

New wildlife e-magazines

CITES UPDATE. Issue 1.2 – Assisting CITES implementation in South Asia Monthly CITES update from P.E.A.C.E. Institute and Research and Resource Centre for CITES (RRCC) Published by Research and Resource Centre for CITES (RRCC)

**RRCC**
CITES UPDATE

RRCC – Assisting **CITES** implementation in South Asia

Monthly CITES update

Published by
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Editorial.....
Thanks for all your comments and suggestions made on our inaugural issue (Number 1 - Issue 1, September 05). We shall continue to look forward to receiving such feedback from you, as this alone shall help us remain relevant and useful.

We are endeavoring to keep this 'update' informative as well as analytical to provide our audience with not only timely information regarding CITES events, deadlines, initiatives and opportunities but also review the participation of CITES Parties from the South Asia region in the CITES process. Because we are convinced that for the countries in the South Asia region to be able to utilize the Convention for furthering the security of their own wild animals and plants as well as deriving economic benefits from legal wildlife trade, it is an overriding imperative that they actively participate in the CITES process. *(We at RRCC are willing to assist any South Asian Party to CITES in this task - Ed).*

For example, it was a matter of concern to find that the report of the Asian representative to the Standing Committee (SC) made at the recent meeting (53rd) of the Standing Committee (SC) carried no information from any CITES Party in the South Asia region, while it carried progress reports from the CITES Parties in east, south east, middle east and west Asia regions. The reason for this could either be that the CITES Parties in the South Asia region had no progress in CITES matters to report to the SC or there was a lack of communication between the Asian regional representatives to SC and the Parties in the South Asia region. Either way the situation calls for an introspection

Objectives of RRCC:

In tune with the strategic vision 2005 of CITES, the Centre shall endeavour to become a third party facilitator to help realise the following CITES vision:

- Enhance the ability of each Party to implement the Convention.
- Strengthen the scientific basis of the decision – making processes.
- Contribute to the reduction and ultimate elimination of illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.
- Promote greater understanding of the Convention.

In addition RRCC proposes to:

- Facilitate the implementation of the Convention in South Asia
- Facilitate interactions between CITES and other related multilateral agencies like CMS, IWC, CBD and WTO

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The **Objectives of RRCC** are described and listed below:

In tune with the strategic vision 2005 of CITES, the Centre shall endeavour to become a third party facilitator to help realise the following CITES vision :

- Enhance the ability of each party to implement the Convention.
- Strengthen the scientific basis of the decision – making processes.
- Contribute to the reduction and ultimate elimination of illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.
- Promote greater understanding of the Convention. In addition RRCC proposes to:
- Facilitate the implementation of the Convention in S. Asia • Facilitate interactions between CITES and other related multilateral agencies like CMS, IWC, CBD and WTO

In his inaugural Editorial of CITES UPDATE, Manoj welcomes readers to the fascinating world of CITES, one of the oldest and most influential global environmental Conventions. One hundred and sixty-nine nations have become a party to it. Not one to mince words, Manoj sets the tone of the e-newsletter by pointing out that the Convention itself admits that while the endorsement of the Convention is today widespread and on the increase, the same cannot be said of its implementation. This is the reason behind the publication.

The editorial goes on to say that the purpose of PEACE in setting up RRCC and the CITES UPDATE publication is to inform, enlighten, and ultimately empower our audience through right and timely knowledge on CITES and its activities and progress. Manoj, as Director of TRAFFIC, India had a rare privilege of witnessing the CITES process at close hand through participation at the two COPs (10th and 11th) and Sri Samar Singh, distinguished Advisor of PEACE chaired the CITES Standing Committee for three consecutive terms in the early nineteen eighties. They will now utilize their experience to assist.

Want to get on board this valuable e-newsletter ? Then send an E mail: manojmisra@peaceinst.org to Manoj and ask to be put on the mailing list. The second issue is already out.

PEACE Institute Charitable Trust, located at 178-F, Pocket IV, Mayur Vihar I, Delhi 93, India is an organisation founded and furnished by the redoubtable Manoj Mishra, a forester, a TRAFFIC copy and a CITES expert. Having founded PEACE Institute for his own peace of mind, Manoj Mishra is tying all kinds of loose ends of information sources for the wildlife and environment community of South Asia. The Research and Resource Centre for CITES (RRCC) is only one of several initiatives of PEACE, all very much needed, all clearly thought out and all destined to be very popular and practical. Assisted by a Managing Committee and advisors the likes of which are Samar Singh, it is easy to imagine a successful future for PEACE generally and for RRCC and CITES UPDATE specifically.



FOREST CASE UPDATE

An Information Dissemination Service for Forest and Wildlife Cases
in the Supreme Court of India

Since 1996 the Supreme Court of India has played the role of a key decision maker and a critical monitoring agency so far as wildlife and forest related issues are concerned. Thus in India today no dead trees, grasses, drift wood etc can be removed except with the prior permission of the Supreme Court. Also no forest/National Park or Sanctuary can be dereserved without prior approval of the Supreme Court. Such developments in the Supreme Court are of crucial concern to nature conservation groups, grassroots organisations as well as local communities who could use the positive developments to their advantage and challenge those contrary to conservation and people's livelihoods.

The Supreme Court's intervention in the following two cases related to forests and wildlife has been extremely critical:

1. The *T.N. Godavarman Thirumulkpad v/s Union of India and ors (Writ Petition 202 of 1995)*, concerning implementation of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980
2. The *Centre for Environment Law (CEL) v/s Union of India and ors (Writ Petition 337 of 1995)* concerning the issue of settlement of rights in National Parks and Sanctuaries and other issues under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972

These cases are being heard since then as part of what is known as the continuing mandamus, whereby courts rather than passing final judgments, keep passing orders and directions with a view of monitoring the functioning of the executive.

Even though the issues the courts deal with are spread all across the country, much of the information remains centralised. There has very often been a demand from that there needs to be some mechanism through which critical information related to the above cases moves beyond the national capital, on a regular basis. Unless grassroots groups are in tune with such policy and legal developments, it will be far more difficult to render success to their isolated battles to against the destruction of the natural forests and biodiversity.

In May 2004, an information dissemination service was initiated envisaged as a *neutral body* to keep a watch on the happenings in the Supreme Court, and disseminate the information through an electronic newsletter and regular flash news. Since then subscribers of this electronic service receive:

- A monthly newsletter which a combination of both direct reporting from the Supreme Court as well as the Central Empowered Committee of the Supreme Court as well as formal orders and case analysis.
- Regular Flash News on when applications and cases are being heard in the Supreme Court or its Central Empowered Committee.
- Responses to requests for particular orders/reports related to the above case.

To subscribe to this please write to: Ritwick Dutta and Kanchi Kohli at forestcase@yahoo.com.

Do pass on the information to others who you might feel would be interested in this information service.

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Previous Issues of Forest Case Update are uploaded on: <http://www.geocities.com/forestcase/forestcaseupdate.html>