consideration at PC-14.

EVALUATION OF TREE SPECIES: On Friday, 15 August, the Netherlands reported on developments concerning proposals to amend the Appendices, on the basis of the contribution to an evaluation of tree species using the new CITES listing criteria published by their Management Authority in 1998 (PC13 Doc. 14.2 (Rev. 1)). He outlined the conclusions of a meeting held on the topic in 2003, including the need for: an integrated approach to tree conservation; stakeholder participation; identification of problems and solutions on a regional basis; awareness raising on CITES applications; improvement of CITES implementation; and organization of regional workshops. The Oceania representative suggested linking the process to regional capacity-building workshops. The US offered assistance in organizing a workshop.

PROJECT REPORT ON *DALBERGIA MELANOXYLON*:

Fauna and Flora International presented its report on *Dalbergia melanoxylon* (African blackwood), noting that commercial trade of the species from the two major exporting countries, Tanzania and Mozambique, is estimated annually at 150-200 cubic meters, and that based on these statistics, international trade did not represent a threat to the species. She added that there was no need for a CITES listing at this time. An African representative said that the report did not include reliable figures of remaining stocks and noted that the rate of use could be unsustainable.

CHECKLISTS AND NOMENCLATURE PROGRESS REPORT

On Friday, 15 August, the UK introduced a progress report on checklists and nomenclature (PC13 Doc. 15.1). He outlined: COP adoption of the UNEP-WCMC Checklist of CITES species and its updates; the issue of whether to retain individual taxon-based checklists, and the question of revising their formats; budget restrictions; and the need for expert assistance, particularly from range States.

UNEP-WCMC informed participants that its 2003 checklist is available. Mexico and others called for a clear set of working practices for the Nomenclature Committee. The representative for Asia stressed that the taxon-based checklists should continue, as they include additional information. Switzerland and Mexico expressed their concerns over the adoption of the UNEP-WCMC checklist. The US advocated returning to the old system of rolling resolutions. The UK noticed that the PC had not recommended adoption of the UNEP-WCMC checklist. Austria said taxon-based checklists are best suited for plants. Delegates questioned the status of the taxon-based checklists in relation to the UNEP-WCMC one. The Secretariat noted that the UNEP-WCMC checklist and updates are accepted as the standard nomenclature. The EC said the status of both checklists should be equal. Chair Clemente confirmed the PC's support for the taxon-based checklists and invited Parties to work on Resolution Conf. 12.11 on adoption of the UNEP-WCMC checklist. The issue will be reconsidered at PC-14.

CHECKLIST OF SUCCULENT EUPHORBIA: On Friday, 15 August, Germany announced the new edition of the Checklist of Succulent Euphorbia to be published later this year.

CHECKLIST OF MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS: On Friday, 15 August, Germany announced that the new edition of the Checklist of medicinal and aromatic plants will be published later this year.

PREPARATION OF CITES CHECKLIST FOR BULBOPHYLLUM (ORCHIDACEAE): On Friday, 15 August, Austria reported on its preparation of a CITES checklist for *Bulbophyllum*. He stated that Austria intends to present a draft manuscript at COP-13.

ID MANUAL PROGRESS REPORT

On Friday, 15 August, the Secretariat introduced a progress report on the production of the Identification Manual (PC13 Doc. 17). He noted that a database on the ID Manual has been created, and that it is helpful to Parties when they prepare proposals to list species. Switzerland reported progress on its contribution to the ID manual regarding the genus *Pachypodium*, and the Appendix I listed species of *Aloe* and *Euphorbia*.



GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSPORT OF LIVE PLANTS

On Friday, 15 August, Canada announced the availability of new guidelines for the transport of live plants, published by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *IN SITU* CONSERVATION AND *EX SITU* PRODUCTION OF PLANTS AND PLANT PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

On Thursday, 14 August, delegates jointly considered documents on: the relationship between *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production of plants, including an annexed draft notification to Parties (PC13 Doc. 19); plant production systems (PC13 Doc. 25.1); and production systems involving CITES-listed species and their impact on wild populations (PC13 Inf. 6).

On the relationship between *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production, the Secretariat stressed that Decision 12.11 requests the PC to analyze the relationship before COP-13. He added that the Secretariat had already circulated a draft notification to Parties in 2001, but received little response. He then requested Parties to comment on the new annexed draft notification, and noted that a similar notification will be circulated to the AC.

Regarding plant production systems, he highlighted that the IUCN/SSC Wildlife Trade Programme has been contracted to work further on the issue. IUCN introduced the document on production systems involving CITES-listed species, stressing that they form a continuum from wild production to closed cycle domesticated systems, and that varieties of production systems need to be grouped into clearly-defined categories for CITES' purposes.

Delegates noted a potential overlap and the need for collaboration with the CBD, as well as a possible low response rate to the new draft notification. Chair Clemente added that the issue has been given low priority by the working group on PC work programme prioritization. Delegates decided not to circulate the draft notification, but instead to circulate the full IUCN/SSC report to PC members, from which case studies on different production systems could be extracted. Parties could comment on the report and further discuss the issue at PC-14.

ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED *TILLANDSIA XEROGRAPHYCA*

On Friday, 15 August, the Netherlands introduced an information document on imports of artificially propagated *Tillandsia xerographica* from Guatemala and the Philippines (PC13 Inf. 5), concluding that no import permits should be issued for artificially propagated *Tillandsia xerographica* and that detailed information is required about the propagation methods and procedures.

LINKS WITH INDUSTRY AND TRADERS TO PROMOTE PROJECTS ON SUSTAINABLE USE

On Friday, 15 August, the Chair noted that this issue was discussed in Plenary and working group discussions and cited *Harpagophytum* and *Caesalpinia echinata* as two examples that could be useful models for sustainable use projects that link industry and traders. She said that this issue would be taken up again at the next PC.

ROLE OF APPENDIX II

On Friday, 15 August, Chair Clemente introduced the agenda item on the role of Appendix II, briefly noting the importance of presenting the role of Appendix II in a positive light. She said examples would be sought at PC-14.

GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION

On Thursday, 14 August, delegates heard a presentation by IUCN on the CBD's Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (PC13 Inf. 11). Noting that the Strategy raises plants' profile, IUCN outlined the Strategy's 16 targets and highlighted the opportunity for synergies between CITES and the CBD. She focused on Target 11, which states that no species of wild flora should be endangered by international trade by 2010, adding that CITES is considered to be the lead organization in the implementation of this goal. Chair Clemente set up a working group to assist IUCN in considering the extent to which CITES has and will contribute to this goal.

On Friday, 15 August, Wendy Strahm (IUCN), Chair of the working group, presented the group's results. She noted that CITES was not only the lead organization in achieving Target 11, but that it is contributing to at least 10 of the 16 targets. She suggested producing a discussion paper on CITES activities to be presented to PC-14 and the SC. On links with the CBD, she said the PC Chair should remain the main contact person, and that funding for periodic regional reviews and collaboration should be sought from the Global Environment Facility.

TRAINING INITIATIVES

On Friday, 15 August, the UK presented a progress report on the standard slide package (PC13 Doc. 24), drawing attention to the updated version of its users guide on *CITES and Plants*, and noting that new publications, *CITES and Succulents*, and *CBD for Botanists*, are available in CD-ROM format. He called on delegates producing CITES capacity-building material for plants to participate in an informal e-mail contact group.

TIME AND VENUE OF THE 14TH PLANTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Namibia offered to host PC-14, which is scheduled for February 2004.

CLOSING REMARKS

Closing the meeting, Chair Clemente thanked participants, CITES Secretariat and staff. CITES Secretary-General Wijnstekers congratulated the PC for progress made and the meeting came to a close at 5:25 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PC-13

With glaciers melting and plants wilting under the abnormally hot temperatures that have been plaguing Europe this summer, delegates to the 13th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee (PC-13) met in the comfort of an air-conditioned conference center in Geneva to discuss the threat of plants species from something even more troubling than the weather – international trade. With less than a week to conduct their work, participants sought to address the numerous proposals and decisions that emerged late in 2002 from CITES COP-12, as well as to look ahead to other issues to be considered at the next PC in February 2004, and at COP-13 in



October 2004. As with past meetings, the Committee worked in a friendly and non-divisive atmosphere to cover as much ground as possible given an agenda weighed down with numerous procedural items.

PRIORITIZE AND ECONOMIZE

“Prioritization is the key to success.” PC Chair Margarita Clemente reiterated this mantra throughout the meeting and even went a step further by establishing a working group to prioritize the Committee’s working programme for the period leading to COP-13. Of the numerous decisions and resolutions directed to the PC, the working group ranked the review of significant trade in specimens of Appendix II species and its evaluation, the review of the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II, and annotations for medicinal plants in the Appendices, as high priorities. Reacting to the ranking, one delegate expressed concern that the issues considered to be a low priority may easily be “swept under the carpet,” while others felt that due to the Committee’s heavy workload they had to start somewhere and readily agreed on the chosen priorities. Given the short time to the next PC meeting and COP, and with the lack of available resources, even carrying out the work associated with the high priority issues will be a difficult challenge.

Although a 6% budget increase for CITES was approved at COP-12, it appears unlikely to be enough to assist with the Convention’s implementation, let alone activities of its scientific bodies. While apologizing for raising the money issue, one delegate warned that funding was critical in determining what work could be undertaken. Such a statement was validated when the African regional representative attempted to tender his resignation as PC Vice-Chair due to lack of financial support to carry out his duties. Although his resignation was rejected with reassurances that the CITES Secretary-General would assist in addressing this matter, it represented a more systemic problem facing the Committee – the lack of full participation of developing countries in the process. So far, the majority of PC Chairs have alternated between representatives from Europe and North America.

COP-12 DECISIONS...

Despite the financial shortcomings threatening to restrict the work of the PC, delegates pointed to a number of success stories during the meeting as proof that the Committee can still carry out its mandate as a scientific advisory body. One issue flagged as a major accomplishment was agreement on a process for the periodic review of the Appendices. This is an issue that many believe could provide good common ground to improve cooperation and coordination between the PC and AC. Although a COP-12 proposal to merge the two committees together was rejected, many felt that there is still a need for each Committee to know what the other is doing, so as to ensure that they do not go in completely different directions. Many commended the fact that the AC Chair attended some of the PC deliberations and that the PC Chair will do the same at the upcoming AC meeting. But, some felt that this does not go far enough and that perhaps there should be another joint meeting, like the one that took place in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in December 2000, to continue discussions on overlapping issues.

...COP-13 PROPOSALS

While much attention was spent on follow-up to COP-12 decisions, there seemed to be little discussion on species proposals for COP-13. Only Germany “tested the waters” by exploring the possibility of including *Caesalpinia echinata* (Pernambuco or Pau Brazil) in the Appendices. This is significant, as *Caesalpinia echinata* is a timber species, an issue still quite sensitive in CITES, even though Bigleaf mahogany was listed under Appendix II at the last COP. Much consultation still has to be undertaken, particularly with the range States, to determine if this species will meet the criteria for an Appendix II listing. The discussion represents a possible future trend towards greater openness in discussing more endangered timber species. Other timber species, as well as new plant species proposals, are most likely to be considered at PC-14, prior to the next COP.

AS IF 25,000 LISTED PLANT SPECIES WEREN'T ENOUGH

In spite of already having over 25,000 plants species listed under the CITES Appendices, delegates still found time to give much attention to non-CITES listed species. One participant actually remarked that he wished that the amount of attention and enthusiasm given to non-CITES species would be given to the ones already on the Appendices. *Harpagophytum* (Devil’s Claw), a harvested savannah grassland plant found mostly in Namibia, is one of those non-listed species that has received considerable attention. Although there is no budget to address non-CITES species, many saw Namibia’s situation analysis for the species as a good case study that incorporates the voluntary involvement of the country of origin and the importing country, as well as cooperation of regional representatives and industry with the purpose of promoting sustainable trade. One delegate commented that pre-emptive work on non-CITES species can help ensure that they do not need to be listed on the Appendices in the first place – one of CITES’ main goals.

TOWARDS PC-14

However, not everyone knows what the goal of CITES is. In fact, CITES is still perceived by consumers and producers as something of a repressive regime that will limit their freedom to trade and consume. With Namibia offering to host the next PC, many believe that holding the meeting in a region where CITES is still held with suspicion, especially by local collectors who are dependent on many plants species for their livelihood, it will help improve awareness and show that CITES can actually be used as a tool for sustainable use. But time is of the essence as some fear that CITES is starting to become less relevant, losing out in budget and personnel to other international environmental agreements, especially to the CBD and UNFCCC. Raising the Convention’s profile is another issue that will have to be added to the agenda.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

19TH MEETING OF THE CITES ANIMALS

COMMITTEE: AC-19 will meet from 18-21 August 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.cites.org>