

CITES Electronic Permitting in the Amazon Countries

Promoting regional cooperation through the exchange of communication technologies to combat illegal trafficking

Context

The continental Amazon, with over 7 million km² comprises the largest continuous area of forest in the world embracing an immense diversity of wild fauna and flora.

This biological wealth makes the Amazon into a region of potential interest for the use of its natural resources. However, the region faces increasing threats to biodiversity, such as overexploitation and illegal trafficking, factors that have contributed to significantly reduce populations of many species.

Global demand for specimens of wild fauna and flora shows an increase. In turn, the number of transactions and speed of trade have increased worldwide, resulting from the advancement of communication technologies.

In this sense, as a measure to combat illegal trafficking, Amazonian countries saw the need to efficiently align CITES administrative procedures and sanitary and customs requirements with new developments in electronic commerce. The regional approach to the subject was reflected in the regional project "Electronic Emission of CITES Permits in Amazonian countries".

Objective

The project is aimed at assisting ACTO Member Countries to develop electronic CITES permitting systems for the traceability of specimens of CITES –listed species in international trade.

Methodology

The project promoted regional cooperation through the exchange of technology and technical assistance to Member Countries to support a harmonized system for the electronic issuance of CITES permits and generated the links (dialogue) with other similar, national bodies such as the ministries of trade, customs and health agencies.

In this way, the exchange of technologies and experience in the region enhances the ability of countries to reduce fraud and illegal international trade in wild animals and plants.

For the project, ACTO, with technical and financial assistance from the Amazon Regional Program (BMZ/DGIS/GIZ), counted with the support of the CITES Secretariat as a strategic partner in the purpose of ensuring sustainable management of wildlife and no detrimental trade.



Name	Strengthening the regional organization ACTO
Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ); Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (DGIS)
Countries	The Amazon countries of the regional organization ACTO: Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela
Partners	Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)
Mission	The technical cooperation project "Strengthening the regional organization ACTO", known as the Amazon Regional Program, is implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German and Dutch governments (BMZ-DGIS). The project responds to the need to strengthen the capacities of the regional organization ACTO so that the latter can deal with the demands of the Amazon countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela) by means of regional initiatives and action for sustainable development in the Amazonia.

- Approval and signing of a contract for financial cooperation between ACTO and the German Development Bank - KfW, for 10 million euros to support and improve systems for electronic issuance of CITES permits in the Amazon region.

Perspectives

In the next five years the project "Management, Monitoring and Control Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Threatened by Trade" signed between ACTO and KfW, will be implemented with the following purposes:

- Strengthen national and regional information systems related to biodiversity,
- Strengthen enforcement of electronic permissions on the countries and
- Support the development of control mechanisms in chains of custody of fauna and flora of interest to the region.

Results

- Positioning the subject of electronic permitting in the countries of the region at the institutional level, facilitating dialogue between CITES authorities and stakeholders related with the issue, nationally and regionally.
- Designation of National Focal Points and definition of inter-agency working groups in each country to develop electronic issuance systems.
- Detailed documentation on current processes and technologies for issuance of CITES permits; on the regulations and related stakeholders, including current and potential electronic issuance systems and single window initiatives.
- Development of an electronic forum for the exchange of experiences and information.
- Strengthening the management capacity of the countries on the issue of endangered species consistent with the purposes and goals of international agreements such as CITES and CBD through South - South cooperation.

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