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*The world's largest plant conservation network*



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# Module 5: CITES and Botanic Gardens



# CITES and Botanic Gardens

This Module will cover:

- Procedures to follow to ensure a botanic garden is CITES compliant;
- Identifying garden activities and collections that can be used to engage with CITES national authorities, enforcement, the public, traders and other botanic gardens.

This Module supplements the [CITES Checklist](#).

# CITES compliance

To assess compliance, you will need:

- knowledge of your garden's collections, activities, partnerships and current procedures;
- an understanding of essential CITES provisions;
- a 'CITES Checklist' of policy and procedural measures to help you regularly check your compliance with CITES requirements.

**CITES procedures may overlap with those you have put in place to track [CBD](#) issues, for example the [Nagoya Protocol](#) or [ABS](#).**

# Checklist questions

Key areas where a Checklist can help you assess whether effective procedures are in place:

- **The acquisition, use, and transfer of collections (e.g. live plants/seeds /spirit material/herbarium specimens/historical artefacts)** – tracking entry/exit of CITES material and dealing with unsolicited or illegal CITES material;
- **Events / Sales** – exhibitions or fundraisers which display or sell CITES material, or material sold through gift shops, plant sales, Internet, third parties or catalogues;

# Checklist questions



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- **Research** – ensure staff undertaking solo / joint overseas research projects, visiting researchers, students, and interns are aware of and complying with CITES regulations;
- **Procurement** – ensure all building works, visitor attractions, exhibitions and gift shops procure CITES material in accordance with CITES/national legislation;
- **Capacity building** – disseminate correct CITES information through publications and training courses/workshops , considering any reputational issues.

# Compliance procedures – acquisition, use and transfer of material

Checklist questions to ask as part of your acquisition procedure:

- **Source of material** – must be of legal and sustainable origin;
- **CITES or non-CITES and origin** – identify the material to determine whether it is CITES regulated. Country of origin (CITES or non-CITES Party, determines permit requirements), collection date ([pre-Convention](#)), form it was collected in (determines whether it is regulated), collected with a government agency and legally acquired (according to national legislation);
- **Wild or artificially propagated** – does the specimen meet the CITES definition of [artificially propagated](#)?
- **Permits** – are there collecting / CITES permits /RSI labels? Is it a direct export from the country of origin or has the specimen come via a third country (determines permits required)?

# Compliance procedures – acquisition, use and transfer of material (2)



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- **EU** – has material been acquired from the EU (determines whether permits are required)? Are there stricter measures to be aware of?
- **Entry/exit points** – establish one entry/exit point for all material as multiple points of entry/exit can lead to non-compliance/tracking problems.



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# Compliance procedures – acquisition, use, and transfer of material (3)

- **Tracking material** – record when permits are provided. This information should follow the specimen/progeny (via database entry/ herbarium label) to alert staff, even at a later date. Keep non-permitted material away from collections and staff access and report to Customs (material may have illegally entered the country). Locality details or other sensitive information may be included in collection data, which may not be for public consumption;
- **Databases** – databases should be linked to allow material to be tracked e.g. taking samples;
- **Regular staff training** – helps identify non-compliance, alerts staff to each other's roles;
- **Unsolicited material /illegal material** – see slide 12.

# CITES Point of Contact (PoC)

Nominate and train a key members of staff to act as a CITES point of contact (PoC) to advise and help colleagues comply with CITES and stricter measures. They must have an understanding of the following:

- CITES provisions and stricter measures (e.g. permit application procedures), contact details of the national CITES and enforcement authorities, lists of CITES Registered Institutes);
- what species (and their parts and derivatives) are regulated;
- where to find information relating to CITES and stricter measures, such as the [EU Wildlife Trade Regulations](#) .

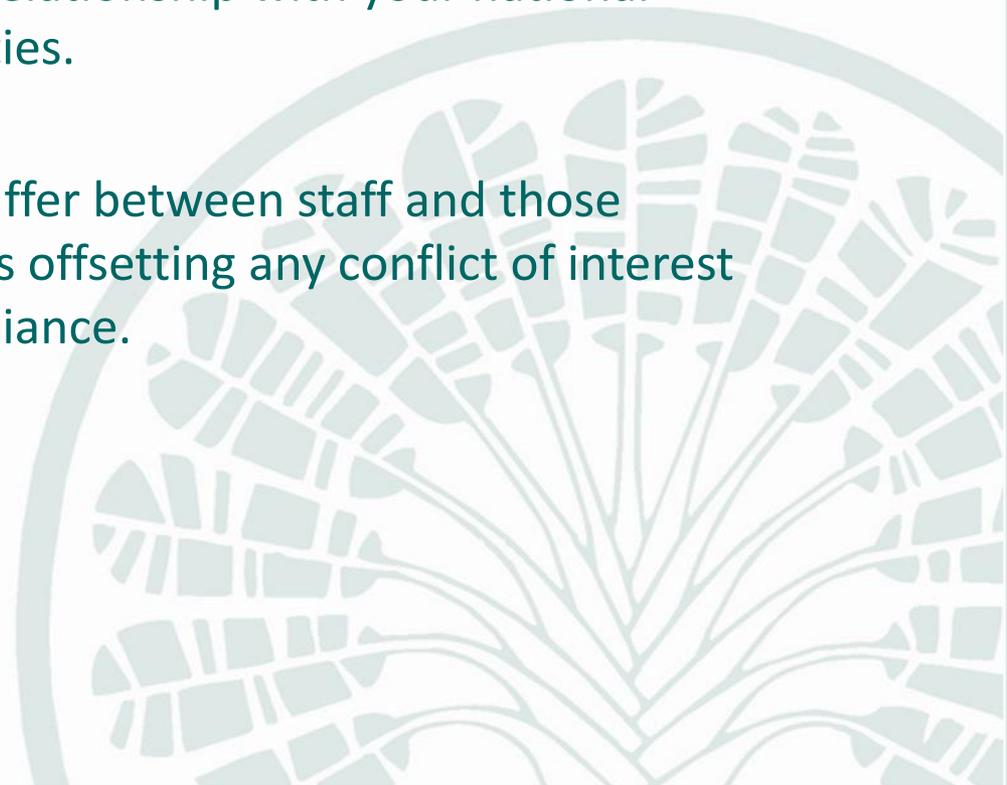
# CITES Point of Contact (PoC)



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- Promote the use of the CITES PoC amongst staff. Share experiences with PoCs at other gardens and ensure they have a good working knowledge of or relationship with your national CITES and enforcement authorities.
- CITES PoCs can also act as a buffer between staff and those involved in policy decisions, thus offsetting any conflict of interest e.g. in cases of CITES non-compliance.



# Publicise CITES collections



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- Use a poster to highlight to staff and visitors that they may be working on CITES collections and should be CITES aware.
- You can tailor it to suit your CITES collections, activities and procedures.
- Post it on herbarium cupboards, staff bulletin boards or near other CITES plant collections.

This is an example of a poster used by RBG Kew.

**Are you working on CITES listed species?**

The main CITES plant groups controlled are; orchids, cacti, carnivorous plants, bulbs, *Aloe*, succulent *Euphorbia*, cycads, palms and some timbers.

If you think you may be sending or receiving CITES listed plants, parts or derivatives contact your CITES Liaison Officer [CLO] who will advise you on obtaining the necessary permits;

 **Information about designated staff** 

**Applies to staff and visitors**

# Compliance procedures – unsolicited/ illegal material

Unsolicited and illegal material includes that which has been formally requested by a staff member, but may have been sent before permits were applied for, or material arriving without permits and staff having prior knowledge of it arriving (through the post).

- **Entry** – material is caught at entry point into garden. Staff should report all unsolicited material and remove it from the collections and further staff access immediately;
- **Reporting** – procedure for reporting such material to Customs;
- **Disposal** – Customs may or may not release the material to you (conflict of interest). They may ask you to repatriate material or contact the CITES authorities in country of origin to return it to an approved rescue centre (usually not back into trade);
- **Use** – check with Customs if you can share material with other botanic gardens for education, conservation and scientific purposes.

# Compliance procedures – Events and Sales



- **Procurement** – before acquiring material, staff should plan ahead, talk to the CITES PoC and follow an established procedure to investigate the source of material;
- **Sale of CITES material** – ensure staff have a basic understanding of CITES, good communication with their PoC or national CITES authorities and know the key issues e.g. which parts and derivatives are regulated. Always check the CITES information conveyed is correct or that contracts contain CITES compliance and acquisition clauses.
- **Sale to international visitors** – put notices in your gift shop alerting visitors to check for stricter domestic measures and whether permits are required;
- **Opportunity to highlight CITES issues** – if the material is CITES-listed, make this the focus of your event or show the benefits of working with other CITES partners.

# Compliance procedures – Research

- **Prior informed** – inform visitors ahead of their arrival/material arriving of your acquisition and use procedures and keep all correspondence. It is their responsibility to secure all permits, get them stamped and ensure material is legal and sustainable;
- **During their stay** – make them aware of internal procedures and be aware of their access to sensitive CITES information (e.g. locality information). Check whether they are staff from another garden or individual researchers/collectors with no affiliations;
- **Donating material post research** – if they are leaving material with you ask them to sign a donation letter ([see modules on ABS](#));
- **Reporting non compliance** – have a procedure to report all CITES contraventions to your PoC and Customs and ensure that this material does not enter the collections.

# Compliance procedures – Procurement

- **Procurement procedure** – in line with the garden's procedure for entry/exit of CITES material;
- **Procurement protocols** – check national procurement protocols, in particular for timber e.g. [the UK's timber procurement policy](#);
- **National, regional and international policy** – check other legislation that should be considered (e.g. [EU Timber Regulation](#));
- **Checking claims** – staff should talk to their CITES PoC before ordering to ensure material is legal and sustainable or whether alternatives should be sought;
- **Contracts** – include CITES acquisition and compliance clauses in all contracts.

# Compliance procedures – Capacity building

- **Publications** – check all content (online and signage) plant trade/ CITES/ acquisition and use issues with your CITES PoC or national CITES authorities;
- **Publishing new species** – check that new species are named based on material obtained legally. Reputational risk if scientific papers are based on illegal material or activities;
- **Training modules (school / higher education etc)** – include CITES in training modules, making sure the information is accurate and up to date;
- **Training the trainer** – regularly train tour or school guides, volunteers, and visitor services. Check their examples are accurate.

By engaging with CITES partners, such as your national Customs, you may be able to secure props to help convey CITES issues to visitors

# Engaging with CITES



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Key areas for engagement with CITES partners to promote CITES issues and as possible sources of revenue:

- **Provision of identification services** – use expertise to develop protocols for CITES species, develop/use existing tests to identify CITES material. Act as a rescue centre or quarantine facility for seized material (ensure chain of custody is secure);
- **Provision of taxonomic information** – feed expertise into CITES processes e.g. scientific information for new CITES plant proposals;



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# Engaging with CITES



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- **Public awareness** – highlight local /international trade issues and your work with CITES partners (e.g. Customs and traders). Host user group events (ensure protocols are in place so illegal material is not sold or incorrect CITES messages promoted);
- **Capacity building** – develop training packages/modules/publications to educate the public, enforcement agencies (police/Customs/inspectors) or traders on CITES.





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# End of Module Five (CITES and Botanic Gardens)

Why not try the [quick quiz?](#)



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Our Mission is to mobilise botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the well-being of people and the planet

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