



Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento
y Uso de la Biodiversidad

Liga Periférico-Insurgentes Sur 4903
Col. Parques del Pedregal, Del. Tlalpan
14010 México, D.F.

Tel. (5255) 5004-5000
Fax. (5255) 5004-4931
www.conabio.gob.mx

Press release

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SPECIES

Guidelines for sustainability to be under the magnifying glass



Mexico, D.F.- International agreement among governments directs their efforts towards the sustainable use of the natural richness of the planet. At the end of April, Mexico will receive around 500 specialists of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ([CITES](#)) in Boca del Río, Veracruz. In the meeting, which will be held from the 28th of April to the 8th of May 2014, their Committees of Flora and of Fauna will provide scientific advice to the participants on the effect of commercial trade on the conservation of species of highest demand worldwide. More than 180 member countries of CITES were invited to contribute with their experiences regarding the sustainable trade of species.

[CITES](#) is an obligatory international agreement among governments; it came into force in 1975 and Mexico has formed a part since 1991. Its mission is to ensure that the international trade of species does not constitute a threat to the survival of their populations, but instead is conducted in a sustainable manner that promotes their conservation. In order to guarantee the sustainability of international trade in species, CITES requires the participation and support of specialists. Year after year, experts from all over the world meet through the CITES Committees of Flora and of Flora to provide up to date information that leads to concrete recommendations for management.



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One of the main causes of biodiversity loss is the overexploitation of species. [CITES](#) regulates the international trade of species with the aim that their populations are not subject to overexploitation. In order to achieve this, it manages a system of permits and certification for their exportation, re-exportation and importation. Regulation by CITES applies to whole animals or plants, alive or dead; their parts, such as bones, skeletons, egg shells, horns, teeth, skin or parts thereof, feathers, eggs, meat, wood, flowers, seeds, roots, etc.; also to derivatives, such as furniture, sculptures, musical instruments and clocks made of ivory (or with parts or incrustations); leather goods; medicines; essences and perfumes, etc.

At the global level, there are around 5,000 species of animals and 30,000 of plants regulated by [CITES](#), of which 500 species of animals and 1,400 of plants are Mexican. Species included in CITES are grouped into three lists known as Appendices, according to degree of threat. **Appendix I:** This includes species in danger of extinction. In general, commercial trade in these species is prohibited, as in the case of the jaguar (*Panthera onca*) or the scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*). This appendix includes 137 Mexican species. **Appendix II:** This includes species that are not necessarily in danger of extinction, but for which trade must be controlled in order to avoid this situation or because they resemble to certain species at risk, such as the disc cactus (*Strombocactus disciformis*). This appendix includes 1,700 Mexican species. **Appendix III:** This includes populations of species found in a CITES member country that has requested support for its protection. International trade is permitted but regulated in the country in question, e.g. the plain chachalaca (*Ortalis vetula*) for individuals originating in Guatemala and Honduras. This appendix includes 26 Mexican species, of which none have been proposed by Mexico.

When a country joins [CITES](#), it must designate at least one Administrative Authority to issue permits and register breeders and nurseries, among other aspects. Likewise, the country must designate a Scientific Authority that advises regarding the effects of international trade on the conservation status of species. In Mexico, the Administrative authority is SEMARNAT through the General Direction of Wildlife. The National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) has served since the year 2000 as the CITES Scientific Authority of Mexico; its mission is to see that the international trade of species included in the Appendices is regulated utilizing the best available scientific, technical and commercial evidence, with the aim of ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of the populations in question. In addition, Mexico has an Authority of Observance and Application of the Law, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA).

For the conservation and sustainable trade of our biodiversity, is the slogan of the 27th Meeting of the Fauna Committee and of the 21st Meeting of the Flora Committee, of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora ([CITES](#)) which will be held at the end of the month in Boca del Río, Veracruz. The slogan invites us to find out more about the international trade in species of flora and fauna and about the species under regulation. For more information, visit the portal Biodiversidad Mexicana of CONABIO www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/index.html.



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To find out more:

- [CITES in the portal Biodiversidad Mexicana: www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/index.html](http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/index.html)
 - [Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora: www.cites.org/esp](http://www.cites.org/esp)
 - [Leaflet on CITES: www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/veracruz/docs/TripticoCITES2014.pdf](http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/planeta/cites/veracruz/docs/TripticoCITES2014.pdf)
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Note to the editors:

The National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO) is a permanent interministerial commission; its purpose is to generate the knowledge required by Mexico on which to base public policies and societal decisions regarding biodiversity. For this reason, it is primarily dedicated to forming and updating the National Biodiversity Information System (SNIB, by its Spanish acronym), supporting projects and studies concerning the knowledge and use of biodiversity, providing advice to governmental agencies and those of other sectors, conducting special projects, disseminating knowledge regarding the biological richness, monitoring international conventions and providing services to the public. CONABIO was created by Presidential Decree on the 16th of March, 1992.

About the press release:

Susana María Rivas Ladrón de Guevara. Media, General Direction of Scientific Communication, CONABIO
Tel. (55) 5004 4972 mrivas@conabio.gob.mx

International cooperation

Biól. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz. General Director of International Cooperation and Implementation, CONABIO
Tel. (55) 5004 4937 hbenitez@conabio.gob.mx

About CONABIO in general:

Dr. Carlos Galindo Leal. General Director of Scientific Communication, CONABIO
Tel. (55) 5004 5005 cgalindo@conabio.gob.mx
