

CIRCULAR

FILE: AP 2/39/1

DATE: 5 May 2020

Circular No: 20/42

TO: SPREP National Focal Points
CITES Focal Points

SUBJECT: Non Detriment Findings for export and permitting processes for
CITES Appendix II listed sea cucumbers in response to CITES
Notification 2019/052

Dear National Focal Points and CITES Management and Scientific Authorities,

CITES is the global instrument for regulating the international trade in plants and animals to ensure such trade does not threaten their survival. Countries Party to CITES apply a common set of international rules to allow the legal international trade of CITES-listed species. Countries cannot trade in the 35,000 CITES-listed species with CITES Parties unless they trade consistently within CITES requirements.

At the 18th CITES CoP held in Geneva in August 2019, Notifications¹ and Decisions² were made that have implications for Pacific Island CITES Parties with respect to sea cucumbers, marine turtles, sharks and rays.

In relation to sea cucumbers, three teatfish species of sea cucumbers were listed under Appendix II (Notification 2019/052). Two of these teatfish species are present and commercially exploited in the Pacific Islands region:

1. white teatfish (*Holothuria fuscogilva*); and
2. black teatfish (*H. whitmaei*)

A twelve-month delay in acceptance of this listing was granted which is due to end on 28 August 2020. This means after 28 August 2020, the international trade in the two listed teatfish species will be no longer allowed unless Pacific Island parties have met the requirements for export. One of these requirements is the need to develop Non-Detriment Findings³ (NDFs).

SPREP and SPC recognise the significant livelihood opportunities that are derived for coastal and islands communities as well as the revenue and foreign exchange that is earned from the sea cucumber fishery and beche-de-mer trade. As well as these benefits, it is also noted that sea cucumbers also play a very important ecological role in ensuring healthy functioning coastal ecosystems.

¹ Refer <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2019-052-.pdf>

² Refer <https://cites.org/eng/dec/index.php>

³ Refer https://cites.org/eng/prog/ndf/index_new.php

In this context we are working together with TRAFFIC, a non-governmental organisation working globally on trade in animals and plants, to offer tailored (on-line) workshops to support interested Pacific islands Parties develop NDFs during this period of coronavirus restrictions. Support in developing NDFs will ensure that trade of the two listed teatfish species can continue, as well as to offer other advice and capacity development opportunities in line with CITES requirements in preparation of the Annex II listing taking effect on 28 August 2020.

If your country is interested in this assistance, please have your Managing Directors or Permanent Secretaries of your respective national fisheries and conservation agencies advise Ms. Karen Baird [karenb@sprep.org], Threatened and Migratory Species Adviser at SPREP, and she will then be able to liaise with appropriate staff within your respective national fisheries and conservation agencies to make the necessary arrangements for this very important training.

Yours sincerely,



Kosi Latu
Director General, SPREP



Dr Stuart Minchin
Director-General, SPC

KL/KB/ma