

Certificate of Scientific Exchange (COSE) – Application and Process

Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) – References

Background

At its 18th meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted a number of amendments to Resolution [Conf. 11.15 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) on *Non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic and forensic research specimens*.

Parties can now register forensic research laboratories. Registered natural history museums, herbaria and forensic research laboratories can also undertake scientific exchange of specimens needed to conduct taxonomic and species-conservation research, as well as wildlife forensic research in accordance with [Article VII, paragraph 6](#) of the Convention and in line with the recommendations contained in the Resolution.

Secretariat maintains a Register of scientific institutions entitled to the exemption provided by [Article VII, paragraph 6](#), of the Convention, which can be accessed through the CITES website http://www.cites.org/common/reg/e_si.html.

[Registration of Scientific Institutions](#): Notification to the Parties No. 2019/068, Geneva, November 26, 2019

National CITES Authorities

The national agency responsible for implementing CITES in each country is the Management Authority. The contact details of each Management Authority can be found on the [National contacts, National CITES Authorities](#).

Exemptions and Special Procedures

There are a number of cases for which the provisions of [Articles III, IV](#) and [V](#) of the Convention do not apply. This can result in exemptions to the normal procedures where no CITES documentation is required, or in special procedures, where trade is regulated, but the specimens are subject to the provisions of an Appendix different to the one in which the species is listed; or other documents than the normal CITES documentation are required.

Provisions of the Convention

Scientific Exchange

[Article VII](#) Exemptions and Other Special Provisions Relating to Trade

6. The provisions of [Articles III, IV](#) and [V](#) shall not apply to the non-commercial loan, donation or exchange between scientists or scientific institutions registered by a Management Authority of their State, of herbarium specimens, other preserved, dried or embedded museum specimens, and live plant material which carry a label issued or approved by a Management Authority.

[Resolution Conf. 11.15 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) contains further provisions regarding the use of the exemption for non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic and forensic research specimens.

Simplified Procedures for Permits and Certificates

Parties take every opportunity within the scope of the Convention to encourage scientific and forensic research on wild fauna and flora, where this may be of use in conserving species that are threatened with extinction or that may become so.

Parties are encouraged to register their scientific institutions to facilitate scientific exchange of specimens needed to conduct taxonomic and species-conservation research, and to conduct wildlife forensic research.

Parties may use simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates to facilitate and expedite trade that will have a negligible impact, or none, on the conservation of the species concerned, for instance, where biological samples are urgently required.

[Simplified procedures for permits and certificates](#): Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Geneva (Switzerland), 17–28 August 2019 Committee II ([CoP18 Comm.II.14](#)) [Conf.11.15 \(Rev.CoP12\)](#)

[Permits and Certificates](#): Resolution [Conf. 12.3 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#)

[Wildlife Forensics](#) CITES

Resolutions / Decisions

- [Paragraph 15. d\) in Resolution Conf. 11.3 \(Rev CoP18\)](#) on *Compliance and enforcement*
- [List of Resolutions and Decisions with provisions on forensic applications](#)

Related CITES Meeting Documents

- [CoP18 Doc. 32](#) on *Enforcement matters*
- [CoP18 Doc. 32 Annex 4](#) on *Development of an electronic directory of laboratories that conform to a defined minimum standard for conducting wildlife forensic testing*
- [SC70 Doc. 30.1](#) on *Enforcement matters*
- [SC70 Doc. 36](#) on *Simplified Procedures for Permits and Certificates*
- [SC69 Doc. 31.1](#) on *Enforcement matters*
- [CoP17 Doc. 25](#) on *Enforcement matters*
- [CoP17 Doc. 25 Annex 4](#) on *A review of wildlife forensic science and laboratory capacity to support the implementation and enforcement of CITES*

Tools and Resources

- Directory of laboratories conducting wildlife forensic testing:
 - [Important information](#)
 - [Directory of laboratories](#)
- [Development of an electronic directory of laboratories that conform to a defined minimum standard for conducting wildlife forensic testing](#) (CoP18)
- [Review of wildlife forensic science and laboratory capacity to support the implementation and enforcement of CITES](#) (CoP17)
- [Overview of CITES permits and certificates](#)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Permits

[Certificate of Scientific Exchange \(COSE\) under the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species \(CITES\)](#)

[3-200-39 Certificate of Scientific Exchange](#) (CITES)

A Certificate of Scientific Exchange (COSE) authorizes the non-commercial loan, donation, or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic, and forensic research specimens as outline in CITES Conference [Resolution 11.15 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#) between scientific institutions currently registered by a CITES Management Authority of their country, of preserved, dried or embedded specimens, herbarium specimens and live plant material which includes a label issued or approved by a Management Authority. All registered institutions are listed on the [CITES website](#).

If the specimens in your application are also listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), you will also need to apply for an ESA Museum permit ([form 3-200-40](#)).

If the species of specimens are protected by other U.S. laws and/or treaties, such as the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, or Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, you are required to obtain additional authorizations prior to any export or re-import of those specimens.

Permit holders of Certificates of Scientific Exchange (COSE) must annually provide a report of their activities to the U.S. CITES Division of Management Authority by using [form 3-200-39a](#).

To Complete this Form you will need the following:

- Contact Information of your Institution/Applicant
- Scientific Collection Information (Specimens/Curation/Records)
- Species Protection Authorizations (as applicable), Endangered Species Act (ESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), Bold and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)
- Depending on your requested activity, you might be required to attach a variety of supporting documentation that demonstrates prior authorization to conduct certain genres of activity (for example, a Marine Mammal Act Authorization)
- Application Processing Fee

Code of Federal Regulations

Title 50: Wildlife and Fisheries

Part 23: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

[50 CFR § 23.48](#) - What are the requirements for a registered scientific institution

(b) *U.S. and foreign general provisions.* The following provisions apply to the registration of scientific institutions and acceptance of shipments from registered scientific institutions:

(1) The receiving and sending scientific institutions must be registered with the Management Authority in their country. Scientists who wish to use this exemption must be affiliated with a registered scientific institution.

(2) A registered scientific institution does not need separate CITES documents for the noncommercial loan, donation, or exchange of preserved, frozen, dried, or embedded museum specimens, herbarium specimens, or live plant material with another registered institution.

(e) *U.S. standard conditions.* Any activity conducted under a certificate of scientific exchange must meet all of the following conditions:

(5) A customs declaration label must be affixed to the outside of each shipping container or package that contains all of the following:

(i) The acronym “CITES.”

(ii) A description of the contents (such as “herbarium specimens”).

(iii) The names and addresses of the sending and receiving registered institutions.

(iv) The signature of a responsible officer of the sending registered scientific institution.

(v) The scientific institution codes of both registered scientific institutions involved in the loan, donation, or exchange.

Government of Canada Environment and Natural Resources Permits

[Canada Application for CITES Registration of Scientific Institutions, CITES Form A5](#)

[Trade in Protected Species: Application for Registration of Scientific Institution](#)

The scientific institution must meet the following conditions in order to be registered and to use a CITES Scientific Certificate:

- A collection of animal and plant specimens recorded in a catalogue is maintained
- Specimens are exchanged with other [CITES-registered](#) institutions (if the other institution is not registered by CITES, CITES Export and/or Import Permits must be used)
- Specimens are herbarium or other preserved, dried or embedded museum specimens, live plant material, or frozen museum specimens *that are currently part of the institution's collection*
- Exchange of specimens is for scientific purposes

Mexico Permits and Certificates ([VUCEM](#))

[Electronic Portal for CITES Permits and Certificates in Mexico](#): Notification to the Parties No. 2015/047, Geneva, August 13, 2015

[Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources](#)

[Authorization, Permit or Certificate of Import, Export or Re-export of Specimens, Parts and Derivatives of Wildlife \(Guidance\)](#)

[Authorization, Permit or Certificate of Import, Export or Re-export of Specimens, Parts and Derivatives of Wildlife](#)

[CITES Authorization, Certificate or Permit](#): Verification Record - Wild flora and fauna, marine resources, forest products and by-products whose purpose is different from trade or industrialization

European Commission [Permits and Certificates](#)

[1.4 Management and Scientific Authorities \(EC\)](#)

[1.6.5 Exchange between scientists and scientific institutions \(Article 7.4 of Council Regulation \(EC\) No 338/97\)](#)

Scientists and scientific institutions often exchange specimens of species listed in the CITES Appendices or in the Annexes of Council Regulation [\(EC\) No 338/97](#), as part of a non-commercial loan or donation. In order to facilitate this exchange and minimize the administrative burden, [Art. 7.4 of Council Regulation \(EC\) No 338/97](#) provides for simplified procedures for dead animal and plant specimens as well as live plants, and allows the use of labels instead of permits or certificates for registered scientists and scientific institutions. The registration of the scientist or scientific institution must be carried out by the Management Authority of the Member State in which they reside. The scientists or institution will then be attributed with a unique registration number, consisting of five digits which are to be indicated on each label.

United Kingdom [Permits and Certificates](#)

The [Animal and Plant Health Agency \(APHA\)](#) issues CITES documentation. It is the UK CITES Management Authority.

[Import/Export/Re-export Application Guidance](#)

CITES Permit Application Form [FED0172](#) ([Guidance](#))

Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy

[Permits and Certificates, Scientific Exchange](#)

[Application for Registration of Scientific Organization for Exchange of Scientific Specimens](#)

Registered scientific institutions may exchange certain specimens of [CITES](#) listed species and Australian native specimens without a permit, provided it is part of an exchange of non-commercial scientific specimens. This exemption for certain scientific specimens is designed to facilitate scientific study, including study into the conservation, management, identification, classification, and taxonomy of species.