

Know Your Bow: New Rules and Essential Steps for Pernambuco Sustainability

February 10, 2026

Presented in partnership with:



League
of American
Orchestras

Presented in Partnership With

- » **American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada**
- » **American Federation of Violin and Bow Makers**
- » **International Alliance of Violin and Bow Makers for Endangered Species**
- » **League of American Orchestras**
- » **NAMM – the National Association of Music Merchants**
- » **National Association for Music Education**
- » **Performing Arts Managers and Agents Coalition**

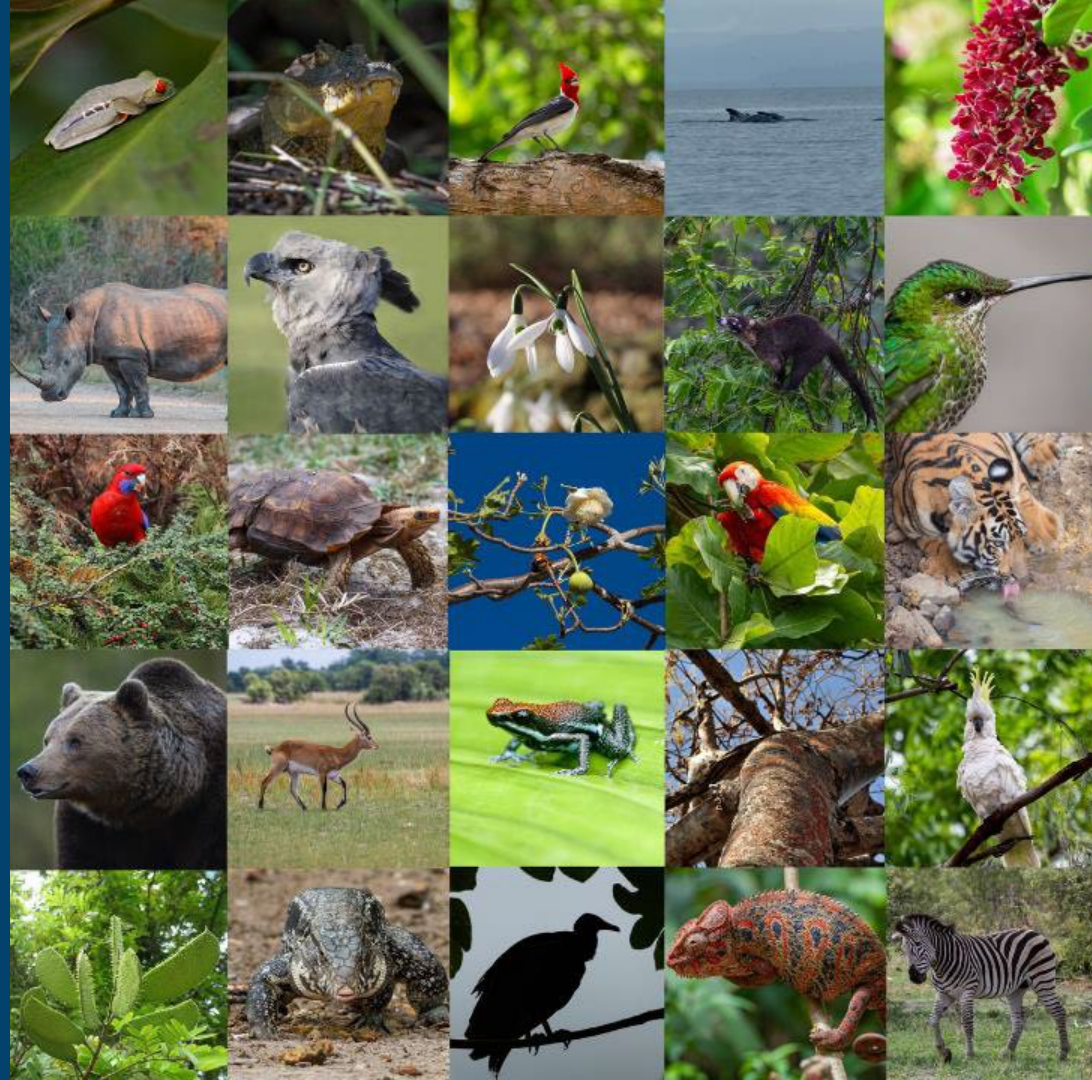
Today 's Speakers

- » **Heather Downey**, Permits Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- » **Anne St. John**, Senior Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- » **Lynn Hannings**, Vice President, International Alliance of Violin and Bow Makers for Endangered Species
- » **Claire Kreger-Boaz**, Public Policy Manager, NAMM
- » **Heather Noonan**, Vice President, Advocacy, League of American Orchestras
- » **Rochelle G. Skolnick**, Director, Symphonic Services Division, American Federation of Musicians



U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) – Updates from CoP20





**CONVENTION
ON INTERNATIONAL
TRADE IN ENDANGERED
SPECIES OF WILD
FAUNA AND FLORA**

What is CITES?

An international agreement among 185 Parties (184 countries and the European Union) to ensure that international trade in listed animals and plants is legal and traceable, and does not threaten their survival in the wild



How does CITES work?

- Regulates the export, re-export, and import, and introduction from the sea of live and dead animals and plants, and their parts and derivatives, of species included in its Appendices
- Functions via a system of permits and certificates that:
 - are issued only if certain conditions are met
 - must be presented when leaving or entering a country
- Includes species in one of three Appendices, each with a different level of protection and document requirements for international trade





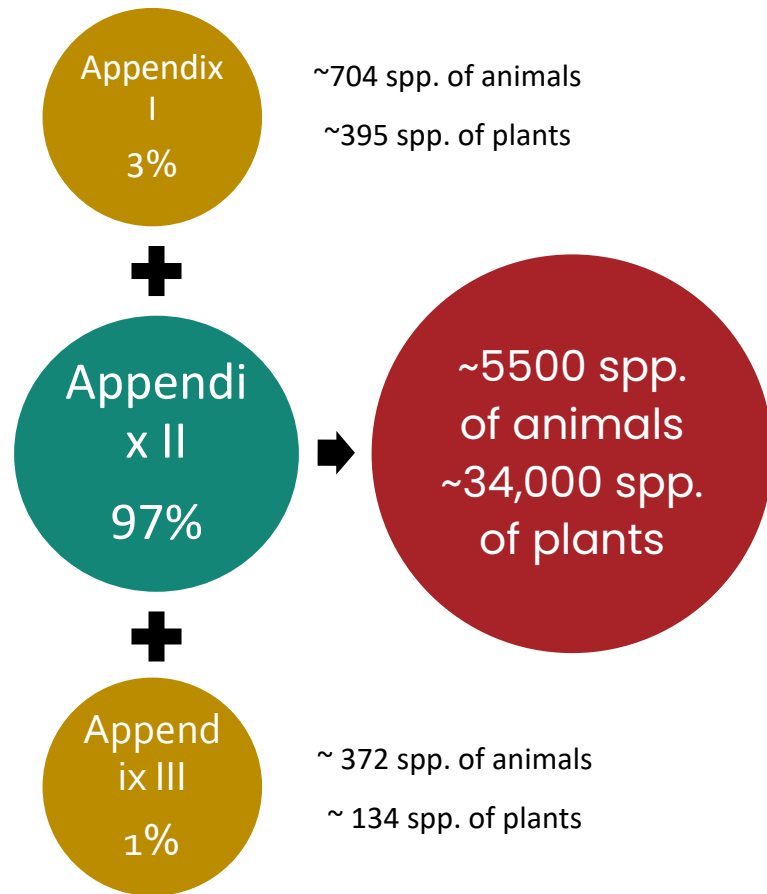
CITES Appendices

CITES provides different levels of protection according to its **three Appendices**:

Appendix I—Species threatened with extinction

Appendix II—Species that may become threatened unless trade is regulated

Appendix III—Species regulated within the jurisdiction of a Party





Appendix	I	II	III
International trade is	Permitted but restricted; generally prohibited for commercial purposes	Permitted for most purposes through a system of permits and certificates	Controlled to complement national level conservation measures
Taxa	~ 700 fauna spp. ~ 400 flora spp.	~ 5,500 fauna spp. ~ 34,000 flora spp.	~ 130 fauna spp. ~ 500 flora spp.

International trade in species included in Appendix I or II requires determinations that the trade is not detrimental to the survival of the species and that the specimens to be traded were legally acquired in accordance with applicable laws. These determinations must be made before CITES permits or certificates may be issued.





CITES-listed species found in musical instruments

- Timber species
- Elephant ivory
- Lizard skin
- Tortoise shell





CITES Annotations

- All CITES listings cover the whole animal or plant, whether alive or dead.
- All Appendix-I listings and Appendix-II animal listings cover all readily recognizable parts and derivatives.
- Appendix-III animal listings and Appendix-II and -III plant listings may be annotated to include or exclude certain commodities.
- The CITES Parties have agreed that annotations for plant listings should focus CITES controls on those commodities that first appear in international trade and those commodities that dominate the demand and trade from the wild.
- As a result, finished commodities are often excluded from CITES plant listings.





20th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP20)



- Brazilwood or pernambuco (*Paubrasilia echinata*) was included in Appendix II on September 13, 2007.
- At CoP20, the annotation (Annotation #10) to this listing was amended to apply to:
 - All parts and derivatives, except finished musical instruments, finished musical instrument accessories and finished musical instrument parts for non-commercial trade only for the purpose of paid and unpaid performance, personal use, display, loan, competition, teaching, appraisal, or repair, provided that this does not change the ownership and that such transport is not for sale, transfer or disposal of the specimen outside of the owner's usual State of residence. Zero quota for wild-harvested specimens (source code W) traded for commercial purposes.
- The amendment will become effective on March 5, 2026.



Credit:
Fopseh



What is “non-commercial trade” in the context of Annotation #10?

Finished musical instruments, parts, and accessories may be moved internationally without CITES documentation, provided that:

- Movement is non-commercial (paid and unpaid performance, personal use, display, loan, competition, teaching, appraisal, or repair)
- Ownership does not change
- The item isn't sold, transferred, or disposed of outside the owner's country of usual residence

All other international trade/movement will require CITES documentation.





“Zero quota for wild-harvested specimens (source code W) traded for commercial purposes”

- No longer authorizing exports for wild-sourced specimens for commercial purposes, for wood harvested on or after the pre-Convention date
- Commercial international trade may be permitted from non-wild sources or pre-Convention specimens (i.e., specimens harvested before the species was first included in the Appendices)
- Required CITES documents:
 - Export permit or re-export certificate for commercial exports from non-wild sources (e.g., plantation origin wood)
 - Pre-Convention certificate to export specimens, including musical instruments, containing wood harvested prior to September 13, 2007 (the original CITES listing date of the species)





Related Decisions adopted at CoP20



- Urge Parties to develop **harmonized marking and identification** approaches for individual pernambuco bows to enhance traceability;
- Urge Parties to provide and update information on **traceability systems**, wood **stockpiles** and their management, and **conversion** factors from wood to bows;
- Urge Parties to provide information on Brazilwood **plantations**;
- Invite Parties to provide information on **public outreach** and awareness raising campaigns;
- Urge Parties to undertake due diligence to ensure that specimens in trade are **legal** and comply with CITES requirements;



Related CoP20 Decisions (Continued)



- Direct the Secretariat to consolidate information provided;
- Direct the Secretariat to work with the Plants Committee to draft guidance on the technical criteria to **classify the wood suitable for bow making**, in support of the development of a standard conversion factor;
- Direct the Plants Committee and Standing Committee to feed into and support these efforts; and
- Invite industry, non-governmental organizations, and civil society to provide financial and technical **support** for this work.



How can musicians and music merchants benefit conservation efforts?

- Be aware of and comply with international, domestic, state, and local wildlife laws.
- Ask questions when buying an instrument or materials.
- Maintain careful records and documentation with your purchases, sales, and transfers, which may be needed for future international movement under CITES.





Permitting requirements – What is a permit?

Generally prohibited activities with protected species such as import, export, and interstate commerce may be authorized when certain criteria are met. FWS then grants a prior authorization in the form of a permit, certificate, or registration.



Determining whether a permit is required


- Species listings
- Annotations
- Pre-Convention, pre-Act, and antique
- Personal and household effects





Species listings

- To determine whether a species is included in the CITES Appendices, visit the CITES website (<https://cites.org/eng/app/appendices.php>) or <https://speciesplus.net/>
- To determine whether a species is protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), visit <https://ecos.fws.gov/>



Varanus salvator
(Laurenti, 1768)
Chordata ▶ Reptilia ▶ Sauria ▶ Varanidae ▶ Varanus

LEGAL	NAMES	DISTRIBUTION	REFERENCES	DOCUMENTS
CITES Listings	CITES Quotas	CITES Suspensions	EU Listing	EU Decisions

CITES

CITES LISTING


APPENDIX	COUNTRY	DATE	NOTES
II		01/07/1975	[GENUS listing Varanus spp.]



CITES Annotations

- When determining whether a CITES permit or certificate is required for trade in CITES-listed species of wood or instruments manufactured from wood, pay attention to the annotation associated with the species.
- If the type of specimen from which your instrument is manufactured is excluded from the CITES listing by an annotation, the instrument is exempt from CITES controls and does not require a CITES document.

Credit: Cook Woods



Dalbergia latifolia
Roxb.
► Fabales ► Leguminosae ► Dalbergia

LEGAL	NAMES	DISTRIBUTION	REFERENCES	DOCUMENTS
CITES Listings	CITES Quotas	CITES Suspensions	EU Listing	EU Decisions

CITES

CITES LISTING			
APPENDIX	COUNTRY	DATE	NOTES
I		26/11/2019	<p>GENUS listed as <i>Dalbergia</i> spp.)</p> <p><u>CoP18 #15</u></p> <p>Except for the species listed in Appendix I</p>



CITES

- When determining if a trade in wood manufactured with the species requires a CITES permit or certificate, attention to the type of instrument is crucial. If the type of instrument is excluded from an annotation, then the trade is not covered by CITES and does not require a CITES permit or certificate.

COP18 #15

All parts and derivatives **except:**

- a) Leaves, flowers, pollen, fruits, and seeds;
- b) Finished products to a maximum weight of wood of the listed species of up to 10 kg per shipment;
- c) Finished musical instruments, finished musical instrument parts and finished musical instrument accessories;
- d) Parts and derivatives of *Dalbergia cochinchinensis*, which are covered by Annotation # 4; and
- e) Parts and derivatives of *Dalbergia* spp. originating and exported from Mexico, which are covered by Annotation # 6.



REFERENCES

DOCUMENTS

EU Listing

EU Decisions


Dalbergia spp.)

Species listed in Appendix I



Pre-Convention

- Pre-Convention means a specimen that was acquired before the date the species was included in the CITES Appendices.
- Individuals and businesses may apply for pre-Convention certificates, musical instrument certificates, or traveling exhibition certificates in lieu of a CITES export permit or re-export certificate for qualifying specimens.



Varanus salvator
(Laurenti, 1768)
Chordata ▶ Reptilia ▶ Sauria ▶ Varanidae ▶ Varanus

Credit: Carlos Delgado

LEGAL	NAMES	DISTRIBUTION	REFERENCES	DOCUMENTS
CITES Listings	CITES Quotas	CITES Suspensions	EU Listing	EU Decisions

CITES

CITES LISTING			
APPENDIX	COUNTRY	DATE	NOTES
II		01/07/1975	[GENUS listing Varanus spp.]



Pre-Convention – Acquisition date

The CITES Parties have agreed that the date on which a specimen is acquired is the date on which the animal or plant or, in the case of parts or derivatives, the animal or plant from which they were taken, was known to be:

- removed from the wild; or
- born in captivity or artificially propagated in a controlled environment; or
- if that date is unknown or cannot be proved, the date on which the specimen was acquired is considered the earliest provable date on which it was first possessed by any person.





Endangered Species Act

- There are separate requirements under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that may apply to species used in the manufacture of musical instruments.
- Imports and export of these species are prohibited unless they were acquired prior to the listing of the species or otherwise permitted. ESA permitting requirements are additional to and different from CITES requirements.
- There are exceptions for African elephant specimens under the special rule found at 50 CFR 17.40(e).





ESA Antique and pre-Act

- **Antique:** Specimen is at least 100 years old, has not been repaired or modified on or after the date the species was listed under the ESA, and the item has either a) entered through a designated port for ESA antiques, or b) there is documented proof the specimen was in the United States prior to September 22, 1982.
- **Pre-Act:** Specimen was held in a controlled environment on or before the date the species was listed under the ESA and the holding or use was not in the course of a commercial activity.





Personal and household effects

A permit may not be required for your instrument if you meet the following issuance criteria:

Personal effects

- Included in Appendix II or III
- For personal use and the quantity must not exceed more than reasonable for use during your trip
- Included in personally accompanying luggage or on your person during travel

Household effects

- Included in Appendix II or III
- Quantity is appropriate for the nature of your move
- Owned by you and used for personal purposes
- Only includes specimens purchased, inherited, or acquired before you changed your residence and shipment is within 1 year of changing residence



Personal and household effects

A permit may not be required for your instrument if you meet the following issuance criteria:

- Not all CITES Parties recognize personal and household effects exemptions. Check with the Management Authority of the relevant country(ies) to verify before your travel or move.
- Included in personally accompanying luggage or on your person during travel
- Only includes specimens purchased, inherited, or acquired before you changed your residence and shipment is within 1 year of changing residence



Which permit application do I use?

3-200-23

Pre-Convention, Pre-Act, and
Antique

- One time shipment
- Commercial and non-commercial purposes
- Permit valid for 6 months
- Item contains:
 - Only wildlife species
 - Both wildlife and wood species
- e.g., relocating with instrument, donating instrument, shipping to buyer in a different country

3-200-32

Export/Re-Export Plants

- One time shipment
- Commercial and non-commercial purposes
- Permit valid for 6 months
- Only CITES listed wood species
- e.g., commercial export or re-export of instruments containing Brazilian Rosewood (*Dalbergia nigra*), relocating with instrument, shipping to buyer in a different country

3-200-88

Musical Instrument / Traveling Exhibition Certificate
(instrument "passport")

- Allows multiple border crossings
- Only for non-commercial purposes: instrument is not being offered for sale or being sold while outside the United States
- e.g., performance, competition, display
- Check with the foreign CITES office for acceptance of this certificate

Musical Instrument
Certificate

- For Single instrument
 - Only for traveling with your instrument (on your person/checked baggage)
 - Certificate can be valid up to 3 years
 - Refer to Resolution Conf. 16.8

Traveling Exhibition
Certificate

- For Orchestra/Ensemble
 - Can be in cargo
 - Certificate can be valid up to 1 year
 - Refer to Resolution Conf. 12.3



Finished instruments - What to include in your application

- Scientific name and common name of species
- Description of instrument(s)
- Date of manufacture
- Provenance (i.e., appraisal documents attesting species and manufacture date)
- Evidence of lawful acquisition (e.g., bill of sale or notarized statement)
- Evidence of lawful import, if relevant (CITES permit, import declaration)
- Current location of instrument(s)
- Photographs of instrument(s)
- Serial number, if available





What will the Service accept as a qualified appraisal?

- The person executing the appraisal has earned appraisal designation from a professional appraiser organization for the type of property being appraised
- Third-party
- What's on the appraisal?
 - Name, address of appraiser
 - Appraiser qualifications
 - Date of appraisal
 - Description of instrument
 - Size
 - Materials
 - Manufacturer
 - Approximate date instrument was created
 - Method used to determine age/species
 - Professional quality image of the article





Commercial specimen - What to include in your application

- Scientific name and common name of species
- Description of item(s), including serial #s, as applicable
- Unit of measurement (e.g., m3)
- Date of manufacture or harvest
- Evidence of lawful acquisition (i.e., full chain-of-custody documentation; notarized statement of stock if pre-Convention)
- For re-exports: evidence of lawful importation (endorsed and cleared CITES document)





Commercial specimen - What to include in your application



- Scientific name and common name of
- Date of manufacture or harvest
- Evidence of lawful acquisition (i.e., full chain-of-custody documentation; notarized statement of stock if pre-Convention)
- For re-exports: evidence of lawful importation (endorsed and cleared CITES document)

Note: These is a generalized list and the submission requirements for individual applications may vary.





Simplified Procedures

- CITES Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates* explains how a CITES Management Authority may issue CITES permits and certificates.
- Section XIII, paragraph 22 of this Resolution details how a Management Authority can create “simplified procedures” to apply the requirements under CITES in certain situations of trade with no or negligible impact on conservation of the species concerned.





What does this mean in practice?

- CITES requirements are still in place, but a Management Authority has the ability to facilitate more rapid movement of shipments and reduce administrative burden on both the processors and the applicant.
- The relevant Management Authority determines whether the use of simplified procedures is merited, based on a consideration of advantages, disadvantages, and risks.



Master Files

- For businesses that export frequently and have large inventories of items containing CITES-listed specimens (e.g., unfinished instrument parts, large collections of guitars, bow blanks, etc.)
- Master files “pre-authorize” a business or individual to export their legally acquired specimens
- Valid for up to 3 years
- Authorize exporters to send variable quantities of the authorized specimens to any recipient





Master Files (Continued)

- Once a master file is established, the permittee may order any number of permits (clones) from that master file.
- Clones are identical except for permit number and are valid 6 months.
- Block 4 (the consignee), Block 11 (the quantity), and sometimes other blocks, are intentionally left blank on the permit for the permittee to fill.
- The master file holder may order any number of clones for export of authorized inventory.



Master File Letters

- Master file holders are held to certain terms and conditions, presented in a letter upon establishment of the file.
- In many instances, we limit the total quantity authorized for export and have reporting requirements.





Other species commonly used in musical instruments with additional requirements

African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*)

- No commercial movement unless antique or pre-Act criteria
- Only needs to meet CITES pre-Convention status if under a traveling exhibition certificate or musical instrument certificate

Hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*)

- No commercial movement or travel using a certificate unless the specimen meets the ESA antique or pre-Act criteria

Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

- No commercial movement or travel using a certificate unless the specimen meets the ESA antique or pre-Act criteria

Bowhead whale (*Balaena mysticetus*)

- No commercial movement or travel using a certificate unless the specimen meets the ESA antique or pre-Act criteria
- This species is under NOAA's jurisdiction. A separate letter must be authorized by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service ("Letter of Determination") for this authorization.



Additional links and resources

- [ePermits](#)
- [Application forms](#)
- [Species+ / Species Checklist](#)
- [ECOS](#)
- Federal regulations
 - [CITES](#)
 - [ESA](#)
- [CITES website](#)
- [CITES National Authority Contacts](#)
- [CITES Resolution Conf. 12.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#)
- [CITES Resolution Conf 16.8 \(Rev. CoP17\)](#)
- [What Can I Do With My Ivory? Web Page](#)
- [Musical Instrument Web Page](#)
- [NMFS Letter of Determination Site](#)

Know Your Bow Campaign

For questions and answers on how to make best efforts to document information on your bow made with Pernambuco wood, visit the League of American Orchestra's website:

[Tips For Owners and Users of Pernambuco Bows](#)



Thank You!



Questions?

Please submit any questions in the **Q&A box.**

Next Steps

- » **Lynn Hannings**, Vice President, International Alliance of Violin and Bow Makers for Endangered Species
- » **Claire Kreger-Boaz**, Public Policy Manager, NAMM
- » **Heather Noonan**, Vice President, Advocacy, League of American Orchestras
- » **Rochelle G. Skolnick**, Director, Symphonic Services Division, American Federation of Musicians

Resources

- » www.americanorchestras.org
- » CITES Protected Species Travel Tips
- » Pernambuco Policies and Conservation
- » Know Your Bow: Tips for Owners and Users of Pernambuco Bows: <https://bit.ly/KYB-Owners>



Resources

- » www.alliance-international.org
- » Bow Wood Inventory Guide
- » Documentation of Bow Materials Form
- » Conservation Initiative Overview

Know Your Bow

FEATURE STORY Jan 16, 2026

The Sustainable Bow

New policies for pernambuco, the wood used in string-instrument bows, will support conservation and music-making. Next steps will require the full attention of musicians and action by the wider music community.



Thank You!

- » Stay for the webinar recording, transcript, and links
- » Please respond to the evaluation request
- » Stay tuned for additional updates and new resources from your national association

Know Your Bow: New Rules and Essential Steps for Pernambuco Sustainability

February 10, 2026

Presented in partnership with:



League
of American
Orchestras