A. PROPOSAL

Inclusion of *Pericopsis elata* in Appendix II.

B. PROPOINENTS

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Denmark.

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxonomy

11. Class: Dicotyledoneae
12. Order: Leguminales
13. Family: Leguminosae (Papilionoideae)
14. Species: *Pericopsis elata* (Harms) van Meeuwen
   Synonyms: *Afrormosia elata* Harms
15. Common Names: English: Afrormosia, African Teak
   French: Teck d’Afrique
   Spanish: Kokroda, Awawai
   Ghana: Assamela
   Côte d’Ivoire: Assamela
   Central African Republic, Congo: Obang

16. Code Numbers:

2. Biological Data


22. Population: This species is considered by the National Academy of Sciences (1979) to be facing economic and biological extinction. Natural regeneration is poor and nowhere is the tree’s regrowing adequate to sustain continued commercial production of timber. According to FAO (1986), *Pericopsis elata* is endangered in parts of its geographical range. *In situ* conservation is considered to be a priority for this species by FAO (1990). *Pericopsis elata* is recorded in the Tropical Timber Conservation (TTC) database established for ITTO as Rare in Cameroon, Vulnerable/not threatened in Congo, Rare in Côte d’Ivoire, and Vulnerable in Ghana. In Ghana, *Pericopsis elata* has a limited natural distribution and it has been overcut. Alder (1989) gives the estimated resource life of the species (i.e. the number of years that it can continue to be commercially utilized at the present rate of extraction) as 0 year in Ghana. The need for conservation...
of *P. elata* in Nigeria was noted by Ola-Adams (1977). He suggested that *ex situ* conservation would be appropriate because of heavy exploitation.

23. **Habitat:** *P. elata* grows in drier parts of moist semi-deciduous forests, in the 1000-1500 mm rainfall zone.

### 3. Trade Data

#### 31. National Utilization:

#### 32. **Legal International Trade:** Afrormosia was little known to the trade before the Second World War and the earliest exports from Ghana were made in 1948. Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire became the major suppliers and Afrormosia is still exported as lumber from Ghana. It is the country’s most valuable indigenous wood.

**Export of Pericopsis elata** from Ghana (Lumber) m³

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Source: Timber Industry Development Board, Ghana (N/A = not available)

Congo and Zaire are now major suppliers of this species, and the trade appears to perceive no problems in supply. Stocks of *P. elata* in Congo are mainly concentrated in the relatively unexploited northern forests.

**Production of Pericopsis elata** in Congo m³

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Source: Ministère de l’Économie Forestière (MEF) and Direction des Recherches Forestières et Piscicoles (DREF) reports.

According to DREF reports, in 1989 Congo exported 23,325 m³ of Afrormosia in log form. It is uncertain why there is such a major discrepancy in reported production and export of the timber. This could possibly indicate re-exports or may reflect mistakes in amounted to 32,350 m³. No production was reported for the following two years in Direction des Forêts reports.

Export of Afrormosia from Zaire is restricted by lack of infrastructure and the large distances involved in transporting to the ports. It has been pointed out, for example, that Afrormosia from the Kisangani region travels around 1000 miles by the river Zaire to Kinshasa and a further 225 miles to Matadi. The costs are therefore enormous compared to the situation in West African countries. European organisations have been increasingly interested in investing in Zaire’s forest, however. One commercial group, with concessions of over 3000 sq. miles in 1986, was exporting 6000 m³ of Afrormosia annually, with strong export markets in Japan, the US and Europe (Baker, 1986).

In the recent survey of UK timber traders carried out for ITTO, four companies stated that they currently import *P. elata*, three from Cameroon, one from Ghana.
of *P. elata* in Nigeria was noted by Ola-Adams (1977). He suggested that *ex situ* conservation would be appropriate because of heavy exploitation.

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In the recent survey of UK timber traders carried out for ITTO, four companies stated that they currently import *P. elata*, three from Cameroon, one from Ghana.
and one from Zaire. Two countries reported that imports and demand had decreased and two that they had remained steady. Pericopsis elata is an important species in furniture production in the UK. The principal use of Afrormosia in the US is in boat construction, interior trim and decorative veneer.

33. **Illegal Trade:** No information available.

34. **Potential Trade Threats:** No information available.

4. **Protection Status**

41. **National:** Pericopsis elata is protected by law in Côte d'Ivoire where it is included in a list of protected species given by Decree No. 66-122, 31 March 1966. This law prohibits uprooting and damage but felling is allowed where sites are being developed for timber plantations.

In the Congo Pericopsis elata is given some protection by Law 32/82 which forbids felling, burning or damage.

In Cameroon the minimum exploitable diameter is 1.0 m.

Pericopsis elata occurs in a number of protected areas including Forêt de Nki, Cameroon and Bia National Park, Ghana.

42. **International:** No international conservation measures are known for Pericopsis elata.

43. **Additional Protection Needs:** It has been recommended that Ghana, Cameroon and Zaire should each set aside 2-3 km² of Afrormosia forest as reserves protected from exploitation but where germplasm collection could take place, and that a concerted effort be made to develop Afrormosia silviculture (National Academy of Sciences, 1979).

5. **Information on Similar Species**

According to National Academy of Sciences (1979) Afrormosia has a texture, grain and appearance much like Teak, and some of the "Teak" furniture sold in the United States is actually Afrormosia.

In the UK furniture makers have been looking for timbers to replace Afrormosia, so far without success (Sparkers, pers. com., 1991).

6. **Comments from Countries of Origin**

Comments on a draft of the proposal were solicited from Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Zaire.

7. **Additional Remarks**

None.
8. References


Map showing the distribution of Tropical Rainforest in West and Central Africa.
(Inset is the distribution of *Pericopsis elata* in West Africa, after Howland 1979)

Africa (37 tropical countries)
Total tree cover: 703.1 million ha but only 216.6 million ha is enclosed forests.


- Previous Extent of Tropical Rainforests
- Current Extent of Tropical Rainforests

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- Distribution of *Pericopsis elata* in West Africa
Pericopsis elata (Harms) van Meeuwen