

## **Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the CITES cell held on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 in the Ministry of Environment and Forests**

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The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the CITES cell was held on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 in Ministry of Environment and Forests, New Delhi. The list of participants who attended the meeting is at **Annexure**.

The Inspector General of Forests (WL) gave a welcome note to start the meeting. He expressed his desire for a fruitful discussion and also congratulated the members for their efforts in constituting this cell. He also wished the committee a successful interaction in future. Thereafter, he requested the Deputy Inspector General of Forest (Wildlife) & Member Secretary, CITES cell to give a presentation on the Agenda Items for the meeting. DIG (WL) gave a brief presentation on the Agenda Items for discussion and decisions. The Agenda Items which were discussed in the meeting are explained below:

### **Agenda Item No. 1: Introduction of Members**

The Inspector General of Forests (WL) requested members to introduce themselves. A brief introduction was given by the members and other invitees.

### **Agenda Item No. 2: Functioning of CITES cell**

The objectives of the CITES cell were discussed and it was agreed that the cell will help the Management Authority and other Assistant Management Authorities in the technical as well as administrative and legal functioning of CITES implementation in India. It will also help in maintaining/ updating and acting on various decisions taken by the CITES parties through the Conference of Parties (CoP) and other meetings or respond to requests from the CITES Secretariat. The Cell will also serve as a link to the Non-Governmental

Organizations, working in the field of control of illegal trade in wildlife and its part and products.

**Agenda Item No. 3: Action plan to decide urgent matters**

**(a) *Preparing proposals for amending the appendices at the CoP:*** It was agreed that the cell may prepare proposals for inclusion of more endangered species into the CITES Appendices and place such proposals before the CITES CoP. It was agreed that some of the species for which the proposals may be prepared are *Santalum album* (Sandal wood), *Tarantula* spp., *Nautilus* spp etc.

**(b) *Non Detrimental Finding (NDF) relating to species traded from India and the progress thereof:*** It was apprised that there was ban by the CITES on the trade from India in *Taxus wallichiana* and *Pterocarpus santalinus* species. The information required to be submitted to the CITES Secretariat to remove the ban on the trade in these species have been furnished and removal of the ban is being followed up with the CITES Secretariat. This will also be strongly represented during the Plant Committee meeting scheduled to be held in April 2011. It was further informed by DIG(WL), that a delegation from India had participated in the Capacity building workshop held at Makati City, Phillippines recently and the procedure for preparing NDF of the species were explained in the workshop. Accordingly NDF for Indian CITES listed species could be prepared in the future. The Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata and IFGTB, Coimbatore, have been requested to prepare the proposal for conducting the NDF study on *Pterocarpus santalinus* (Red Sanders) as a first step.

**(c) *Action to be taken for the Plant and Animal Committee meeting schedule to be held from 18-21 April 2011 and 18-22 July 2011 respectively:*** The following subjects were discussed on action to be taken for the Plant and Animal Committee meeting:

### **Sharks:**

CITES Parties are required to report on trade in specimens of these species and to provide information on the implementation of National Plans of Action for Sharks or regional plans and other available relevant data and information on the species. [[\\* Resolution Conf. 12.6 \(Rev. CoP 15\)](#)].

It was therefore, decided that information from Coastal States, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Cochin and Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA) may be invited on Sharks and their trade status, and also on the basis of CMS Regulation, on receipt of the requisite information the final view can be taken.

### **Sturgeons:**

Caspian range States for these species should report on progress made in improving the existing sturgeon stock assessment and Total Allowable Catch determination methodology through a detailed report describing how the recommendations in document AC24 Doc. 12.2 have been implemented and whether they have been accepted by all range States. [[\\* Resolution Conf. 12.7 \(Rev. CoP 14\)](#)] and [the recommendation made at the 58<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee](#)].

In the meeting it was decided that India is not a range state for this species. However it was agreed that inputs from ZSI and CMFRI may be obtained to decide our stand.

### **Orchids: annotation for species included in Appendix II:**

CITES Countries of export and import are required to make recommendations and prepare identification material on further exemptions for artificially propagated hybrids of Orchidaceae spp. included in Appendix II, taking

into consideration the capacities of countries to implement and control such exemptions effectively. ([\\*Decision 14.133](#))

It was agreed that comments of BSI may be obtained before taking a final view on this subject.

**Cedrela odorata, Dalbergia retusa, D. granadillo and D. stevensonii:**

Range States of these species are required to complete and update the available information on these species; assess their populations, report the existence, extent and type of forest plantations of the species; and compile the information related to export of the species, including volumes and products, indicating the percentage from plantations.

Parties are also required to compile the information on the import and re-export of these species, including origin (wild or cultivated), volumes and products, indicating the country of origin and final destination; and Report the existence, extent and type of forest plantations of these species, including exported volumes and products. [[\\* Decision 14.146 \(Rev. CoP15\).](#)]

In the meeting it was decided that India is not a range state for these species. However it was agreed that comments of BSI and RDD(ER) may be obtained to decide our stand.

*It was agreed by members that adequate representation from India for the meetings of the Plant and Animal Committee scheduled to be held in April 2011 will be worked out.*

***(d) Publication of CITES magazine/newsletters/CITES update including issues which are important to India:***

RDD (NR) briefed about the publication 'CITES and India' published in year 2001. Since no significant publication has come out after this, the cell should start working on the publication of CITES document, covering the last 10 years (2001-

2010) progress of India at CITES . Shri Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India, suggested that CITES Secretariat may be requested to give information on the records/archives available in CITES Secretariat to help the publication. It was agreed that Shri Vivek Menon (Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India), Shri Prasenjeet Navgire (Programme Officer, Wildlife Trust of India) Shri Avinash Basker (Representative of Wildlife Protection Society of India) and Legal Consultant, CITES cell will take up the task, so as to have the publication before the next CoP meeting.

***(e) Discussing the recent structural changes in the CITES Secretariat:***

RDD (NR) explained that there has been a change in the organisational structure of the CITES Secretariat as depicted in the organogram given on the CITES website. The link for the following are: <http://cites.org/eng/disc/sec/sec-structure.pdf> and <http://cites.org/eng/disc/sec/sec-function.pdf>.

It was decided that it may be referred by the CITES officials in India to have better correspondence with CITES Secretariat officials.

**Agenda Item No. 4: Initiating a CITES Certificate Course at Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun.**

DIG(WL) informed that there is a noticeable lack of expertise in the matters related to CITES issues at the field level. Complexities involved in the compliance of CITES provisions especially at the field level demands a comprehensive capacity building programme for field practitioners. Lack of awareness among the interdepartmental officials could be one of the reasons of reported existence of large volumes of illegally traded wildlife articles. Understaffing of WCCB which mainly deals with these issues further aggravates the situation. Therefore there is a need of starting a certificate course in WII on CITES. The participants may include forest officers, border organisations, police, customs etc. In the due course

of time, this course may prove to be a good tool of capacity building and international cooperation in wildlife trade regulation in SE Asian countries. Therefore, it was suggested that the CITES Cell and WII may collaborate in deciding and designing this course with faculties from WII, MoEF, WCCB, international experts etc. It was also informed that in a pre-meeting discussion with Member Secretary NTCA, Director, TRAFFIC-India and Dean - WII have also supported the introduction of such a CITES Course in WII, which will further enhance the knowledge and awareness among the field level officers for better implementation of CITES related provisions.

Shri Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India suggested that the course may be developed in two modules i.e., one for the field level officer and one for the senior officers in a year for about a period from 3 weeks to 3 months. In this way the course will be proved advantageous to all levels of officers.

Further DIG(WL) also suggested that one official from WII may be requested to take up the task of preparing the draft syllabus modalities, alongwith Shri Vivek Menon (Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India), Shri Prasenjeet Navgire (Programme Officer, Wildlife Trust of India), Shri Avinash Basker (Representative of Wildlife Protection Society of India) and Dr. Ajay Kumar Saxena (Project Coordinator, MoEF) for starting the Course at WII. It was also suggested that collaboration may be sought from the International University of Andalucía, Spain, which conducts Masters Course on CITES and CBD.

#### **Agenda Item No. 5: Role of Legal Consultant**

It was proposed in the meeting that CITES Cell may appoint Shri Pankaj Yadav as a Legal Consultant for CITES Cell, who has been working with Wildlife Division, MoEF. This proposal was unanimously agreed by the members.

**Agenda Item No. 6: Any other item with the permission of the chair.**

With the permission of the chair, following additional items were discussed:

1. It was informed that Member Secretary, NTCA, has suggested that one Biologist may be appointed as member in the CITES Cell to help in issues of biological sciences. This proposal was agreed by the CITES Cell members, the modalities for appointing Scientist will be worked out.

The idea of inviting one representative from among the four Scientific authorities and four regional offices of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau on rotational basis in future meetings of the Cell was also agreed upon by the members.

2. It was further informed that Shri Sameer Sinha, Director TRAFFIC India, has suggested that we may ask the four scientific authorities i.e., BSI, ZSI, WII and CMFRI to identify sub-offices as sub focal scientific authorities which will further help these four scientific authorities in their CITES related functioning. While appreciating the idea of designating these focal institutions, Shri Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India, suggested that it should be only for the internal management of issues and these focal institutions may not be appointed as scientific authorities from India to CITES. The roles of the four scientific authorities' needs to be re-informed and roles of the sub focal institutions may be defined in due course.

**3. Alleged proposal of downlisting of *Saussurea costus* from Appendix I:**

There appears to be a proposal of the CITES Secretariat to down-list *Saussurea costus* from Appendix I. It was suggested that the Ministry may take a view on this. Shri Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India, pointed out that this species is also listed in Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, therefore view may be

taken in light of the Act also. He also pointed that down-listing will harm the species especially with regard to trade taking place in countries like Nepal and China. It was mentioned that inefficacy, if any, of putting the species in Appendix I may be due to poor implementation, rather than inclusion of the species in Appendix I.

4. Secondment of Officers to CITES Secretariat: It was informed by the DIG (WL) that process of seconding the officers to CITES Secretariat, as agreed to by CoP proposal has already been moved.

5. It was agreed that, the proposals for inclusion of species in the Appendices of CITES. As well as the report on Non-Detrimental Findings for the Plant and Animal Committee meetings scheduled to be held from 18-21 April 2011 and 18-22 July 2011 shall be worked out by, Shri Prasenjeet Navgire (Programme Officer, Wildlife Trust of India), Shri Avinash Basker (Representative of Wildlife Protection Society of India) and Shri Tarun Kumar Kathula (Project Associate, MoEF).

6. All the members unanimously agreed with the suggestion of Shri Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India, that the cell should inform the CITES secretariat about the constitution of the cell and seek their suggestions/comments.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks from the Chair.

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## ANNEXURE

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1.	Shri. A.K Srivastava IGF(WL)	Chairman
2.	Ms. Prakriti Srivastava, DIG(WL)	Member Secretary
3.	Shri. Vivek Menon Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India.	Member
4.	Shri. Ramesh Pandey, RDD(NR)	Member
5.	Shri Avinash Basker Representative of Wildlife Protection Society of India.	Member
6.	Shri Pankaj Yadav Legal Consultant, CITES cell.	Member
7.	Shri. Anup Nayak, Joint Director (WCCB)	Invitee
8.	Shri. Yogendra Pal Singh, Deputy Director (WL)	Invitee
9.	Shri Prasenjeet Navigre, Programme Officer, Wildlife Trust of India.	Invitee
10.	Shri. C. Sasikumar, RA(WL)	Invitee
11.	Dr. Ajay Kumar Saxena , Project Coordinator	Invitee
12.	Shri Tarun Kumar Kathula, Project Associate	Invitee

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