

DOI / CCAD / CITES Program

Since 2008, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) CITES capacity building program has improved implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in Central America and the Dominican Republic. In partnership with the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), DOI provides technical assistance, training, and support to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic to better control the trade of endangered species.



The program is carried out through an annual work plan developed with input from all countries that identifies high-priority national, bi-national and regional activities. Activities are coordinated through the CITES Professionals Committee, which meets three times a year to evaluate, monitor and share the progress of the work plan.

Funding for the program is provided by the United States Department of State under the Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement Environmental Cooperation Program

DOI/CCAD/CITES Program Objectives

1. Strengthened CITES legal framework in CAFTA-DR countries
2. Improved performance of CITES Management, Scientific, and Enforcement Authorities
3. Strengthened protection of CITES species in their habitats
4. Coordinated CITES capacity building efforts in the region



Collaborative activities at the national, bi-national and regional level include:

- Technical assistance from the U.S. Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Specialized assistance in updating laws, decrees and regulations
- Capacity building workshops and coordination meetings
- Development of training tools using new technology (interactive tutorials, online manuals, websites)
- Development of manuals and guidelines for improving the control of trade and reducing the illegal trafficking of endangered species
- Support countries in developing species studies to update scientific information and improve decision making
- Facilitating regional, national and bi-national exchanges to improve coordination and collaboration in the region

Partners

- The CITES Professionals Committee: comprised of CITES Management Authorities from CAFTA-DR countries, CCAD and DOI
- Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD)
- CAFTA-DR environment points of contact
- U.S. Agencies (FWS, DOJ, NOAA)
- CITES Secretariat in Geneva
- NGOs (TRAFFIC, Humane Society International) and local communities



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WORK PROGRAM CAFTA-DR CITES CCAD DOI PARTNER

DEPARTAMENTO DEL INTERIOR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS (DOI)
COMISIÓN CENTROAMERICANA DE AMBIENTE Y DESARROLLO (CCAD)

Supporting the Region to improve the implementation of CITES
in combating illegal trade, protect endangered species and their habitats



MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

DEVELOPMENT OF TOOLS, RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

- Illustrated identification guide of endangered species in El Salvador
- Index of Guatemalan fish species
- Update on regional listings of CITES Wild Flora and Fauna in Central America and the Dominican Republic
- Regional CITES Economic Valuation Study in five CAFTA-DR countries
- Tillandsia population study in Guatemala
- Sea Turtle Conservation Action Plan in El Salvador
- Interactive CITES training Course (developed specifically for Central America)
- Costa Rica and Nicaragua Bi-national Operating Manual
- Guatemalan Bromeliad Illustrated Guide (genus Tillandsia)
- Iguana Identification Guide (genus Ctenosaura)
- Survey of Status, Trade, and Exploitation of Central American Iguanas

IMPROVEMENT OF LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Developed and promulgated CITES regulations in El Salvador, which helped El Salvador move from Category II to Category I compliance with the Convention
- Established the structure of the Central American Wildlife Enforcement Network (ROAVIS)
- Drafted amendments for the "CITES Implementation in Honduras" Act
- Drafted amendments for CITES wildlife regulations in Costa Rica.
- Implemented plans for seizures of illegal wildlife trafficking in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, with more than 3,600 specimens seized.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN CITES SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT .

The training program has engaged more than 1100 government officials in more than 20 workshops in each CAFTA-DR country. Among these included:

- Workshops for trainers in CAFTA-DR countries who later led national training programs.

- Law enforcement training for 80 prosecutors, customs officials, police, and CITES Authorities in the Regional Workshop to Enhance Wildlife Law Enforcement, part of the Central American Wildlife Enforcement Network initiative.
- Technology training for 40 officials from CITES Authorities, trade facilitation officials, and customs officials, were trained at the Electronic Permits and New Technologies Regional Workshop.
- Scientific training for 40 officials, including fisheries authorities, CITES Scientific Authorities, and scientists from throughout the region, on methodologies and tools to make non-detriment findings during the NDF Capacity- Building Workshop in the Dominican Republic.
- The CITES Legal and Operational Regional Workshop provided training to 80 officials on managing and enforcing the convention in Central America and the Dominican Republic.
- 20 national training workshops have been implemented in the CAFTA-DR countries from 2009-2011 using tools developed by DOI-CCAD and the CITES Secretariat in Geneva.

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

- Established two information technology systems modules that manage procedures for issuing CITES permits in national offices.
- Established two online databases that include CITES records of activities at the national offices of selected countries.
- Published two websites with CITES information to share procedures, requirements and other relevant topics with the public.
- Provided technological equipment to establish information management systems for CITES databases (servers, computers, scanners, licenses etc.)

REGIONAL COORDINATION

The DOI-CCAD partnership has been successful in:

- Facilitating the support of international organizations to CAFTA-DR countries on various topics (INTERPOL, UNODC, IUCN, TRAFFIC, HSI, UNEP-WCMC, IBAMA, OMA, CONABIO)
- Coordinating and facilitating regional meetings that improved planning of CITES activities in Central America and Dominican Republic.
- Supporting the participation of the CITES Secretariat and its officers in training workshops, meetings, and advice on legal and technical matters in the region.
- Providing advice and technical assistance for the inclusion of the Iguana (genus Ctenosaura) in CITES Appendix II at the 15th Conference, Doha, Qatar 2010.

2012 PROJECTION:

- Strengthen the capacities of the Central American Wildlife Enforcement Network (ROAVIS) through specialized law enforcement training
- Support for improved law enforcement coordination at the national level in each country
- Develop a CITES portal on the CCAD website to improve program sustainability and information sharing
- Support selected countries in the establishment of information management systems for CITES databases that will eventually link to the comprehensive regional system
- US based training on protocols and procedures for wildlife inspection at ports of entry.

