

Inclusion of seeds of *Dypsis decaryi* in Appendix II

Proponent: Madagascar

Summary: *Dypsis decaryi*, known in CITES standard taxonomy as *Neodypsis decaryi*, is a palm species endemic to Madagascar, where it is found in one small area in the south-east. Part of the population occurs in a protected area covering 500 ha (a parcel of land forming part of the much larger Andohahela National Park complex), the remainder just outside the protected area. The palm grows on slopes in dry forest or bush on stony soil at altitudes of 80–600 m.

Neodypsis decaryi is very widely grown as an ornamental in tropical and subtropical countries around the world, including in Madagascar itself. It is propagated by seed, which has been collected from the wild population and exported in large quantities. Seed from plants cultivated outside Madagascar is also widely available and is almost certainly in international trade. Within its range the leaves are used for thatching and the fruits eaten by children (Dransfield and Beentje, 1995). In the mid-1990s, the population outside the protected area was reported to be declining, chiefly because of fire and grazing by livestock. Inside the protected area, the population appeared secure (Ratsirarson *et al.*, 1996).

The species was included in Appendix II in 1975. The listing did not have an annotation, meaning that under the terms of the Convention, all parts and derivatives were included. In 1985, it was annotated with the general annotation applied to Appendix II-listed plants at that time, which amongst other things excluded seeds. This may have been unwitting, as seeds were, and always have been, the only wild specimens regularly in trade. The listing is currently covered by annotation #1. There is no indication of any large-scale collection of wild plants for international trade.

Despite their being exempted from the provisions of the Convention, some trade in seeds is included in the CITES trade database. Madagascar reported the export of 700 kg of seeds in the period 1989–1990 and 570 kg in the period 2006–2008 (the latter declared as of wild origin, with no source provided for the former), and the USA reported export of 1500 seeds to Colombia in 1989.

Analysis: This proposal is to alter the scope of an Appendix-II listing in terms of the parts and derivatives to which it applies. It does not alter the species listing itself, so that the criteria in *Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14)* are not relevant.

Seeds are the primary commodity in international trade from the wild population and harvesting of seed could, in theory, have an impact on the population (although is believed not to be detrimental at present). There is trade in seed harvested from artificially propagated plants in non-range States. This trade has no impact on wild populations. To ease enforcement, the proposal could be amended to refer only to Madagascar populations.

Six other species of palm from Madagascar are currently included in Appendix II without an annotation, so that all their parts and derivatives (including seeds) are covered by the provisions of the Convention. A seventh, *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis*, is currently covered by annotation #1, which exempts various parts and derivatives, including seeds. It is the subject of proposal Prop. 32, to remove the annotation, at CoP15. Annotation #1 is also the subject of a proposal (Prop. 25) to be considered at the present CoP.

Seeds of *Neodypsis decaryi* are similar to those of several other *Neodypsis* (or *Dypsis*) species, but under the terms of *Resolution Conf 9.6 (Rev.)* would be

classified as readily recognizable.

Reviewers:

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

References:

- Ratsirarson, J., Silander Jr, J.A. and Richard, A.F. (1995). Conservation and management of a threatened Madagascar palm species *Neodypsis decaryi*, Jumelle. *Conservation Biology* 10 (1): 40–52.
- Dransfield, J. and Beentje, H. (1995). *The Palms of Madagascar*. RBG Kew and International Palm Society. Xii + 475 pp.