



SUMMARY OF THE 14TH MEETING OF THE CITES PLANTS COMMITTEE: 16-20 FEBRUARY 2004

The 14th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC-14) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 16-20 February 2004, in Windhoek, Namibia. The meeting drew together 77 participants representing governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. Delegates at PC-14 met in Plenary throughout the week to discuss 25 agenda items on a range of topics, including the: review of resolutions on plants and plant trade; definition of technical terms used in the annotations for medicinal plants; significant trade in plants; review of the CITES appendices; follow-up of decisions from the 12th meeting of CITES' Conference of the Parties (COP-12); and species proposals for COP-13.

Several working groups were set up to further address specific issues, including: Review of Significant Trade; plants and plant trade resolutions; annotations for artificially propagated hybrids; annotations for CITES-listed medicinal plants; and regional representation and communication. Two drafting groups were also established to assist with finalizing the Chair's report to COP-13 and to review criteria for amendment of the Appendices.

Despite a heavy agenda, the Plants Committee managed to tackle some of the more pressing issues, such as the criteria for amending the Appendices and the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, that had to be considered prior to the next COP, to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in October 2004. The Animals Committee will closely follow the outcomes of the Plants Committee meeting, as they will have to address these issues as well, at their next meeting in March 2004 in South Africa.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CITES

CITES was established 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 164 Parties to the Convention.

CITES' aim is to ensure that international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival. CITES Parties 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. Appendix II species 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 those subject to domestic regulation by a Party requesting 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 adopted 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 the Appendices. There are approximately 5,000 fauna species and 28,000 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 maintain trade records that are annually forwarded to the CITES

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Secretariat, the sum of which enables the Secretariat to compile statistical information on the global volume of trade in Appendix-listed species.

The operational bodies of CITES include the Standing Committee (SC) and the scientific advisory committees: the Plants Committee (PC) and the Animals Committee (AC); and their subcommittees, the Nomenclature Committee and the Identification Manual Committee. As scientific and technical support bodies, the role of both the PC and AC 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.

The current Chair of the PC is Margarita Clemente (Spain) and the Vice Chair is Quentin Luke (Kenya). The PC regional representatives are: 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; Netra Pal Singh (India) and Irawati (Indonesia) for Asia; Margarita Clemente (Spain) and Giuseppe Frenguelli (Italy) for Europe; and Greg Leach (Australia) for Oceania.

Regional representatives are elected at COP meetings, with the number of representatives weighted according to the number of Parties within each region and according to the regional distribution of biodiversity. The Chair and Vice Chair are elected by the regional PC members.

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 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, ceding to the COP's decision to allow three African States – Botswana, Namibia and South Africa – to sell a limited and strictly controlled amount of their registered ivory.

THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE PLANTS

COMMITTEE: PC-13 met in Geneva, Switzerland, from 12-15 August 2003, to consider strategic planning, significant trade, and evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade. Delegates also followed-up on COP-12 decisions on *Harpagophytum* spp., *Guaiacum* spp. and *Aquilaria* spp., and agreed on the terms of reference and schedule for the review of criteria for amending Appendices I and II.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

PC-14 commenced Monday morning, 16 February, with Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism Pillemon Malima's welcoming of delegates to Namibia. He expressed appreciation for including *Harpagophytum* (Devil's Claw), a species widely found in Namibia, on the PC-14 agenda, and called for adding *Hoodia* (Carrion Flower), another indigenous species that faces global commercial demand. Minister Malima reiterated Namibia's commitment to biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource exploitation.

CITES PC Chair Margarita Clemente thanked the Namibian government for hosting the meeting, adding that CITES should not be viewed in Namibia and other countries as a mechanism that imposes sanctions, but one that fosters the sustainable use of resources. Citing a heavy agenda due to numerous COP-12 decisions directed to the PC, she highlighted several priorities, including evaluating the review of significant trade, reviewing resolutions and annotations for medicinal plants, and finalizing revision of the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II.

David Morgan, CITES Scientific Support Unit Head-designate, recalled the central role of science within the convention and called for further resources and the mainstreaming of the PC's work into the work of CITES.

Following the opening remarks, delegates adopted the Rules of Procedure (PC14 Doc. 2) with several amendments, including that all documents submitted by the Secretariat or a Party be posted on the CITES website, and that the distribution by the Secretariat of printed documents for any meeting would be carried out at least 40 days before a given meeting.

The meeting's Agenda (PC14 Doc. 3.1 (Rev.1)) was also adopted with minor changes, namely the clustering of documents on related agenda items and the inclusion of reports from the Netherlands and Tanzania. Delegates then adopted the Working Programme (PC14 Doc. 3.2) and agreed on the Admission of Observers (PC14 Doc. 4).

PC WORKING PROGRAMME UNTIL COP-13

On Monday, 16 February, Chair Clemente introduced the working programme for the PC until COP-13, which includes the preparation of the Chair's report, resolutions and decisions directed to the PC (PC13 Doc. 8.1), and a review of the PC Action Plan (PC14 Doc. 5.3). She announced the establishment of a working group to assist in drafting the Chair's report for COP-13 and requested the PC regional representative for Africa to continue chairing the working group on prioritizing the PC work programme that was established at PC-12.

On Friday afternoon, 20 February, Chair Clemente presented the conclusions reached on the Action Plan, noting a proposal to eliminate all decisions directed to the PC and to reformulate the decisions that should be continued. She said that no working programme will be presented at COP-13, but that the PC would inform the COP that its work programme would be decided in light of COP-13's outcomes. The Secretariat informed delegates that while the 2005 budget has been adopted, the PC should, at the upcoming Standing Committee meeting, reiterate its request for a budget for PC tasks and activities for the 2006-8 triennium.

FOLLOW-UP OF COP-12 DECISIONS

REVIEW OF RESOLUTION CONF. 9.24: On Monday and Tuesday, 16-17 February, delegates discussed the revised COP-12 Resolution (Decision 12.97) on the Review of Criteria for Amendment of Appendices I and II (PC14 Doc. 6.1). Chair Clemente said the document was prepared to facilitate the assessment of the proposed revisions of Resolution 9.24 using individual taxa, including 20 Appendix I and 20 Appendix II species. The Secretariat introduced several related informational documents, including: a synthesis of test of applicability of criteria for selected plant taxa (PC14 Inf. 9); a compilation of comments regarding the



applicability of criteria to assess the status of flora for listing under Appendix I and II (PC14 Inf. 10 and 11); and an evaluation of the criteria for listing on Appendix I (PC14 Inf. 13).

Oceania and Central and South America and the Caribbean, as well as AC Chair Thomas Althaus (Switzerland), Mexico, the US and the European Commission (EC), said fundamental changes to the text should be avoided. Species Survival Network (SSN) added that any revision should not alter the spirit of compromise reached at earlier sessions, but noted that some new language had weakened the precautionary approach.

Delegates then considered the applicability of criteria to assess the status of selected plant taxa (PC14 Inf. 9), based on a synthesis of scientific review.

Trade Criterion: On the trade criterion – species that are or may be affected by trade should be included in Appendix I if they meet at least one of the biological criteria listed in Annex I – three recommendations were addressed: clarification that “trade” signified “international trade;” qualifying the notion of “affected by trade” by reference to demonstrability of evidence and to previous trade as indicative of potential trade re-initiation; and distinction of past wild harvested trade. Delegates agreed that proposed changes were redundant, except for the demand for demonstrability of potential trade.

Appendix I Criterion A: On this criterion – the wild population is small – three recommendations were made: defining “wild population;” improving the definition of “small wild population” taking into account relevant information, rather than absolute numbers, considering the need to link the definition to availability and levels of exploitation; and alternatively, refraining from modifying the definition, which allows for the use of available information.

AC Chair Althaus stressed the need to clarify the word “small.” Austria underlined the importance of linking the definition with other relevant information. The US reminded delegates that at COP-12 the Secretariat had prepared a document on the definition of “wild population” and, with Africa, suggested the meeting should elucidate this concept. He agreed with the recommendation to disregard numerical values, but said linkage to availability of exploitation was redundant.

The EC proposed that the definition be accompanied by guidelines and, with the US, agreed with the recommendation to refrain from modifying the definition. The International Wildlife Management Consortium-World Conservation Trust (IWMC) noted that the problem of defining “wild population” is distinct from the implementation of the criterion. Mexico suggested including the impact of harvest on the size of the population. The Secretariat said, and others agreed, that this was not necessary since the criterion deals with small population, not harvest, which is dealt with in another section.

On sub-criterion A(i) – an observed, inferred or projected decline in the number of individuals or the area and the quality of habitat – three recommendations were made: defining the terms “inferred” and “projected” decline; defining a timeframe to determine decline; and linking the decline with other parameters, such as habitat quality or area of distribution.

The US, with Africa, said declines associated with natural phenomena should be taken into account. Canada noted that the decline of some species during some parts of the cycle or in some areas is natural and should not be a negative aspect and, with the

EC, suggested that this be clarified in a user’s guide. IWMC stressed the need to define the terms “inferred” or “projected.” Chair Clemente agreed with AC Chair Althaus that the criterion should remain simple and be clarified by a user’s guide.

On sub-criterion A(ii) – each sub-population being very small – it was noted that the sub-criterion was not applicable to the species examined and its modification was recommended in order to avoid having to define the term “very small,” suggesting the wording “the size of each sub-population is such that it can be considered to be unviable in the future.” AC Chair Althaus noted the importance of defining “sub-population” and argued that it would be possible to define the term “very small” by comparing species of the same taxonomic group. Africa stressed the need to define viable populations and sub-populations for plants. Austria noted the work of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on this definition and that the notion of sub-populations is valuable if species are fragmented. North America explained that the biology of the species is more important than numerical figures, and that the notion encompasses gene flows.

On sub-criterion A(iii) – a majority of individuals, during one or more life-history phases, being concentrated in one sub-population – it was recommended that the sub-criterion: can be misinterpreted and does not apply to plants species; and could be modified to reflect that another risk factor affecting plant species can be the vulnerability of certain extrinsic (human) factors, such as exploitation or contamination.

Africa disagreed with the conclusions of the review and stated that the criterion is applicable to plants in general, but that the species used were inappropriate. AC Chair Althaus stressed the need to define “sub-population.” Mexico suggested that since the sub-criterion concerns temporal and spatial distribution, it should be moved to Criterion B or deleted. Africa, supported by the AC Chair and the EC, called to retain the sub-criterion in its position.

On sub-criterion A(iv) – large short-term fluctuations in the number of individuals appropriate to measuring population size for the species concerned – it was recommended to: clarify that the criterion need not be applicable to all species; substitute generational time for numbers in the definition of fluctuations; and refer to fluctuations “outside the normal population cycles of the species concerned.”

The Netherlands said that the latter change would introduce non-biological fluctuation factors. Austria called for a decision on whether the intention is to take into account normal cycle fluctuations or additional factors influencing fluctuations. The US suggested reverting to the original language of Resolution 9.24. TRAFFIC suggested the wording “large short-term fluctuations in the numbers of individuals required to measure population size,” to enhance objectiveness. The US emphasized that the proposed drafting replaced evaluation of vulnerability by population monitoring. The EC said the AC should be asked to explain the departure from the COP-12 Chair’s text on Resolution 9.24.

On sub-criterion A(v) – high vulnerability due to the species’ biology or behavior – it was recommended that it: be applied to plants, with a clarification that not all factors may be applicable; differentiate intrinsic (biotic) from extrinsic (abiotic) factors in vulnerability; and define “slow growth rate.”



The US welcomed the recommendations, but noted that since “growth rate” referred to individuals, a new definition was unnecessary. He noted that the reviewers did not call for a definition, but for clarification whether the term referred to individuals or to the population.

Appendix I Criterion B: On this criterion – the wild population has a restricted area of distribution – recommendations called for: excluding from the definition of the “area of distribution” any unit of measure; defining the level of restriction; clarifying the biological criterion and its application; and eliminating the fluctuation criterion from the sub-criteria list for plants.

AC Chair Althaus stressed the need for flexibility in consideration of sub-criteria, as some may be applicable to animals but not to plants. He also suggested that “area of distribution” be substituted by “area of occupancy.”

Many delegates agreed that the 10,000 sq. km. figure given for the “restricted area of distribution” was misleading since it is not applicable to all species. Delegates recommended eliminating the numerical figure and agreed that habitat specificity should be taken into account.

Appendix I Criterion C: On this criterion – a marked decline in the population size in the wild, which has been either observed as ongoing, or inferred or projected on the basis of any of five criteria – it was recommended to delete reference to “extrinsic human-induced factors” as there are other threats such as hurricanes, parasitism and disease that are not necessarily anthropogenic. AC Chair Althaus, with Austria, agreed with this recommendation. SSN supported the addition of diseases and climate change as factors of decline.

Appendix I Criterion D: On this criterion – if not included in Appendix I, is likely to satisfy one or more of criteria A-C within five years – a recommendation was made to eliminate the criterion as it is highly speculative, or to clarify the difference between this criterion and Appendix II Criterion A.

IWMC favored eliminating the criterion, noting that if the Convention is properly implemented an Appendix II species should not be threatened in the subsequent five years. Oceania opposed eliminating the criterion, arguing that it would “re-open closed wounds,” since many Parties see it as a safety net. Austria also disagreed, stating that trade is not the only cause of decline. The EU suggested, and the US disagreed, reserving this criterion for species that are already in Appendix II. SSN asked to replace the term “five years” by “in the near future.” Africa said the period should be the same as the frequency of the COPs, every three years. The EU, Asia, North America and Oceania, were in favor of keeping the five-year period.

Appendix II Criterion A: On this criterion – it is known or can be inferred or projected that the regulation of trade in the species is necessary to avoid it becoming eligible for inclusion in Appendix I in the near future – it was recommended to: clarify the relationship between this criterion and Appendix I Criterion D; clarify “near future” and include it in the glossary; and demand that assertions on applicability of criteria be explained. The EC emphasized that all assertions and inferences must be supported by evidence. Africa said that the term “near future” is appropriate since it refers to the biology of the species rather than to the Convention’s procedures as in Appendix I Criterion D.

Appendix II Criterion B: On this criterion – it is known, or can be inferred or projected, that harvesting of specimens from the wild for international trade has or may have a detrimental impact on the species – it was recommended to: define “detrimental impact” and other terms; remove sub-criteria (i) and (ii); and include the IUCN-World Conservation’s factors of vulnerability.

AC Chair Althaus questioned the suitability of mentioning IUCN’s factors in an Appendix concerning trade volumes. The US, supported by Oceania, Chair Clemente and AC Chair Althaus, urged that in view of the difficulties created by the proposed Criterion B, the PC should revert to the original text of Resolution 9.24. Austria and the EC suggested indicating that the list of vulnerability factors is non-exhaustive, and referring to IUCN’s criteria.

Appendix II Criterion C: On this criterion – the specimen of species in the form in which it is traded resembles specimens of a species included in Appendix II or in Appendix I, such that a non-expert with reasonable effort is unlikely to be able to distinguish between them – it was noted that most plants are difficult for non-experts to identify, and recommended further explaining the terms “non-expert” and “reasonable effort.”

Appendix II Criterion D: The criterion – there are compelling reasons other than those given in criterion C above to ensure that effective control of trade in currently listed species is achieved – was found to work well and no recommendations were made. AC Chair Althaus called for clarification of its wording and enhancing it by giving examples of “compelling reasons.” Austria agreed with adding a clearly non-exhaustive list of examples. Delegates agreed to these suggestions.

Following discussion on Appendix I and II criteria, Chair Clemente established a drafting group for their amendment.

On Friday, 20 February, Oceania, Chair of the drafting group, introduced the group’s proposed amendments to Appendix I and II criteria (PC14 DG1 Doc. 1), highlighting a link in the section on split listing to a new definition of “wild population;” new text on factors in consideration of transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I regarding higher taxa; and a new definition of “wild population.” The PC approved the changes with some amendments, including deletion of reference to biotic and abiotic factors. On split listing, delegates agreed to clarify that all populations are covered unless excluded by annotations, and to delete reference to balance between protection of a species and its exposure to traders’ attention.

GUAIACUM SPP: On Monday, 16 February, the Secretariat introduced a document on *Guaiaacum* spp. (*lignum vitae* or tree of life) (PC14 Doc. 6.3) relating to a COP-12 decision requesting the PC to assess the status of *Guaiaacum* in the wild and in trade, and threats to the species. Mexico presented its progress on current research on the status of *Guaiaacum* spp. (PC14 Inf. 1), indicating that *G. sanctum* is widely distributed in the Yucatan Peninsula, but has a discontinuous distribution in tropical sub-deciduous forests. The Netherlands enquired about the status of a Cuban request to conduct a similar survey. The Chair emphasized that all proposals must be accompanied by financial provisions, and suggested that the PC encourage Cuba to submit a financially detailed proposal for consideration by importing States.

HARPAGOPHYTUM SPP.: On Tuesday, 17 February, South Africa introduced a progress report on *Harpagophytum* spp. (Devil’s Claw) (PC14 Doc. 6.2), as requested by COP-12 decisions for range States, to provide a status report on wild populations and



to negotiate with the Devil's Claw industry to support sustainable management programmes. South Africa confirmed that *H. procumbens* and *H. zeyheri* occur in the country, but their ranges do not overlap. Adding that *H. procumbens* is the only species harvested commercially in South Africa, she said there is no immediate threat to the species as a result of harvesting, but that populations have declined and are being monitored. She also reported that support from the Devil's Claw industry has not been forthcoming. Namibia highlighted a national Devil's Claw situation analysis, which includes surveys on resources, socioeconomic factors and markets. He emphasized that Namibia prefers promoting wild harvesting over cultivation, recognizing the benefits to indigenous harvesters. Although a Namibian Devil's Claw working group has met with traders and exporters to explore ways to ensure the species' sustainability, he said that, in Namibia, collaboration with the industry had not been positive either.

Chair Clemente asked range States how the PC could help them and whether or not the PC should maintain decisions related to this non-listed species. The UK suggested a Devil's Claw awareness-raising campaign in importing States. The EC said legally binding measures have been implemented in Europe to monitor imports. IWMC said the COP-12 decisions also required importing countries to submit reports on the trade, particularly on the role of the pharmaceutical industry. Fauna and Flora International (FFI) noted the importance of focusing on the livelihood of harvesters. Chair Clemente asked the range States to meet in a working group to recommend how the PC should take the issue forward.

On Friday, 20 February, Africa, Chair of the *Harpagophytum* working group, presented the group's recommendations, including that the PC decide on what action is required for outstanding reports from importing countries; regional Devil's Claw working group compile an information document for COP-13 on lessons learned; and that the Chair's report note the impact of a CITES listing on the livelihoods of poor people. Chair Clemente suggesting adding a call to Devil's Claw traders to support projects for sustainable use.

AQUILARIA SPP.: On Wednesday, 18 February, TRAFFIC introduced the progress report on *Aquilaria* spp. (agarwood) (PC14 Doc. 6.4), containing information on progress achieved on six related COP-12 decisions. Regarding Decision 12.66, DNA work should be undertaken to clarify whether *A. agallocha* is synonymous with *A. malaccensis*. Regarding Decision 12.67, distribution data must improve to enable re-evaluation. Regarding Decision 12.68, the PC should consider whether listing all agarwood taxa on Appendix II would help harmonize management of harvest and trade. Regarding Decision 12.69, re-evaluation of the IUCN Red List should be endorsed. Regarding Decision 12.70, Malaysia and Indonesia should convene a working group for non-detriment methodology. And regarding Decision 12.71, an international agarwood conference was convened in Vietnam. Chair Clemente said this issue would be further addressed in a working group on the Review of Significant Trade (RST).

On Friday, 20 February, the UK introduced the recommendations of the working group on RST in specimens of Appendix II species (PC14 WG 3.1 Doc.1 Annex 2) on *Aquilaria* spp. Recommendations include that: DNA work by the Netherlands continue; detailed information of the distribution of species be coordinated by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (IUCN-SSC) with input from the IUCN Global Trees Specialist Group; listing of all

agarwood producing taxa on Appendix II be discussed; and further field research be conducted in East Asia and the Middle East. The PC adopted the recommendations and agreed to include financial implications in the Chair's report to COP-13.

TECHNICAL PROPOSALS FROM COP-12

IMPROVING REGIONAL COMMUNICATION AND REPRESENTATION: On Wednesday, 18 February, the Netherlands introduced the document on improving regional communication and regional representation (PC14. Doc. 7.1), noting that regional representatives complain of lack of: time and means to communicate; response from within their regions; and guidelines on their roles. He suggested that there should be a recommendation that only "competent" individuals may be nominated, and that candidates and governments be provided with a manual on the regional representative's role.

Many regional representatives indicated the lack of institutional support and difficulties in communications within the region. Netra Pal Singh (India) emphasized the lack of institutional continuity. John Donaldson (South Africa), Giuseppe Frenguelli (Italy) and AC Chair Althaus praised the proposal for a formal commitment by a State nominating a person to provide support. Greg Leach (Australia) cautioned that this could discourage developing States from nominating candidates in view of the financial requirements. Patricia Dávila Aranda (Mexico) signaled the importance of a guidebook for governmental commitment. Margarita Clemente suggested preparing a calendar so that CITES management authorities are aware of the regional representatives' commitments. She also expressed frustration that the PC Chair is always held by a developed country.

Donaldson suggested that to ensure nominations from developing countries, candidates could seek sponsors. Chair Clemente established a working group to further consider the issue.

On Friday, 20 February, the Netherlands, Chair of the working group, presented the group's results (PC14 WG2 Doc. 1). He highlighted the working group's proposals to: amend Resolution Conf. 11.1 on formal commitments of regional representatives and of their governments; evaluate regional representatives' performance; promote a mechanism to support the PC and AC Chairs and Vice Chairs; and draft a regional representatives' manual. The PC endorsed the recommendations.

DEFINITIONS OF TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN ANNOTATIONS FOR MEDICINAL PLANTS: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat introduced document PC14 Doc. 7.2, noting that it had contracted the IUCN-SSC's Medicinal Plants Specialist Group to prepare a paper on annotations in relation to plant species used for medicinal purposes.

Germany, on behalf of IUCN, presented paper PC14 Inf. 3, emphasizing that not all traded commodities should be subject to CITES control. He said trade controls should govern only commodities that dominate trade, and should focus on commodities that first appear in international trade as exports from range States. France called for harmonizing CITES terminology with the Harmonized Customs Code and avoiding general annotations, and cautioned that controlling only original forms would exclude export of products from country of origin. The US remarked that the report exceeds the IUCN-SSC Medicinal Plants Specialist Group's mandate, raising doubt whether recommendations would be ready in time for submission to COP-13. Austria, supported by



Canada, urged giving priority to control of trade that is detrimental to species. He also recommended employing comprehensible terminology, and incorporating existing work in the COP-13 report. Chair Clemente established a working group, chaired by Germany, to further consider definitions of technical terms.

On Friday afternoon, 20 February, Germany presented the report of the working group on annotations for medicinal plants, which recommends that the Chair's report address the following elements that should guide future annotations. They include:

- clear definitions of all terms used in the present annotations;
- identification of taxa for which the current annotations inadequately reflect the trade;
- identification of cases in which improved annotations can be easily achieved and make recommendations in this regard; and
- two guiding principles (controls should concentrate on commodities that first appear in international trade as exports from range States, and on commodities that dominate the trade (PC14 Inf. 3)).

Germany said the working group would pursue its work on this issue intersessionally.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANNOTATION FOR ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED HYBRIDS WITHIN THE GENUS *PHALAENOPSIS*: On Thursday, 19 February, the US noted that exemptions for artificially propagated orchids within the genus *Phalaenopsis* were not being used and that permits continued to be issued. He added that growers feared that importing countries would fail to recognize the exempted species and refuse shipments. Chair Clemente suggested eliminating or modifying the exemption. Asia, Mexico and the Secretariat favored eliminating it, while the Netherlands preferred continuing to work on the issue. Noting that the exemption could encourage fraud, Switzerland proposed confining it to Annex II species. China suggested establishing a more effective register of nurseries that produce the exempted species.

REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS ON PLANTS AND PLANT TRADE: On Wednesday, 18 February, the US, Chair of the intersessional working group, presented on the review of resolutions pertaining to plants and plant trade and the definition of "artificially propagated" (PC14 Doc. 7.4). The Secretariat introduced its comments regarding the review (PC14 Doc. 7.4 Addendum). The US noted that the working group had clarified language of the definition, particularly that if a plant is artificially propagated, all its products are also artificially propagated. He said based on a Chilean recommendation, the working group had proposed amending the definition to allow for some Appendix I plants grown from wild-collected seed to be treated as artificially propagated specimens if they meet certain conditions. The Secretariat said that Resolution Conf. 11.16 (on ranching and trade in ranched specimens) provides a solution and said it was unnecessary to establish additional exemptions for Appendix I specimens. She further suggested applying to plants this Resolution, which to date has only been applied to animals. Africa said some Appendix I species on the verge of extinction would strongly benefit from wild seeds harvesting.

IWMC recalled that since COP-2, Parties have accepted that as soon as a specimen was cultivated from a seed, it was artificial. He suggested agreeing on general language, and that countries of origin of species that could be threatened by the harvesting of wild

seeds be considered on a case-by-case basis. He also noted that there cannot be a parental stock for annual species and warned against transferring language from the animal world to plants.

Chair Clemente said the Resolution on "artificially propagated" aimed at helping countries of origin to deal with artificially propagated seeds, giving greater opportunities to nurseries and promoting artificial propagation to enhance conservation. Mexico stated that "non-natural environment" should be defined. Asia pointed out that the definition of "controlled environment" was inadequate since many nurseries in developing countries would be unable to fulfil its conditions. On the exemption for specimens grown from wild-collected seeds, the US underscored the need to define both the notion that "specimens take a long time to reach reproductive age" and the "parental stock" of an annual plant. Chair Clemente asked the working group to produce a new text incorporating suggestions made during the discussion.

On Friday afternoon, 20 February, the US, Chair of the working group, presented the draft revision on the regulation of trade in plants (PC14 WG 4 Doc. 1). On the definition of "artificially propagated," he described the main changes as aiming to: account for cultivation of exempt seeds; address the issue of the artificial propagation of wild-collected seeds; clarify the term "cultivated parental stock" to ensure there is no detriment to the survival of the species in the wild; and include specimens from Appendix III. On hybrids, he explained the language had be made clearer, and on flaked seedlings of Appendix I orchids, he said the group had rejected the possibility of expanding the exemption to other taxa.

He suggested, and delegates agreed, that the working group continue its work after the meeting to finalize the draft. The Secretariat agreed to make changes to Resolution Conf. 9.19 that are necessary to harmonize that document with the final draft of Resolution Conf. 11.11. Also on harmonization, delegates decided to suspend the registration of a nursery in Chile that cultivates wild-collected seeds until the language of the applicable resolutions is adopted by the COP.

DETERMINATION OF THE DEFINITION OF *SWIETENIA MACROPHYLLA* PLYWOOD: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat requested that the PC adopt a definition of *Swietenia macrophylla* (Bigleaf mahogany) plywood (PC14 Doc. 7.5.1). The US introduced a document (PC14 Doc. 7.5.2 (Rev.1)) defining 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."

Central and South America and the Caribbean, on behalf of Peru, and Mexico, proposed modifying the definition. The US urged the PC to maintain the definition, endorsed by the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group, reiterating that it is a generic definition of plywood and not specific to *S. macrophylla*.

On Friday, 20 February, the US, Chair of the working group on the definition of plywood, noted that the group decided to keep the definition as is so as to be consistent with the Harmonized Customs Codes.

SPECIES PROPOSALS FOR COP-13

ANNOTATIONS FOR CERTAIN ARTIFICIALLY PROPAGATED ORCHID HYBRIDS: On Thursday, 19 February, Switzerland presented a draft proposal (PC14 Doc. 8.1) on annota-



tions for certain artificially propagated orchid hybrids. Chair Clemente established a working group, chaired by the US, to further discuss the issue.

On Friday afternoon, 20 February, the US, Chair of the working group, reported that the group recommended that COP-13 amend the annotation to reduce the number of specimens required to qualify for the exemptions from 100 to 20.

SPECIMENS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNDER EXEMPTION: On Thursday, 19 February, Switzerland presented its proposal on specimens in international trade under exemption (PC14 Doc. 8.2), according to which specimens that cease to qualify for an exemption from the CITES regulations are deemed to originate in the country in which they cease to qualify for that exemption.

The US, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and the EC supported the proposal without amendments, while Mexico opposed it due to concerns regarding fraud and called for better ways to trace the origin of specimens to ensure CITES implementation. The Netherlands said there was no value in keeping track of exempt specimens. Austria noted that Mexico's concern was relevant to the CBD and warned against confusing the two processes. The US, the Netherlands and the EC said the burden of proof was on the person claiming the exemption to show documentation that validates it. Germany introduced a related document on flaked seedlings traded under CITES' standard exemption (PC14 Inf. 7). Chair Clemente recognized the risk of fraud such seedlings pose but said it should be balanced against the fact that a large amount of material is legally transported *in vitro*. The PC encouraged Switzerland to pursue its work on the issue.

PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE CAESALPINIA ECHINATA IN THE APPENDICES: On Friday, 20 February, Germany informed delegates that they may abandon their plans of proposing an Appendix II listing for *Caesalpinia echinata* (Pernambuco or Pau Brazil) due to lack of response from Brazil. The Confederation of Craftsmen and Users of Natural Resources (COMURNAT) reported on progress made on an international initiative on the protection of *C. echinata*, highlighting: the launch of 19 of the 52 projects this year; the information of local communities on good management of the resource to increase economic profitability; and a tree registration programme. He praised the initiative for including the social, cultural, economic and scientific aspects of conservation and suggested it be expanded to other countries and species.

SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN PLANTS

EVALUATION OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE: On Wednesday, 18 February, the EC introduced the document on the evaluation of RST (PC14 Doc. 9.1), noting three main principles that the PC and AC should consider: the impact of trade on non-CITES species; the use of terms such as "efficiency" and "cost-effectiveness;" and the wider socioeconomic issues that pertain to regulation of wildlife trade.

Responding to queries on how the evaluation would be funded, the Secretariat suggested that a portion of the RST budget could be used or external funding could be found. The UK said the evaluation could be postponed since the PC was just beginning its RST. Chair Clemente said the issue should be further discussed within the RST working group, chaired by the UK.

On Friday, 20 February, the UK introduced the working group's revised terms of reference for evaluation of the RST (PC14 WG 3.1 Doc. 1), noting that non-listed species should not be examined in detail as part of the RST, and that reviews should commence only after COP-14.

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION CONF. 12.8: Trade in Plants from Madagascar: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat introduced documents on trade in plants from Madagascar (PC14 Doc. 9.2.1) and the Action Plan for the reform of Madagascar's wildlife export trade (PC14 Inf. 12). Informing participants that some of the short-term plans are already being implemented, he invited the PC to: comment further on the Action Plan; propose milestones for implementation; and consider how the PC wished to be informed of future progress. Austria suggested providing an export allowance for living plants for Madagascar to enable scientific work under the Action Plan and training.

Progress with the Implementation of Species Reviews: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat introduced document PC14 Doc. 9.2.2, noting that COP-12 requested the PC to review reports by range States, and where appropriate, revise the preliminary categorizations proposed.

TRAFFIC presented the RST for Cycads (PC14 Doc. 9.2.2 Annex 1), noting that a large number of species are threatened with extinction in the wild as a result of habitat destruction and trade in wild-collected plants. He said the discrepancy between the RST findings and expert submissions indicates significant trade that is either illegal or not CITES-regulated. He also said the Appendices should be reviewed to harmonize criteria application and expressed concern that an Appendix I listing does not always offer advantages to wild species.

Presenting the RST for *Aquilaria malaccensis* (agarwood) (PC14 Doc. 9.2.2 Annex 2), TRAFFIC noted that Malaysian agarwood species have been categorized as "species of urgent concern," and that Indian and Indonesian species have been categorized as "species of possible concern."

FFI presented the RST for *Pericopsis elata* (African teak) (PC14 Doc. 9.2.2 Annex 3), noting that priorities in countries of export include the formulation of clear procedures for making CITES non-detriment findings. He called for enhanced control of illegal export and consideration of a re-evaluation of the IUCN Red List. The Democratic Republic of Congo said an Appendix II listing of *P. elata* is unjustified given its abundance in the wild.

FFI also presented the RST for East African *Aloe* extracts (PC14 Doc. 9.2.2 Annex 4), highlighting that impact of the trade on the conservation status of *Aloe* species is unclear. She added that there is concern about the levels of exploitation of several species, particularly in view of the lack of regulation, and suggested categorizing *A. scabrifolia*, *A. secundiflora* and *A. turkanensis* as "species of urgent concern." She also expressed support for: community propagation and cultivation schemes for *Aloe* species used medicinally; the development of cultivation and propagation guidelines; and the update of the conservation assessment for East Africa based on the IUCN Red List.

On Friday, 20 February, the UK introduced the recommendations of the RST working group, which adopted the categorization suggested in the reviews, with the exception that categorized Madagascar Cycad as a species of "urgent concern" rather than "possible concern."



SELECTION OF NEW SPECIES: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat introduced the document on the selection of new species (PC14 Doc. 9.3). The United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) presented an analysis of trade data in Appendix II plant species over ten years and a proposed process for selecting new species for the RST. Identifying 15 new species, she noted that a species showing an increase in levels of trade needs more attention than a species for which trade has been decreasing, and that a species showing considerable variation in past levels of trade needs more attention than one showing constant trade levels.

The US suggested waiting until the next PC meeting to select new species. North America, with Germany, suggested carrying out a more qualitative review, rather than using only a statistical framework. TRAFFIC introduced its process for selecting species (PC14 Inf. 5 and Inf. 6), noting that it was complimentary to the UNEP-WCMC process in that it provides additional analytical steps to consider information presented prior to selecting species for review and assists in eliminating non-essential species. The Secretariat said the additional process would have significant time and cost implications, noting limited financial resources for the RST. Chair Clemente established a working group to discuss the methodological approach for selecting new species and to provide a list of species for the next phase of the RST.

On Friday, 20 February, Africa (South Africa), Chair of the working group, presented the outcomes of its deliberations. On methodology, he noted that the UNEP-WCMC analysis should include the significance of the regression of analyses and an analysis of specimens traded as artificially propagated to identify species for review where there may be a problem with reporting. He added that the analysis should be distributed and that PC members should solicit information for species in their area. On the selection of new species, the working group suggested the following: *Galanthus woronowii*, *Podophyllum hexandrum*, *Cyathea contaminans*, *Cibotium barometz*, *Dendrobium nobile*, and an orchid species from Belize to be selected.

REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES

PERIODIC REVIEW OF ANIMAL AND PLANT TAXA IN THE APPENDICES: On Friday, 20 February, the US presented document PC14 Doc. 10.1, highlighting a flowchart, developed by the joint working group on the review of the Appendices of the PC and AC, for a rapid assessment technique for the periodic review of the Appendices. Oceania pointed out that the flowchart does not capture an RST indicating an unclear situation, such as that of cycads. The PC decided to forward the document to the AC and to discuss a revised version at the next meetings of the PC and AC.

REVIEW OF HEAVILY TRADED NON-CITES SPECIES

On Friday, 20 February, Chair Clemente suggested, and the PC agreed, presenting *Harpagophytum* spp. as a case study of a heavily traded non-CITES species in her report to COP-13. On *Taxus wallichiana*, the US raised concern over illegal trade from China in extracts that Chinese traders claim contain raw taxa imported from North America. He pointed out that an Appendix II listing will not resolve internal control problems. Africa said that South Africa, Botswana and Namibia are considering action on an Appendix II listing of *Hoodia*. The Netherlands noted that, together with IUCN-

WCMC, it would convene regional workshops from 2004 to 2006 on tree conservation and management as a follow-up to the progress report on the evaluation of tree species. He noted that the first workshop would take place in Central America.

REPORT OF A STUDY ON TILLANDSIA XEROGRAPHICA

On Friday, 20 February, the Netherlands introduced an information document on imports of artificially propagated *Tillandsia xerographica* from Guatemala (PC14 Inf. 8), noting the dire situation of this species in the wild and underlining the need for a further survey. He said the trade in *T. xerographica* can be sustainable and called for: re-opening the trade in that species; encouraging CITES-compliant nurseries; controlling export shipments in importing countries; and evaluating progress at PC-15. Guatemala said that the creation of protected areas should help control illegal activities and requested information from importing States on illegal shipments. The Organization for the Investigation, Protection and Conservation of Phytogenic resources (CONREFI) said it was working on guidelines for proper *Tillandsia* multiplication and a systematic process of control for the non-detrimental trade of this species in accordance with CITES.

CHECKLISTS AND NOMENCLATURE

PROGRESS REPORT: On Friday, 20 February, the UK presented a progress report on checklists and nomenclatures (PC14 Doc. 12.1) and on the CITES Nomenclature Committee (PC14 Inf. 4) and recommended that Resolution Conf. 12.11 be amended to recognize that all taxon-based checklists have at least equal status as the UNEP-WCMC Checklist. He said he would circulate a draft checklist of CITES species, include the comments received and forward it to the AC meeting in order for the two Committees to reach a consensus in preparation for COP-13. He congratulated Germany on the production of a new *Euphorbia* Checklist and noted the updated *Cactaceae* Checklist and the work of Austria on the *Bulbophyllum* Checklist. He called on the PC to comment on: priorities for the work of the Nomenclature Committee; the improvement of transparency and understanding of the workings of the Nomenclature Committee; and recommendations for experts to review the Orchid Checklist. Mexico announced that it had translated the Orchids Checklist into Spanish and called for funding for its publication.

PREPARATION OF CITES CHECKLIST FOR BULBOPHYLLUM (ORCHIDACEAE): On Friday, 20 February, Austria presented on the preparation of a CITES Checklist for *Bulbophyllum*. He stressed the importance of collecting data on the taxa, establishing an electronic database, and contacting international experts on the genus.

ID MANUAL: PROGRESS REPORT

On Friday, 20 February, the Secretariat introduced a progress report on the Identification Manual (PC14 Doc. 13), noting that the manual is gradually being converted into electronic format.

GUIDELINES FOR TRANSPORT OF LIVE PLANTS

On Friday, 20 February, the US introduced an information document (PC14 Inf. 15) containing a standard form for reporting non-compliance with transport guidelines. He suggested distributing the voluntary form through a notification.



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

On Friday, 20 February, the Secretariat introduced the document on *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production of plants (PC14 Doc. 15), noting the IUCN-SSC Wildlife Trade Programme's review of production systems (PC14 Doc. 15 Annex 1), and the designation of source codes for specimens in trade that originate from different production systems (PC14 Doc. 21). The US said IUCN's work confused production systems with the relationship between *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production, instead of defining production systems and indicating their appropriate source codes (PC14 Inf. 17). Several delegates noted that the report contains errors already flagged and matters that have explicitly been rejected by the Parties. Oceania cautioned against explosion of source codes and, supported by Austria, called for linking the *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production relationship with the CBD. The EC emphasized the PC's potential contribution on source codes. IWMC, supported by AC Chair Althaus, suggested addressing animals separately from plants. North America said the IUCN should have clear guidelines from the PC. The PC concluded that in view of their technicality, source codes should be discussed in another fora.

LINKS WITH INDUSTRY AND TRADERS TO PROMOTE PROJECTS ON SUSTAINABLE USE

On Friday, 20 February, Chair Clemente requested written examples for the Chair's report to COP-13 on links with industry and traders to promote projects on sustainable use from Germany (on *Zamia* spp. from Mexico); Guatemala and the Netherlands (on *Tillandsia xerographica* from Guatemala); the US (on native medicinal plants including *Panax ginseng* from the US); and COMURNAT (on *Cesalpinia echinata* from Brazil).

ROLE OF APPENDIX II

On Friday, 20 February, Chair Clemente noted that Appendix II was often "demonized" and called on delegates to submit examples that illustrate the fact that its function is to favor sustainable use. AC Chair Althaus said an Appendix II listing implied issuing import and export permits, and that in some countries this can be long and costly, which explains why the Appendix is seen by some as a tool to prohibit trade.

GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION: ANALYSIS AND LINKS WITH THE CBD

On Friday, 20 February, FFI introduced the document (PC14 Doc. 18) noting a discussion paper it prepared on CITES' activities and collaboration with the CBD. He noted: comments received on specific species; mechanisms to reduce overexploitation; specific milestones to the Global Strategy target on elimination of illegal trade; and priorities established for research and potential sources of funding.

OTHER PC-13 OUTCOMES

BIGLEAF MAHOGANY WORKING GROUP REPORT: On Thursday, 19 February, the Secretariat introduced the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group's report (PC14 19.1(Rev.1)), requesting delegates to identify key recommendations to be forwarded to COP-13. South and Central America and the Caribbean reported on a meeting of the Bigleaf Mahogany Working Group (PC14 Doc.

19.1), which identified priorities for action, primarily preparation of management plans, inventories, capacity building, monitoring and international cooperation.

EXPORT QUOTA WORKING GROUP: On Friday, 20 February, the Secretariat informed the PC that the working group had not yet convened so the PC had no reports to consider.

TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES: On Friday, 20 February, the Secretariat reported to the PC that no communications had been received concerning technical implementation issues.

TRAINING INITIATIVES

On Friday, 20 February, the UK presented a progress report on the standard slide package (PC14 Doc. 20.1), drawing attention to an updated version of its user's guide on CITES and Plants, and noting a new user's guide being prepared on CITES and Timber. On the University of Cordoba's CITES masters course, Chair Clemente suggested a proposal for COP-13 to call for external support to recognize the usefulness of the course. Africa, Europe, Asia, the US and others supported the proposal.

REGIONAL REPORTS AND DIRECTORIES

On Friday, 20 February, Chair Clemente noted that due to time constraints, delegates should read the regional reports and directories in their own time.

TIME AND VENUE OF THE 14TH PLANTS COMMITTEE MEETING

On Friday, 20 February, Slovenia offered to host PC-15, tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2005.

CLOSING REMARKS

Closing the meeting, Chair Clemente thanked participants, the CITES Secretariat, and translators for all their hard work. She also thanked the Namibian authorities for hosting a very successful meeting. After announcing that this was her final meeting as PC Chair, Vice Chair Luke Quentin thanked Clemente for her incredible leadership and devotion to the PC. The meeting came to a close at 7:50 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PC-14

Known for its rich wildlife, one would think Namibia to be the ideal location to hold a CITES Animals Committee meeting. That distinction, however, goes to South Africa when AC-20 will meet in Johannesburg next month. But, as home to a wide array of unique plant life, Namibia proved to be an equally appropriate environment to hold a Plants Committee meeting. As with most PC meetings to date, the Committee met in a friendly and intimate atmosphere even though the challenging agenda could have easily disrupted the agreeable mood. With only a week to conduct their work, delegates deliberated on the numerous CITES COP-12 proposals and decisions directed to the PC. With COP-13 six months away, addressing these numerous proposals and decisions proved to be only that much more urgent. The following analysis addresses the PC's relationship with the AC, the role of regional representation, and preparation in the lead-up to COP-13.



TACKLING THE AGENDA

A heavy agenda at PC-13 in Geneva last year convinced delegates that four days simply was not enough time to address all the issues at hand. An even heavier agenda at PC-14 in Windhoek convinced delegates that five days were not enough either. By the fourth day of the meeting, only 9 out of the 25 agenda items had been covered, due primarily to two afternoons committed to working groups and the better part of a day devoted to the lengthy process of reviewing the criteria for amendment for Appendices I and II. Some felt too much time was spent on the issue, citing lack of prioritization. But, to others, so much devotion to one issue was not necessarily wasted time, as many believe that criteria are key to the Convention, particularly in that they determine the foundation for listing species on the CITES Appendices. As satisfied as PC delegates may have been with their review of the criteria, there is no guarantee their amendments will be taken on board at AC-20, which will conduct its own review. Only after AC-20 will the two Committee Chairs meet to draft a common position for COP consideration. Reaching a common position, some delegates professed, may prove to be the biggest challenge.

PC MEETS AC

Whether the AC and PC should meet separately or back-to-back at the same venue has been a long, on-going debate. Despite an attempt at COP-12 to merge the two Committees, many still feel it is important at least to have the PC and AC meet in the same place within days of each other so as to improve coordination and cooperation and, according to the Secretariat, costs. Although there has not been a joint session of the two scientific Committees since a meeting held in West Virginia, US, in 2000, PC-13 and AC-19 were both held in Geneva last August, allowing the AC Chair to attend some of the deliberations of the PC, and the PC Chair to do the same in the AC. Some felt this was a good start in harmonizing the work of the Committees, although others felt it did not go far enough. Most concerns were put to rest by the attendance of the AC Chair and an AC regional representative for Africa for the duration of PC-14 – a CITES first. “Cross-pollination is very useful, especially on the criteria issue,” remarked the AC African regional representative. “We can now go to the AC with a finished product and work towards a uniformly applied criteria for both the PC and AC.” This doesn’t mean there will be total agreement on the issue, or on other shared issues for that matter, but many noted the high level of cooperation between the two Committees was a good starting point.

REGIONAL REPRESENTATION

Many were pleased to note the high level of representation from the African region, mostly attributed to the fact that the meeting took place on the continent. Even a delegate from the Democratic Republic of Congo, a CITES Party rarely seen at PC meetings, was present to discuss the status of its *Pericopsis elata* (African teak) population. As one delegate explained, one of the advantages of holding the meeting away from Geneva, where PC and AC meetings are supposed to be held every other year, is that it encourages more participation from range States. One of the initial reasons for holding the PC in Namibia was to raise local awareness for *Harpagophytum* spp. (Devil’s Claw) and to show how CITES can be used as a tool for promoting the sustainable use of a species. Although not as much time was given to discussing the status of Devil’s Claw

as was given at PC-13, range States were able to discuss their findings, while some delegates were able to take advantage of a weekend excursion to see first hand where the indigenous plant grows and meet the people who harvest it.

While delegates welcomed the increased level of African participation, PC regional representatives from developing countries underlined growing difficulties in properly fulfilling their functions due to budget constraints and lack of government and institutional support. Chair Clemente acknowledged the problem, adding that the same difficulties would most likely prevent a candidate from a developing State from becoming the next PC Chair when her term comes to an end at COP-13. A PC working group on improving regional communication addressed the issue, offering several recommendations to be considered at COP-13, but many delegates felt the regional representatives still would not get the support they need, particularly financial support. If this is the case, it could further compromise the tenuous role they play in representing their regions.

TOWARDS COP-13

With so much time spent on criteria, little time was actually spent on an issue one would expect to be covered before a COP: new species proposals. Germany again proposed a possible listing of *Caesalpinia echinata* (Pernambuco or Pau Brazil) on the Appendices, while the US brought up the possibility of listing several Asian species of *Taxus* (Yew tree). But, two proposals for consideration are just a “drop in the bucket” considering the 20,000-plus species already listed on the Appendices and the many more out there potentially in need of protection. Parties still have until May to submit proposals, so perhaps new plant species will find their way on to the agenda in time for COP-13. Until then, the PC can feel proud that they have completed their substantial agenda and fine-tuned some of the more important technical proposals and reviews.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE COP-13

50TH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING

COMMITTEE: SC-50 will meet from 15-19 March 2004, 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/eng/news/meetings/SC50.shtml>

20TH MEETING OF THE CITES ANIMALS

COMMITTEE: AC-20 will meet from 29 March 2004-2 April 2004, in Johannesburg, South Africa. 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/eng/news/meetings/AC20.shtml>

13TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE

PARTIES TO CITES: CITES COP-13 will meet from 2-14 October 2004, in Bangkok, Thailand. 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/eng/news/meetings/CoP13_dates.shtml