

Prunus africana and other medicinal plant species: towards improving the implementation of CITES



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CITES-listed medicinal plant species in international trade



- Several hundred medicinal plant species are CITES listed (mostly App. II)
- Most seem “accidental” (listed as part of genus / family listings), few listings for medicinal plant trade, **little CITES attention to this trade or little need for regulation?**

- E-commerce in these species:
100,000’s offers available
(Ebay and Amazon alone)
- Hardly any mention applicable CITES regulation, finding confirmed by scientific studies
- **E-commerce largely unaware of regulation?**

Species	Source	Species	Source
<i>Aloe</i> spp.	eBay	<i>Guaiacum</i> spp.	Amazon
<i>Aloe arborescens</i>	eBay, Amazon	<i>Panax ginseng</i>	eBay, Amazon
<i>Aloe ferox</i>	eBay, Amazon	<i>Panax quinquefolius</i>	eBay, Amazon
<i>Aloe perryi</i>	eBay	<i>Cactaceae</i> spp.	eBay
<i>Hoodia</i> spp.	eBay, Amazon	<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	eBay, Amazon
<i>Rauvolfia serpentina</i>	eBay	<i>Saussurea costus</i>	eBay
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	eBay	<i>Diospyros</i> spp.	Amazon
<i>Phalaenopsis amabilis</i>	eBay	<i>Euphorbia</i> spp.	Amazon
<i>Vanilla planifolia</i>	eBay, Amazon	<i>Euphorbia antisyphilitica</i>	eBay
<i>Cistanche deserticola</i>	eBay	<i>Prunus Africana</i>	eBay
<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	eBay, Amazon	<i>Aquilaria</i> spp.	eBay, Amazon
<i>Cyclamen</i> spp.	Amazon	<i>Nardostachys grandiflora</i>	eBay, Amazon
<i>Picrorhiza kurrooa</i>	Amazon	<i>Guaiacum officinale</i>	eBay, Amazon

Characteristics of medicinal plant trade that warrant targeted attention by CITES



- High numbers of mostly wild sourced species in trade, many species endangered
- Economically substantial and quickly growing trade volumes and values
- Many highly processed and hardly traceable products
- Presumably substantial share of illicit trade
- Immediate relevance to health and livelihoods of the majority of global population
- Complexity of actors and markets
- Need to take into account highly relevant local knowledge bases and networks:
 - long-term, intense familiarity of local knowledge keepers with medicinal plant populations and their ecological characteristics
 - cultural and medical salience of many species

How to make the use and trade
of medicinal plant species more
sustainable?

Addressing species and trade patterns



Objective	Activity
Define priority species, based on levels of trade, conservation status, threats, livelihood relevance, and other criteria	Use existing analyses, and a consultative process via Secretariat notification to parties
Elicit the structure of value chains, focusing on key players or 'nodes', from harvest to consumer demand	Hire a consultant or institution with pertinent expertise for in-depth analysis of e-commerce trade networks
Raise awareness of conservation impacts, CITES regulation, and response strategies	Reach out to key players or 'nodes', e.g. through bilateral contacts or workshops
Develop pilot systems for tracing medicinal plant products	Collaborate with UNCTAD and relevant industry stakeholders, taking into account previous work on BioTrade and CITES and traceability

Addressing conservation impacts



Objective	Activity
Consider the role of certification approaches in CITES	Support ongoing work by TRAFFIC / BfN to assess synergies between CITES and the FairWild certification approach
	Assess, in how far existing NDF guidelines are complementary to the information provided by certification systems., If appropriate, propose amendments or specification to allow the incorporation of information provided by certification systems
	Consider an additional expert workshop to explore advantages and barriers of certification systems in CITES regulations
	Consider collaborative approaches between CITES authorities and certification institutions, with a view to efficiently align permitting and certification processes

Make CITES a learning organization: capacity building and adaptation



Objective	Activity
Strengthen national MA / SA capacities	Develop materials to implement CITES provisions of relevance to medicinal plants, in particular livelihoods considerations, traditional knowledge, and the Addis Abbeba principles
	Upload capacity building materials to the CITES webpage and the CITES Virtual College
	Include specific content in the CITES Masters curriculum at the University of Andalucia
	Support national capacity building efforts in a framework similar to the CITES-EU trees project.
Enable refinement, revision and adaptation of the CITES medicinal plants strategy	Strike an intersessional working group on CITES and medicinal plant species to continuously monitor the progress of pertinent work, and to propose adaptations as required

Thank you – Merci – Gracias - Dankeschön



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Please see also: [CoP18 Doc. 55](#)