

Transfer of Tomato Frog *Dyscophus antongilii* from Appendix I to Appendix II

Proponent: Madagascar

Summary: The Tomato Frog *Dyscophus antongilii* is an attractive orange-red coloured frog, one of three members of the genus *Dyscophus*, all endemic to Madagascar. The two other members of the genus, *D. insularis* and *D. guineti*, are the subjects of Prop. 38, for inclusion in Appendix II; neither is currently listed in the Appendices.

The species has a relatively wide distribution in the east and northeast of Madagascar. The precise limits of the range are uncertain, in part because of possible confusion with the very similar *D. guineti*. Although there is no overall population estimate, one expert has noted that based on a mark-recapture study in part of the range, and the life history characteristics of the species, it is reasonable to presume that populations may reach hundreds of thousands individuals¹. In 2008 it was said to be locally abundant, especially in and around Maroantsetra² and in the Ambatovaky Special Reserve region. Urban expansion is taking place in parts of the range, notably around Maroantsetra and this may be leading to some reduction in population³. However, the species is said to be adaptable, and has been recorded in urban areas and other altered habitats. It breeds several times per year after rainfalls, and lays 1000-15,000 eggs.

Dyscophus antongilii was included in CITES Appendix I in 1987 as it was harvested for the international pet trade and believed at the time to have a restricted range⁴. The CITES Trade Database includes a small amount of exports from Madagascar between 2000 and 2007, including 75 live frogs, and 400 specimens for scientific purposes. There was a small amount of reported trade between non-range States (76 live frogs over the same period, all bred in captivity or born in captivity); the majority of which were exported by Germany or Latvia. No trade in *D. antongilii* has been reported to CITES since 2007 in wild, or captive-bred specimens. However, a seizure in Malaysia in 2010 of 47 *D. antongilii* of Madagascan origin indicates demand for the species continues⁵. The similar species *D. guineti* and *D. insularis* are traded in some volume (see analysis for Prop. 38).

Dyscophus antongilii is currently listed as a protected species in Madagascar (Category I Class I Decree 2006-400) which means harvest is only allowed for scientific purposes⁶. Under domestic legislation, a transfer to Class II, which would allow for some harvest for commercial purposes outside of protected areas, would necessitate additional studies including population inventories⁶. Current the population is not actively monitored nor is it the subject of specific management measures. The Supporting Statement notes that the Madagascar Scientific Authority will recommend conservative quotas for commercial collecting, but does not provide any detail on any proposed export quota. All Madagascan amphibian species currently included in Appendix II are subject to conservative export quotas⁷.

Dyscophus antongilii is classified in the IUCN Red List as Near Threatened (2008).

Analysis: *Dyscophus antongilii* does not have a restricted range nor a small population. There are no indications that the population is undergoing a marked decline. The species does not therefore appear to meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I.

The precautionary measures in Annex 4 of *Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)* should be met. A conservative collection quota is proposed, only to be permitted once population inventories have taken place. Currently other Appendix-II listed Madagascan amphibian species are exported under similar measures. Export of these other species has been closely scrutinised by Parties, and has been agreed to demonstrate compliance with Article IV of the Convention⁸ and therefore one would expect trade of this species, if transferred to Appendix II to comply with Article IV as well. Inclusion in Appendix II of the similar *Dyscophus guineti* and *D. insularis*, as proposed by Madagascar in Prop. 38, would help ensure enforcement controls for this species were effective.

Reviewers: M. D. Kusri and C. Ratsimbazafy.

References:

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

¹ Andreone, F. (2016) *In litt.* to the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses Team, Cambridge, UK.

² Raxworthy, C.J., Vences, M., Andreone, F. & Nussbaum, R. (2008) *Dyscophus antongilii*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2008.

³ Ratsimbazafy, C. (2016) *In litt.* to the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses Team, Cambridge, UK.

⁴ Andreone, F., Mercurio, V. & Mattioli, F. (2006) Between environmental degradation and international pet trade: conservation strategies for the threatened amphibians of Madagascar. *Natura – Soc. it. Sci. nat. Museo civ. Stor. Nat. Milano*, (Milano, Italy) 95: 81-96.

⁵ TRAFFIC (2010) Hundreds of Malagasy tortoises seized in Malaysia. <http://www.traffic.org/home/2010/7/16/hundreds-of-malagasy-tortoises-seized-in-malaysia.html>. Viewed on 26th May 2016.

⁶ Ramiandrivo (2016) *In litt.* to TRAFFIC.

⁷ CITES (2016) The CITES export quotas. <https://cites.org/eng/resources/quotas/index.php> Viewed on 28th June.

⁸ See for example: <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/26/sum/E-AC26-SumRec.pdf>.