

## WTO CTE – June 2014

### **Intervention by the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES Secretariat )**

Before this meeting, the CITES Secretariat shared with the WTO Secretariat a narrative document and graphic summary of recent high-level events and initiatives on illegal wildlife trade. This material is now on the CITES website, together with a related press statement, and copies have been provided in the back of the room.

Paragraph 203 of the outcome document for Rio+20 recognizes CITES as a treaty that stands at the intersection between trade, environment and development. Most recently, in the Resolution on Illegal trade in wildlife adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly last week, CITES is recognized as the principal international instrument for ensuring that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. The Convention's legally-binding status and its membership of 180 States-Parties enable it to play a critical role in regulating commercial and non-commercial international wildlife trade in order to ensure that such trade is legal, sustainable and traceable.

Given its multilateral, rule-based approach, CITES has harmoniously co-existed with WTO (and GATT) for over 40 years.

As timber has featured prominently in Members' discussions today, the Secretariat would note that over 400 tree species have now been listed in the Convention's Appendices and are subject to its permitting scheme, which is based on prior findings of legal acquisition and non-detriment to the survival of a species in the wild. CITES is continuing to work closely with ITTO on the second phase of a joint programme aimed at ensuring the legality, sustainability and traceability of CITES-listed timber products. In response to a decision adopted by CITES CoP16 in March 2013, ITTO and CITES have launched a trade study of all timber-species listed in Appendices II and III of the Convention to determine the type and volume of products in trade – particularly those products not currently covered by annotations in the Convention. Work is also ongoing to develop a cooperative agreement with FAO related to forests, which should further strengthen its collaboration with the Geneva-based UNECE/FAO Forest and Timber Section. At the regional and national levels, CITES has been involved in analyses and consultations about its link to new legislation designed to prevent the importation of illegally-sourced timber.

Illegal trade in rosewood from Madagascar has been receiving increased attention under the Convention, since a number of species were listed in Appendix II at CoP16. The Secretary-General met with the President of Madagascar and the Secretariat has not only engaged directly with policy and law enforcement officials in Madagascar but also officials in transit and destination countries. Similar challenges with illegal rosewood trade occur in Southeast Asia and Central America, and consideration is now being given to taking a global approach to the issue.

CITES trade controls for commercially valuable shark and ray species, which were included in Appendix II at CoP16, will enter into effect on 14 September 2014. In the meantime, CITES has been working closely with Parties, FAO, the private sector (e.g. the International Air Transport Association) and other non-State actors to help Parties prepare for the implementation of these listings

The Secretariat has been closely following activities related to the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation, including relevant new cooperation between WCO and ITC. There is longstanding cooperation between CITES and WCO through both a cooperative MoU and their partnership in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), which also comprises INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank. Earlier this year, CITES concluded an MoU with ITC, which complements its existing MoU with UNCTAD. An additional MoU with UNCTAD is under development to address cooperation with respect to UNCTAD's Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA).

The WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, CITES, the UN conventions on transnational organized crime, corruption and arms and the WHO Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products were the focus of a pioneering seminar to boost legal capacity to tackle different types of illicit trade, which was organized earlier this month in Asunción by the INTERPOL General Secretariat, Office of Legal Affairs, and the Public Prosecutor's Office in Paraguay.

CITES appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the most recent WTO Advance Course on Trade and Environment, and it was an interesting change of pace to have participants come to the International Environment House for a day.

The 65th meeting of the Standing Committee will take place in Geneva from 7 to 11 July 2014 and policy decisions on a number of trade-related issues will be taken at that time. The CITES Secretariat will brief the CTE on the results of SC65 at the next opportunity.

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