

## Transfer of the Southern Boobook (Norfolk Island) *Ninox novaeseelandiae undulata* from Appendix I to Appendix II

### Proponent: Australia

**Summary:** The Norfolk Island Southern Boobook *Ninox novaeseelandiae undulata*, is a subspecies of owl that was once found on Norfolk Island and probably on the adjacent Philip Island, external territories of Australia. Extensive conversion of the native forest for agriculture has made the habitat unsuitable for the owl, leading to precipitous population decline. The last known genetically pure female of the subspecies was recorded in 1996. Surveys in 2005 found no birds of the subspecies on either Norfolk Island or Philip Island<sup>1</sup>.

The parent species, *Ninox novaeseelandiae* (as recognised under CITES taxonomy) occurs in Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste. Individuals of *Ninox novaeseelandiae novaeseelandiae* were introduced to Norfolk Island in 1987. Cross-breeding with the remaining female *N. n. undulata* resulted in a small hybrid population which is managed and subject to intensive monitoring.

*Ninox novaeseelandiae undulata* was included in Appendix I in 1977. In 1979 all owls (order Strigiformes) other than those included in Appendix I were included in Appendix II. No trade in the subspecies has been recorded in the CITES Trade Database. Extremely limited trade in *Ninox novaeseelandiae* has been recorded since the listing of Strigiformes; since 2002, Australia has exported 18 scientific specimens according to the CITES Trade Database.

*Ninox novaeseelandiae undulata* is listed as endangered in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999), which regulates trade in CITES-listed and Australian native wildlife and their products. Export of a live Australian native mammal, bird, reptile or amphibian is strictly prohibited for commercial purposes but they may be exported for specific non-commercial purposes (e.g. for research, education, exhibition or a pet bird).

**Analysis:** The genetically pure subspecies *Ninox novaeseelandiae undulata* is evidently extinct. It was never recorded in trade; trade in its parent species *N. novaeseelandiae* has been extremely limited, with no commercial trade reported from a range State. The remaining hybrid population (*N. n. novaeseelandiae* x *N. n. undulata*) is managed and intensively monitored. In the unlikely event of *N. n. undulata* being rediscovered, Australian national legislation would prohibit its export for commercial purposes. All trade in *N. novaeseelandiae* (and its hybrids) will come under the provisions of CITES Appendix II and Australian national legislation, which prohibits export of live specimens for commercial purposes. It would appear that the precautionary measures in Annex 4 of *Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP 16)* have been met.

### References:

Information not referenced in the Summary section is from the Supporting Statement.

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<sup>1</sup> Christian, M.L., Holdaway, R.N., Smith J.L. and Coyne P.D. (2012) *A Comparative Atlas of Bird Distribution in the Norfolk Island Group South West Pacific Ocean 1978-2005*. Norfolk Island Norfolk Island Flora & Fauna Society Inc.