

Inclusion of Algerian Fir *Abies numidica* in Appendix I

Proponent: Algeria

Summary: *Abies numidica*, the Algerian Fir, is an evergreen coniferous tree which grows to a height of 20-35m¹. It is native to Algeria where it occurs only at 1800-2000m elevation on Djebel Babor, part of the Petite Kabylie Mountain Range. The total extent of forests containing the species is estimated at less than 30km² with the fir only occupying a small portion of this. Access to the area is highly restricted because of security problems and there are no recent population estimates. A 2011 report stated that the number of trees had halved since the 1950s, although the basis of this is not known².

The area is a Nature Reserve to which entry is controlled; wardens try to prevent timber extraction, hunting and livestock grazing although these activities apparently still persist, with grazing in particular said to seriously affect plant regeneration. Fires are also reportedly a hazard².

A number of specific conservation proposals have been suggested and relevant authorities are said to be very supportive of action to protect the site, but no more recent information is available regarding its current status and management¹.

Algerian Fir is not exploited for timber³ but it is grown as an ornamental tree in parks and larger gardens, being valued among firs for its drought tolerance and attractive appearance⁴. However it is sensitive to low temperatures and to air pollution in urban environments³. It is mostly cultivated in countries around the Mediterranean Sea, where it is sometimes planted in hedges as it takes trimming well³. Few cultivars are known. The species hybridises readily with other *Abies* spp., so that seed collected from cultivated trees is often hybrid³. As a result the species has reportedly mostly been grown from seed collected *in situ*, although some nurseries use grafting techniques as a method of propagation⁵. There are no indications of wild collection of plants, nor is it known if seed is collected from wild plants at present.

This species is reported to be present in 72 botanic gardens⁶. Availability of the species on-line appears to be very limited.

This species is classified in the IUCN Red List as Critically Endangered (2011).

Analysis: The species has a restricted range and has a population which is apparently declining, so that it appears to meet the biological criteria for listing in Appendix I. If trade from the wild population does occur, which is not known, it is almost certainly in seeds. Unless very substantial quantities were collected, or harvest were destructive (through felling of the trees) such trade would be highly unlikely to have an effect on the wild population. It is not clear therefore whether the species meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I.

A listing with no annotation would mean all parts and products were included.

References:

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

¹ Yahi, N., Knees, S.G. & Gardner, M.F. (2013) *Abies numidica*. Threatened Conifers of the World <http://threatenedconifers.rbge.org.uk/taxa/details/104>. Viewed June 2016.

² World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (2011) Northern Africa: Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. <http://www.worldwildlife.org/ecoregions/pa0513>. Viewed June 2016.

³ Conifers of the World (2016) Pinaceae *Abies numidica*. <http://herbaria.plants.ox.ac.uk/bol/conifers/CONIFERS/Species/Record/1323>. Viewed June 2016.

⁴ American Conifer Society (2016) *Abies numidica*. <http://conifersociety.org/conifers/conifer/abies/numidica/>. Viewed June 2016.

⁵ Haddow, G. (2016) *In litt.* to IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses Team, Cambridge, UK.

⁶ BGCI (2016) Plant Search. http://www.bgci.org/plant_search.php. Viewed June 2016.