

CoP17 Prop 49. [Cuba] Inclusion of all species of Cuban land snails in the genus *Polymita* in Appendix I

There are six species of land snails in the genus *Polymita*, all of them endemic to Cuba: *Polymita brocheri*, *P. muscarum*, *P. picta*, *P. sulphurosa*, *P. venusta* and *P. versicolor*. The snails are arboreal and adapted to live on a range of plants. In the wild, *Polymita* are estimated to live between 12 and 19 months, and individuals (which are hermaphroditic) breed only once. The 2-3cm shells of *Polymita* are colourful and are generally considered beautiful and are sold in handicrafts and to shell collectors. Cuba banned export in 1943. In recent years, Customs authorities in Cuba have seized shells en route to the USA, although the bulk of trade may be destined for Europe and Asia. One species, *P. sulphurosa*, which is apparently rare, has a limited and fragmented range, with evidence of a marked historic decline appears to meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I. Although habitat reduction has induced population declines in the five other species, they do not currently appear to meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I in Annex 1 of Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16).

Some of the other species have distinctive patterning and colouration, making them relatively easy to identify, but in some species (e.g. *P. venusta* and *P. picta*) there is considerable intraspecific variation, so that enforcement agents may have difficulty identifying specimens to species level with confidence. There is no provision for listing species in Appendix I as lookalikes under the current criteria. However all species, except *P. brocheri* which has a distinctive shape to its shell, would appear to meet the criteria in Annex 2b of Res Conf. 9.24 (Rev CoP16). Listing the entire genus in the Appendices would help address any enforcement difficulties.

ACCEPT