

**CoP17 Prop 56 [Gabon and the European Union] Inclusion of *Guibourtia demeusei*, *G. pellegriniana* and *G. tessmannii* in Appendix II with annotation #4**

All three *Guibourtia* species in this proposal are traded internationally as *Bubinga*, and as a substitute for *Hongmu* timbers in China. Available trade data, often reported under trade names is rarely species specific. The species, particularly *G. tessmannii* and *G. pellegriniana*, are known to be in demand internationally for their rosewood-type timber, the market for which has grown very rapidly in Asia, particularly China, in recent years. There are indications of illegal harvest and trade, the volume of which is not fully quantified but which may be relatively high.

While information on the species has improved in recent years, there is still insufficient data to determine if these species meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix II. Recent assessments in forestry concessions in Gabon found extremely low stocks of *G. tessmannii* and *G. pellegriniana* combined that could be harvested on a sustainable basis, while inventories in Cameroon have found similarly low stocking densities. A considerably higher density of *G. demeusei* has been reported in the Central African Republic. Given the evident scarcity of harvestable-sized *G. tessmannii* and *G. pellegriniana*, it is likely that current harvest for export of these species is exceeding the rate at which such trees are entering the harvestable population. This has led to probable commercial extinction of these species and it is unlikely these species will be able to sustain the international trade. Reported harvest and export of *G. demeusei* in several range States increased around 2009 and 2010, which may be associated both with increasing demand for rosewoods in general at that time, and declining availability of *G. tessmannii* and *G. pellegriniana*. The trade has shifted from logs to sawn timber, due to the log export bans for Cameroon and Gabon, and a harvest suspension for Cameroon. Illegal harvesting and illegality is suspected to continue to occur due to mis-declaration of exports.

Given the difficulties in distinguishing between *G. tessmannii* and *G. pellegriniana*, if either were to be included in Appendix II, then the other would meet the criteria in Annex 2b of the Resolution as lookalikes. Information regarding the similarity of these species to *G. demeusei* is conflicting but all three may be traded under the same generic trade name. Since there are between 14 and 16 species in the genus *Guibourtia*, this may lead to enforcement issues. To support strengthened international controls such as an Appendix II listing, proponent States should also consider the development of identification guides to avoid confusion between all these *Guibourtia* species, range States should also be encouraged to capture more species information at harvest and in trade, including for the whole genus so as to monitor for the possibility of future substitutions with other *Guibourtia* species for the market.

Listing of these three species in Appendix II will give added impetus to the range States to conduct non-detriment findings to ensure the sustainability of the trade and increase revenue from legal trade.

**ACCEPT**