

Inclusion of seeds of *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* in Appendix II

Proponent: Madagascar

Summary: *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* is a palm from Madagascar that was included in Appendix II in 2002. The listing was unannotated, so that all readily recognizable parts and derivatives were included in the listing. At CoP14 in 2007 a proposal (no 27) was put forward to amend, amongst other things, annotation #1. *B. madagascariensis* was erroneously included in a list of species that already had this annotation. When the proposal was discussed in Committee I at CoP14, the Secretariat sought clarification on the inclusion of this species in the proposal. The only recorded intervention was from Germany, who recommended that it be retained (CoP14 Com. I Rep. 5 (Rev. 1), p. 1). This part of the proposal being approved, *B. madagascariensis* was then included in the Appendices with new annotation #1, namely:

All parts and derivatives, except:

- a) seeds, spores and pollen (including pollinia);
- b) seedling or tissue cultures obtained *in vitro*, in solid or liquid media, transported in sterile containers;
- c) cut flowers of artificially propagated plants; and
- d) fruits and parts and derivatives thereof of artificially propagated plants of the genus *Vanilla*.

This change represented a substantive change in the listing for *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* with no, or at best extremely limited, consultation with the range State, and based on an error in a proposal. The supporting statement for the original proposal to list *B. madagascariensis* (along with a number of other Malagasy palms) submitted at CoP12 makes it clear that seeds (and possibly seedlings) are the only items known to be in trade from wild populations and were as such intended to be covered by the listing.

Beccariophoenix madagascariensis is a very rare palm known from a few sites in eastern Madagascar. The genus is endemic to Madagascar, and includes two other taxa, *B. alfredi* and an unnamed form. Neither is currently included in the CITES Appendices. *B. madagascariensis* is sought after in the international horticultural trade and is propagated by seed. Currently there are not known to be any seed-bearing plants outside Madagascar, nor any in cultivation in Madagascar, although cultivated plants have recently begun to flower abundantly and may be expected to seed soon (Dransfield, 2010). Virtually all trade recorded in the CITES trade database in the period 2003–2007 was in seeds, with Madagascar reporting the export of just over 70 kg, most in 2007 and 2008 (the latter probably based on permits issued in 2007 before the exemption resulting from the CoP14 decision came into force). All this was of wild origin. Importing countries, chiefly the USA, have reported import of a few kilogrammes of seeds and a few thousand seeds, almost all in the period 2003–2006 (presumably having stopped recording seeds from 2007 onwards).

In addition to being used in the horticultural trade, Dransfield and Beentje (1995) report that the species has been used locally in house construction and (destructively) harvested for the extraction of palm hearts, eaten locally. Young leaflets were sought after for the production of “manarano” hats which were formerly exported in quantity, harvest for this being believed to be a major cause of the present rarity. A very small number of leaves has been reported in trade under CITES, all for scientific purposes.

Analysis: This proposal restores what appears to have been the original intent of the listing of *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis*, in that it would now cover what is evidently the main part and derivative in trade. Seeds of *Beccariophoenix* spp. are relatively easy to distinguish from those of other palms, but not from each other. However under the terms of *Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev.)* seeds of *B. madagascariensis* would fit the definition of readily recognizable.

Reviewers:

W. Baker, J. Dransfield, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

References:

Dransfield, J. (2010). *In litt.* to IUCN/TRAFFIC analyses team, Cambridge.

Dransfield, J. and Beentje, H. (1995). *The Palms of Madagascar*. RBG Kew and International Palm Society. Xii + 475 pp.