

BACKGROUND PAPER ON CITES CoP17
PROPOSALS TO LIST ROSEWOOD (*DALBERGIA*) ON APPENDIX II

BACKGROUND: Rosewood is the common name for the timber genus *dalbergia*, which is found in forests in Africa, Central and South America and Southeast Asia, among other locations. Usage varies widely, depending on species and location, and includes such things as furniture, walking sticks, construction materials, sculptures and handicrafts. In the world of music, it is used to make guitars, clarinets, oboes, flutes, bagpipes, xylophones, marimbas and other instruments. Because of its tonal qualities and appearance, rosewoods are often highly valued components of instruments.

CoP 17: There are currently some 250+ different species of *dalbergia*, of which one (*dalbergia nigra*, aka Brazilian rosewood) is currently listed on CITES Appendix I, 55 are listed on Appendix II and five are listed on Appendix III. Almost all are annotated to cover logs, sawn wood and veneer sheets only; none are annotated to include parts and derivatives and/or finished products.

Two proposals have been introduced to expand *dalbergia* listings in Appendix II:

- Proposal 54, introduced by Mexico, to add 13 named species of *dalbergia* native to Mexico and Central America, and
- Proposal 55, introduced by Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala and Kenya, to include all *dalbergia* species (except *dalbergia nigra*).

Proponents have said the proposals are needed because the various *dalbergia* species are difficult to differentiate, making enforcement a problem, and due to increased demand for rosewood in the Asian market to make luxury furniture. The CITES Secretariat has expressed support for adoption of both proposals.

OUR VIEW: While the undersigned organizations have no position specific to Proposals 54 and 55 regarding the overall effort to expand listings in Appendix II, we understand that action might be necessary to help ensure compliance with existing restrictions and to prevent further degradation of timber resources. Further restrictions on the trade in musical instruments, however, would provide no conservation benefit to the genus. **In order to ensure that the proposals do not detrimentally affect the musical instrument trade and the performance of music, any Appendix II listing should include an annotation that would result in exempting musical instruments. Without such an annotation, the proposals would subject the music industry to costly and administratively burdensome permit requirements in order to export instruments for sale or use by musicians when traveling, with no corresponding benefit to *dalbergia* populations.**



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