

PROJECT NAME: Strengthening the Implementation and Effective Enforcement of CITES for Timber in North America

1. **Project duration:** from November 2021 to November 2023 (24 months)
2. **Budget (C\$):** 535,000
3. **Short statement of the issue(s) under this topic, need/gap identified; the project objective(s) and activities to address the issue; and expected outcomes and benefits/beneficiaries:**

CITES provides crucial mechanisms to ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants is carried out in a controlled manner that does not threaten the survival of species. Appendix II of CITES covers species that are not necessarily threatened with extinction, but for which trade must still be controlled in order to avoid the possibility that they become endangered. Appendix II also includes so-called "look-alike species"—whose morphology closely resembles that of species listed for conservation. The CEC can help reduce illegal trade in CITES Appendix II timber species in North America by bringing together and leveraging the knowledge and roles of management and scientific authorities, enforcement officers, wood identification experts and forensic scientists, and other relevant experts to address specific needs within CITES regulations and enforcement activities. Specifically, this project will develop information on CITES enforcement relevant to the trinational North American context, enhance the capacity of enforcement officials to identify CITES timber species reaching our borders, explore methods and systems for tracking timber species in trade, and support scientific assessment of a new CITES source code (related to timber species). These efforts will strengthen communication and coordination between key actors throughout North American CITES implementation, provide them with invaluable information to strengthen CITES enforcement, and contribute to addressing the root causes of illegal trafficking of timber species.

4. **Select the strategic pillar(s) from the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan that the project addresses:**

- Clean Air, Land and Water
- Preventing and Reducing Pollution in the Marine Environment
- Circular Economy and Sustainable Materials Management
- Shared Ecosystems and Species
- Resilient Economies and Communities
- Effective Enforcement of Environmental Laws

5. Describe how the project uses strategic, cross-cutting approaches in its implementation (i.e., Innovative and Effective Solutions and/or Diverse and Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement and Public Participation, including gender and diversity effects and opportunities, and youth):

This project focuses on Appendix II timber species, including look-alike species, which must be better monitored to ensure that they are not adversely affected by international trade. To do so, this project will facilitate the exchange of expertise between relevant stakeholders, including enforcement officers and forensics experts, on recent and innovative developments in identification and traceability solutions, including software, devices and forensic technologies, that can facilitate improved North American identification, tracking, and enforcement of CITES Appendix II specimens in international trade.

6. Explain how the project can achieve more impact through trinational cooperation:

The CEC is well positioned to bring together experts and government officials from Canada, Mexico and the United States to create networks, share experience, develop knowledge on CITES implementation and enforcement related to trade in wood products from CITES-listed timber species (e.g., species identification), and examine similarities and differences in national legislation and regulations. Building on CEC's 2017–2018 project "Sustainable Trade of Priority Species in North America" and leveraging each country's strengths, this project will improve CITES implementation and prevent and reduce illegal timber trade in North America.

7. Describe how the project complements, or avoids duplication with, other national or international work:

This project leverages ongoing national and international work on forest legality and illegal logging. Specifically, members from this CEC working group are coordinating with, and in many cases, are directly participating in complementary programs and initiatives, such as the North American Forest Commission, the CITES Plants Committee Working Group on timber identification, US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), World Forest ID (WFID), the Canadian Wood Identification Research Project, and other joint efforts. Collaboration amongst the various working groups, initiatives and programs ensures complementarity of our actions to accelerate adoption of best practices and avoids duplicative work.

8. Describe how the project engages traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) experts or Tribal/First Nations/Indigenous communities, if applicable:

No in-depth engagement with TEK experts or Tribal/First Nations/Indigenous communities is expected during the implementation of this project.

9. Describe how the project engages new audiences or partners, if applicable:

This project involves possible communications and collaborations with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Interpol, the North American Forest Commission and the Global Illegal Logging and Associated Trade Program.

10. **Identify the designated partner agencies or organizations committed to implementing this project, as well as other organizations that could be involved, or benefit from it, including through outreach efforts, collaborations or partnerships (e.g., federal agencies, other levels of government, academia, NGOs, the private sector, civil society, and youth):**

Lead agencies or organizations	Country
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) - Wildlife Enforcement Directorate	Canada
Natural Resources Canada–Canadian Forest Service (CFS)	Canada
<i>Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (Semarnat)</i>	Mexico
<i>Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (Profepa)</i>	Mexico
<i>Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (Conabio)</i>	Mexico
US Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service (USFS)	United States
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	United States

Other organizations/individuals (if applicable)	Country
US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	United States
US Trade Representative	United States
US Department of State, Office of Conservation and Water in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES/ECW)	United States
US Environmental Protection Agency	United States
US Department of Homeland Security	United States
US Department of Justice	United States
<i>Comisión Nacional Forestal</i>	Mexico
Wildlife Conservation Society (Latin America Coordination for Wildlife Trafficking; Mr. Adrian Reuter, Regional Coordinator)	United States-Mexico
National Autonomous University of Mexico (Department of Botany)	Mexico
Chapingo Autonomous University (Laboratory of Wood Anatomy and Identification)	Mexico
<i>Administración General de Aduanas—SAT</i>	Mexico

11. In the following table, describe: the project objective(s) and the activities and subtasks planned to achieve the objective(s); the corresponding outputs, expected results and how they will be measured (performance measures); baselines (if known), and targets by end of the project; and the timeline and budget.

OBJECTIVE 1	Increase understanding of national contexts for CITES implementation in North America, especially relating to the verification process for legal trade of wood products.	
Activity 1 Budget: \$55,000	Share information on, and assess similarities and differences between national legislation, regulations, and processes for implementation of CITES by enforcement officers, with particular reference to laws and regulations specifically related to what information needs to be verified for traded wood products and the process for that verification. The results of this activity will inform activities 2 and 3.	
Output(s)	Report compiling relevant national legislation, regulations, and processes for implementation of CITES by enforcement officers in North America, with particular reference to what information needs to be verified for traded wood products and the process for that verification	
Expected results, performance measures	This information is used by enforcement officers, forensics experts and other actors within North America to facilitate collaboration and to develop training curricula for enforcement officers.	
Baseline (current status), if known	N/A	
Target (by project end)	N/A	
Subtask 1.1	Conduct a survey and organize online meetings to exchange and compare information on national legislation, regulations, and processes for implementation of CITES by enforcement officers.	First half of Year 1
Subtask 1.2	Develop a report of the findings, including recommendations for activities 2 and 3 (internal document).	First half of Year 1
OBJECTIVE 2	Increase the knowledge and capacity to intercept suspicious wood products of CITES-regulated species at North American borders.	
Activity 2 Budget: \$205,000	Provide training, including information on novel tools and risk assessment, to enforcement officers to improve their ability to determine if a timber import is at high risk of being illegal.	

Output(s)	Training on identification tools and risk assessment for suspicious wood products of CITES-regulated species.	
Expected results, performance measures	An increased number of enforcement officers with capacity to identify and assess risk related to wood products at North American borders.	
Baseline (current status), if known	N/A	
Target (by project end)	12 new officers trained per country	
Subtask 2.1	Develop the curriculum and materials for training enforcement officers (including tools, as appropriate and feasible), in close collaboration with enforcement officials in the three countries, to ensure their needs and interests are taken into account.	Second half of year 1
Subtask 2.2	Organise and conduct training sessions, following a “train the trainer” model.	First half of year 2
OBJECTIVE 3	Form an alliance of laboratories to facilitate collaboration on wood identification between the three countries.	
Activity 3 Budget: \$115,000	Form an alliance of the laboratories providing forensic and research capacity for wood products identification, in order to harmonize databases, share reference samples, and facilitate accurate, rapid and expedient species identification of timber evidence.	
Output(s)	Hold exchanges and training sessions with laboratories in the three countries to share reference samples and data, facilitate identification of timber evidence, and develop related standard operating procedures.	
Expected results, performance measures	An alliance of laboratories from the three countries will have been created and exchanges have taken place.	
Baseline (current status), if known	No such alliance currently exists, and no exchanges of expertise and samples have yet taken place at the North American level.	
Target (by project end)	N/A	

Subtask 3.1	Develop an alliance among forensic and research laboratories that conduct timber testing, beginning with each country identifying who is or will be doing timber identification for CITES enforcement and optimum choices for laboratory equipment.	First half of Year 1
Subtask 3.2	Conduct a meeting that brings together relevant scientists and staff from the identified institutions.	Year 1
Subtask 3.3	Determine priority species and the number of validated samples needed and available.	Year 1
Subtask 3.4	Develop and implement approaches for sharing samples and harmonizing relevant wood identification reference databases.	Years 1 and 2
Subtask 3.5	Assist each country in capacity development for priority taxa.	Years 1 and 2
Subtask 3.6	Conduct a meeting with scientists from alliance laboratories for sharing of tools and methodologies for wood identification.	Year 2
Subtask 3.7	Conduct virtual and in-person meetings and training sessions with wood identification scientists and enforcement officers to share samples, data, and knowledge on wood identification techniques.	Years 1 and 2
Subtask 3.8	Publish a case study (e.g., brochure) highlighting the outcomes of this activity.	Year 2
OBJECTIVE 4	Improve North America's capacity to track the origin of timber in trade.	
Activity 4	Identify potential methods and processes, exchange best practices, and deliver recommendations to improve North American capacity to track the origin of timber in trade.	
Budget: \$90,000		
Output(s)	Report on best practices and recommendations to improve North American capacity to track the origin of timber in trade.	
Expected results, performance measures	This information is used by the three countries to inform decisions to improve the tracking of the origin of timber in trade.	
Baseline (current status), if known	N/A	

Target (by project end)	N/A	
Subtask 4.1	Establish a technical working group, including enforcement officers.	Year 1
Subtask 4.2	Carry out research and exchanges of best practices to identify methods and processes to track wood products in trade.	Year 1
Subtask 4.3	Develop a report and recommendations to improve North American capacity to track the origin of timber in trade.	Year 2
OBJECTIVE 5	Develop guidance on CITES source code Y implementation and conducting non-detriment findings for tree species.	
Activity 5 Budget: \$70,000	Coordinate exchanges and produce information to increase guidance to CITES Parties on CITES regulation and enforcement in North America.	
Output(s)	Report on guidelines and tools on source code Y implementation and conducting non-detriment findings (NDFs).	
Expected results, performance measures	This information is used by the three countries to inform the implementation of CITES source code Y and conducting NDFs and shared with the rest of CITES parties in order to contribute to better implementation of the Convention worldwide.	
Baseline (current status), if known	No specific guidance exists on CITES source code Y.	
Target (by project end)	N/A	
Subtask 5.1	Organize and conduct a workshop and other consultations, as needed, to develop guidance on source code Y implementation and conducting non-detriment findings (NDF).	Year 1
Subtask 5.2	Publish a report of the findings, guidance and tools on CITES source code Y implementation and conducting NDFs, based on the workshop outcomes.	First half of Year 2

12. Describe post-project expected impacts:

Expected impact (by when: month, year)	SMART performance measure(s)
By December 2025, an increased number of enforcement officers will have received training to identify and assess risk related to wood products traded at North American borders.	Number of frontline officers trained, by country
By December 2025, ongoing exchanges and sharing of reference samples and data between alliance laboratories will have taken place to facilitate identification of timber evidence.	Number of meetings between alliance laboratories Number of samples shared
By December 2025, the information produced through this project will have proved useful to the CITES Parties and other stakeholders in informing implementation and enforcement efforts.	Perceived usefulness of the information (through survey)