



Artificial Propagation of CITES Protected Plants

The Africa Regional Bureau of the Species Survival Network (SSN) welcomes you to this issue of *CITES Afrique*, featuring an article on distinguishing wild-collected from artificially propagated specimens of CITES-listed plant species. The sophisticated methods traffickers use to smuggle CITES-listed plants, and the difficulty non-experts face in identifying specimens, complicate the work of customs officers worldwide.

We also take this opportunity to introduce the Big Cats Initiative, a new grant program launched by the National Geographic Society to save lions. Finally, we present the alarm-

ing results of a study conducted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) showing that one fifth of the world's vertebrates are threatened with extinction, with amphibians experiencing the highest risk.



Baby orchids in sterile jars © Creative Commons

We hope you will find this information helpful to your work. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Friendly greetings.

Will Travers, Shelley Waterland and Alice Stroud, SSN Africa Regional Bureau

Latest CITES Postings and Notifications

◆ The Secretariat advised Parties not to authorize the import of ivory carvings from Zimbabwe based on a 'Short Export Permit', but to demand, instead, that travelers present a standard CITES export permit (CITES Notification 2010/024)

◆ The Secretariat provided information about the Masters course on *Management, Access and Conservation of Species in Trade: the International Framework* (CITES Notification 2010/025)

◆ The Secretariat announced that it has awarded Certificates of Commendation to the Customs Administration of the Czech Republic, the Czech Environmental Inspectorate, the Airports of Thailand Public Company, and the CITES Wildlife Checkpoint of the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conser-

vation Department of the Government of Thailand (CITES Notifications 2010/026-030)

◆ The Secretariat announced the subjects on which Parties should report for the 19th Plants Committee and the 25th Animals Committee meetings; subjects include sharks, sturgeons, orchids, non-detriment findings and selected tropical timber species. Reports from Parties are to be provided to the Secretariat by 15 January 2011. (CITES Notification 2010/027)

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties of Canada's reservations with respect to the amendments to Appendices I and II adopted at CoP15 (CITES Notification 2010/028)

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties that it has been requested to include two facilities in the *Register of*

*operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes: a facility breeding American crocodiles (*Crocodylus acutus*) in Colombia and a facility breeding golden arowanas (*Scleropages formosus*) in Indonesia. The operations will be included in the Secretariat's Register on 20 January 2011 and 1 February 2011 respectively unless the Secretariat receives an objection from a Party and such objection is not withdrawn before each date (CITES Notifications No. 2010/029-032)*

◆ The Secretariat distributed a request for the submission of applications for membership in the CITES Working Group on Bigleaf Mahogany and Other Neotropical Timber Species (CITES Notification 2010/031)

Inside this issue:

Differentiating between wild and artificially propagated plants	2
One fifth of vertebrates threatened—amphibians most at risk	3
The Big Cats Initiative launched to save lions / Ivory dealers arrested in Cameroon	3
Capacity building corner	3
SSN member and CITES species of the month	4

Important CITES Dates

- **8-11 November 2010:** 79th Interpol General Assembly, Doha, Qatar
- **17-19 November 2010:** CITES capacity building workshop for Africa, Douala, Cameroon
- **6-7 December 2010:** 9th meeting of the MIKE Technical Advisory Group, Nairobi, Kenya
- **31 December 2010:** deadline for African elephant range States that wish to authorize export of raw ivory in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP15) to communicate in writing to the Secretariat export quotas for raw ivory for 2011

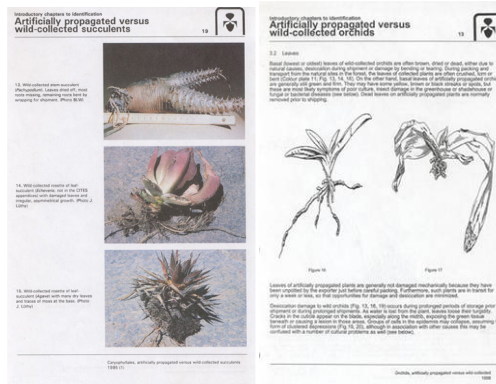
Differentiating Between Wild and Artificially Propagated Plants

The CITES Convention protects about 28,000 listed species of plants against over-exploitation through international trade (CITES Secretariat, 2010). Because artificial propagation is thought to promote conservation by relieving pressure on wild plant populations, an exemption to CITES permitting rules exist for trade in specimens of artificially propagated plants. Artificially propagated specimens of Appendix I plant species produced for commercial purposes are treated as Appendix II specimens, for which a non-detriment finding is still required. Artificially propagated specimens of Appendix I plant species not produced for commercial purposes, as well as those on Appendix II and III, may be traded internationally using a Certificate of Artificial Propagation. The relevant Scientific Authorities are not required to assess the detrimental effect of such trade before such certificates are issued (CITES Arti-

cle VII ; see also Resolution Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP 15) on *Registration of nurseries that artificially propagate specimens of Appendix-I plant species for export purposes*).

TRAFFIC estimates that the illegal trade in medicinal and attractive ornamental plants such as orchids, ferns, cacti

and succulents reaps, for criminals, "tens of hundreds of millions of dollars every year." Annual volumes of illicitly traded plants amount to millions of specimens (*International News Service*, 2002). This illegal trade varies from the concealment of a few plants by amateurs and hobbyists to large shipments containing hundreds of illegally traded specimens. The use of fraudulent claims of artificial propagation is one of the methods most commonly used by smugglers to facilitate illegal trade (*CITES World 2002*). Differentiating between wild and artificially propagated plant specimens is a very complex task for customs officers, who cannot always have access to the necessary specialists for guidance. The tables below offer basic guidelines on what to look for distinguishing between wild and artificially propagated plant specimens. If you need further assistance, please contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau.



CITES Identification Manual

	Succulent plants : the cactus family (Cactaceae), succulent <i>Euphorbia</i> species (Euphorbiaceae), the genera <i>Aloe</i> (Liliaceae) and <i>Pachypodium</i> (Apocynaceae)	
	Wild	Artificially propagated
General appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irregular in shape and size Wounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniform Healthy plant parts
Leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insect damaged Presence of mosses or lichens associated with natural habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean uniform leaves with no apparent damage May carry marks of horticultural sprays Lack the presence of mosses or lichens
Spine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coarser, more irregular, thicker Likely to be damaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Un-damaged and uniform Of regular shape and size
Roots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coarse, uneven and irregularly shaped Dead and broken Cut back when removed from the wild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular in shape/ in shape of container Unbroken, do not show signs of having been cut back Several main roots / free from habitat soil
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Native soil and associated plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually clean of soil Horticultural soil present (e.g. sand, rockwool)

	Orchids	
	Wild	Artificially propagated
General appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unhealthy Uneven growth, size varies Often with dried inflorescences or pods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Specimens similar in size Specimens almost identical
Leaves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crushed or torn Show signs of chewing by insects or small mammals, or light colored spots or holes caused by insects Signs of desiccation (less swollen and cracked especially along midrib) Mottled or dull in color Often damaged (mold, algae, lichen, insect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No apparent damage (mold, algae, lichen, insect)
Roots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often unhealthy, few in number Damaged, torn or cut away when removed from the wild – new roots may grow from old damaged root material Show variation in direction (not in the shape of a container) Some may be dead (fleshy outer layer withered into a brown powdery substance) Part of the original substrate still attached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular in shape/ in shape of container Unbroken, do not show signs of having been cut back

Source: Royal Botanic Gardens, 2004. CITES World, 2002 and TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, 2008-2009.

One Fifth of Vertebrates Threatened - Amphibians Most at Risk

A new study by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has established that a fifth of the world's vertebrate species are threatened with extinction and that, on average, 52 species of mammals, birds, and amphibians move one category closer to extinction every year. The study also concludes that the most alarming situation is that of amphibians with 41% of the world's amphibian species threatened with extinction. In comparison, 33% of cartilaginous fishes, 25% of mammals, 22% of reptiles, 15% of bony fishes, and 13% of birds are threatened (IUCN, 2010). CITES only protects 114 of the 6,752 currently-known amphibian species. The trade and use of amphibians as food, for medicinal

purposes, and as pets are growing, and threaten the survival of several species. In Africa, several amphibian species have already become extinct. This cry of alarm



Omaniundu reed frog (*Hyperolius sankuruensis*) © Getty Images, Agence France-Presse

about the rate of extinction of amphibians worldwide comes shortly after scientists rediscovered three amphibian species once thought extinct including two West African frogs: the red-limbed Mount Nimba reed frog (*Hyperolius nimba*), last seen in 1967 and spotted in Ivory Coast, and the Omaniundu reed frog (*Hyperolius sankuruensis*), last seen in 1979 and re-discovered in the Congo river (IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group and Conservation International, September 2010).

Please contact SSN if you have questions about amphibian conservation.

Big Cats Initiative Launched to Save African Big Cats

At the instigation of veteran wildlife filmmakers and photographers Derek and Beverly Joubert, the National Geographic Society has launched the Big Cats Initiative (BCI) to develop successful strategies to restore and safeguard Africa's lions, cheetahs, and leopards. The first phase of the program is focused on lion conservation, and aims to reverse their ongoing decline.

The BCI is accepting grant proposals for projects which fall under the following categories:

- Innovative projects with quick results for saving lions

- Anti-poaching programs
- Projects that test new technology
- Educational projects focused on communities



African lion (*Panthera leo*), CITES Appendix II © B. Maas

- Projects that establish economic incentives for local people to ensure long-term survival of lions

More information is available online at <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/big-cats-grant/>

SSN encourages African CITES Parties to apply for funding and to undertake activities with the goal of improving the conservation of lions. Please contact SSN if you need assistance.



Ivory Dealers Arrested in Yaoundé, Cameroon

The Centre Regional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife, working in collaboration with the forces of law and order, the Judiciary and SSN member the Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA), arrested two wildlife traffickers trying to sell four carved pieces of ivory and brought an Egyptian to court for complicity. The arrests occurred shortly after the Cameroonian authorities raided the forests of Dja, Lobo and Djoum and dismantled two

hunting camps used by poachers, leading to the seizure of half a ton of elephant meat, 12 ivory tusks, two elephant tails and various weapons left behind by poachers when discovered by the authorities (*allAfrica.com*, 21 October 2010). Under Cameroon's 1994 wildlife legislation, penalties can include a sentence of 3 to 10 years and/or a fine of up to 10 million FCFA (21,200 USD) for anyone found in possession of parts of dead or

live protected animal species, including elephants.

SSN warmly congratulates the Cameroonian authorities for this enforcement success.



Previous seizure of one ton of ivory in Douala, Cameroon © CRTV

Capacity-building corner

Useful publications:

- ◆ *World Atlas of Great Apes and Their Conservation* available for download at <<http://ia700103.us.archive.org/4/items/worldatlasofgrea05cald/worldatlasofgrea05cald.pdf>>

Useful websites:

- ◆ <www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/species/about_ssc/specialist_groups/directory_specialist_groups/directory_sg_plants/ssc_cactus_succulent/cites_species/> links to information on the CITES protection of succulent plants

- ◆ <<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/big-cats-grant/>> *The Big Cat Initiative*

Please contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau if you need help with translation.



Species Survival Network's Africa Regional Bureau

Working within CITES to facilitate the participation of African countries

Anglophone Africa:



Will Travers,
President



Shelley Waterland,
Coordinator

Francophone Africa:



Alice Stroud,
Coordinator

Species Survival Network
c/o Born Free Foundation
3 Grove House; Foundry Lane
Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 5PL,
UK
Tel: +44-403-240170
Fax: +441-403-327-838
E-mail: willtravers@ssn.org;
Shelley@bornfree.org.uk

Species Survival Network
511 NW 8th St
Corvallis, OR 97330
USA
Tel/Fax: 1 541 758 2049
Email:
alicestroud@ssn.org

www.ssn.org

Call for local representation

The Species Survival Network's Africa Regional Bureau is engaged in a capacity building effort which involves local non-governmental organizations and the Press. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need help with CITES issues, if you wish to submit article ideas for the newsletter or if you wish to apply for SSN membership.

SSN Member of the Month: Robin des Bois (Robin Hood)

Organization Profile:

Founder: Jacky Bonnemains

Date of Creation: 1985

Mission Statement: Protection of mankind and the environment, defense of threatened species, equitable and rational management of natural resources.

Offices Located in: France

Projects in Africa Located in: West Africa

Website: <http://www.robindesbois.org/>

Project of Regional Interest: Lobbying.

The protection of African wild fauna has been a priority for Robin des Bois since its creation in 1985. This organization has actively participated in CITES since 1988 and contributed to the adoption of CITES' international ban on ivory trade in 1989. It is particularly active in Europe where it provides decision-makers with information relevant to threats affecting wild species. Robin des Bois also promotes the use of "vegetable ivory," or tagua nut (*Phytalephas aequatorialis*), a substitute to animal ivory which comes from the fruit of a palm tree in the West Amazon basin. Vegetable ivory allows craftsmen specialized in ivory carvings to continue their trade while not harming African and Asian elephants. The organization also promotes use of another species of vegetable ivory that can be found in Africa, produced by the doum palm (*Hyphaene thebaica*).



Vegetable ivory / Ivoire végétal (*Phytalephas macrocarpa*). © Robin des Bois

Contact Information:

Charlotte Nithart
14 rue de l'Atlas
75019 Paris
France
Phone: +33 (1) 48 04 09 36
Fax: +33 (1) 48 04 56 41
Email: c.nithart@robindesbois.org

CITES Protected Species of the Month

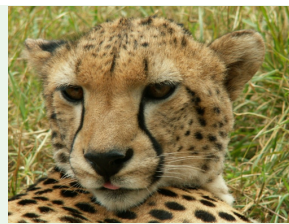


Guava baby (*Angraecum distichum*) included in CITES Appendix II © Eric Hunt

- ◆ **Name:** Guava baby; orchidée (*Angraecum distichum*)
- ◆ **CITES listing:** Appendix II
- ◆ **CITES export quotas:** No export quotas reported for 2010 (see <<http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2010/ExportQuotas2010.pdf>>)
- ◆ **CITES trade levels (WCMC Trade Database 2010):** Between 2000 and 2009, 59 live plants and 6 cultures were traded. Main exporter was South Africa

and main importer was Switzerland

- ◆ **IUCN category:** Not yet assessed
- ◆ **Threats:** Overcollection for ornamental plant trade; habitat loss
- ◆ **Range States:** Gabon, Cameroon, Madagascar
- ◆ **Useful resources:** IUCN Orchid Specialist Group <<http://www.orchidconservation.org/osg/>>; factsheet on the genus *Angraecum* <<http://www.angraecum.org/>>



Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*) listed in CITES Appendix I © B. Maas

- ◆ **Name:** Cheetah, guépard (*Acinonyx jubatus*)
- ◆ **CITES listing:** Appendix I
- ◆ **CITES export quotas:** Annual export quotas for live specimens and hunting trophies are as follows: Botswana: 5; Namibia: 150; Zimbabwe: 50 (see <http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2010/ExportQuotas2010.pdf>)
- ◆ **CITES trade levels (WCMC Trade Database 2010):** between 2000 and 2010, exports of cheetahs amounted to

28,364 specimens, 1,151 trophies, 847 live animals, 457 skins, 157 skulls, 64 skin pieces, 59 teeth, 23 bodies, 23 claws, 11 hair, 9 skeletons, 2 flasks, 2 garments, and 1 leather product. Main importers were Germany and the United States. Main exporters were Namibia and South Africa. All legal commercial trade must be in captive-bred specimens as the species is listed on Appendix I

- ◆ **IUCN category:** Vulnerable
- ◆ **Threats:** Habitat loss, direct persecution, disease and international trade
- ◆ **Range States:** Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Niger, Algeria, Mali
- ◆ **Useful resources:** IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group <http://www.catsg.org/catsgportal/cat-website/20_cat-website/home/index_en.htm>; cheetah factsheet <http://www.cheetah.org/?nd=cheetah_facts>