



CITES Appendix II Supports Sustainable Use

CITES permits provide assurance that the specimen in international trade has come from legal and sustainable sources.



© Alligator Trading Company, Dade City, Florida



Two examples of thriving international commerce in U.S. native species listed in CITES Appendix II are trade in American alligator products and American ginseng roots.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty ratified by most countries worldwide since it first entered into force in 1975. The treaty ensures that international wildlife trade is based on sustainable use and management of wild and captive populations of animals and plants. It monitors the status of these species in commercial trade among countries to safeguard these resources for the future.

CITES Appendix II is:

- NOT a list of species in which international trade is prohibited. *CITES Appendix-II species may be traded internationally if accompanied by appropriate permits.*
- NOT a list of endangered species. *CITES helps support natural resource management programs in range countries to prevent endangerment.*
- NOT a ban or boycott of trade. *CITES helps regulate and monitor trade for species vulnerable to overuse, and implements measures to attain sustainable harvest and legal trade.*

How It Works:

Exporters must obtain a CITES permit from their national CITES Management Authority for each shipment that contains CITES-listed specimens. A permit is based on findings made by the Management Authority and, in many cases, a non-detriment finding made by the Scientific Authority. In the United States, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is home to these two offices. Visit our

website at www.international.fws.gov, or contact us for application forms and information on obtaining permits. The CITES Secretariat maintains a list of national CITES authority addresses and contact information at www.cites.org.

Export permits for an Appendix-II specimen can be issued only when the following findings are made:

- **A scientific finding of non-detriment**—data or expert scientific opinion on the biological status of the species indicating that the export is not likely to be detrimental to species survival. Sustainable use is the essence of a CITES non-detriment finding. Depending on the species and the magnitude of exports anticipated, non-detriment findings are made either on specific applications or generically (for all potential exports collectively).

Generic findings may advise that a quota (maximum allowable number) or other export limitation mechanism be imposed to ensure that exports remain non-detrimental to the survival of the species. That quota is set by the exporting country. Countries are encouraged to notify the CITES Secretariat of national quotas. The Secretariat then informs other countries and posts the quotas on its website.

- **A finding that specimens were acquired legally**—evidence that specimens to be exported were not obtained in violation of any state, federal, or other jurisdictional law.

Live animal and plant shipments must be prepared so as to minimize risk of

injury, damage to health, or cruel treatment. In the case of air transport, animals must be shipped in accordance with International Air Transport Association (IATA) Live Animals Regulations.

Similarity of Appearance. Sometimes species are listed in Appendix II to enable effective regulation of other listed species. Usually, this type of listing is necessary when species, or their parts or products, are similar in appearance to other listed species and could cause identification difficulties. For these species, the scientific non-detriment finding is based on the risk their export presents to the listed species they resemble. The process also includes monitoring to ensure that these look-alike species are not adversely affected by trade.

Captive Breeding and Artificial Propagation. Because the impact of export on wild populations of listed animals and plants is a CITES concern, it is easier for CITES authorities to make the appropriate export findings for animals produced in captivity and plants propagated under controlled conditions. However, if the captive breeding and propagation operations draw on wild

populations to establish, expand, or maintain their breeding and propagation stock, the findings may be more complicated.

Potential Impacts of Appendix-II Export on Commercial Interests:

A CITES Scientific Authority may be unable to make a finding of non-detriment when species are vulnerable to harvest from the wild because of biological limitations; are harvested in quantities too large to ensure sustainability; or are not subject to a management program or other mechanism assuring sustainable use. When this happens, a permit application is denied or a zero export quota is set.

Benefits of Appendix-II Export Controls to Commercial Interests:

Longstanding international cooperation is the basis of CITES' effectiveness. The support of businesses, consumers, and the general public are vital to balancing conservation and trade needs within countries. Listing a species in Appendix II can produce the following benefits:

- Validation (through CITES permits) that the specimen has come from legal and sustainable sources, and has met international standards;

- Assurance that trade practices follow principles of sustainability;
- Uniform responsibility to address illegal trade, since all countries must meet the same CITES permitting conditions and enforce the listing;
- Increased public awareness of the important role CITES plays to conserve animals and plants, and a broader body of information on which to base consumer decisions;
- Assurance of long-term species sustainability through control of trade, and consumer confidence that species are being used in ways that are not harmful to their ecosystem.

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