

# Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP18)\*

## Non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic and forensic research specimens

RECALLING Resolutions Conf. 1.4 and Conf. 2.14, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its first and second meetings (Bern, 1976; San José, 1979);

CONSIDERING that Article VII, paragraph 6, of the Convention provides an exemption from the provisions relating to regulation of trade in specimens of species included in Appendices I, II and III for "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 museums specimens, and live plant material which carry a label issued or approved by a Management Authority";

RECOGNIZING that this exemption should apply to animal (non-live) and plant specimens, including forensic research specimens, that are legally acquired by a registered scientific institution and (re-)exported or imported under the authority of this institution;

CONSIDERING that museum needs for research specimens can have adverse impact on small populations of rare animals and plants;

RECALLING the recommendations of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bern, 1976);

### THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ENCOURAGES Parties 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;
2. URGES Parties to contact scientists and scientific institutions in the territory under their jurisdiction to facilitate greater understanding of the scientific exchange provisions of Article VII, paragraph 6, on the non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of scientific specimens;
3. RECOMMENDS that:
  - a) 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;
  - b) in order to reduce the potential impact of research, the Parties encourage their natural history museums, herbaria and forensic research laboratories to inventory their holdings of rare and endangered species and make that information widely available to the Parties and the research community, as appropriate. These inventories will allow researchers to efficiently borrow specimens for study or use forensic information contained in reference databases;
  - c) addenda should be added to the inventories as specimens become available. Scientific and Management Authorities of the Parties can use the information in determining whether further collecting of some rare species may be justifiable, or whether the need already can be met by borrowing specimens from other museums or using forensic information provided by forensic research laboratories;
  - d) Parties urge their museums, herbaria and forensic research laboratories to undertake such inventories and make such information publicly available;
  - e) Registered institutions should be subject to renewal at the discretion of the registering management authority to ensure that only current, valid institutions are eligible for scientific exchange; and

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\* Amended at the 12th and 18th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

- f) The Secretariat shall issue a Notification every five years requesting that Parties review and update their register of scientific institutions and communicate any changes to the Secretariat
- g) Parties implement the exemption for scientific exchange in Article VII, paragraph 6, as follows:
  - i) registration of scientific and forensic research institutions should be done in a manner that extends the exemption to all such institutions meeting certain standards in each Party as determined to be bona fide upon the advice of a Scientific Authority;
  - ii) each Management Authority should communicate to the Secretariat as soon as practicable the names and addresses and the type of research they can provide, of those scientific institutions registered, and the Secretariat without delay then communicate this information to all other Parties;
  - iii) the requirement that the container used to transport the specimens or samples carry a label issued or approved by a Management Authority should be met by authorizing the use of Customs Declaration labels, provided they bear the acronym CITES, identification of contents as herbarium specimens, preserved, dried or embedded museum specimens (including non-live animal specimens) or live plant material for scientific study, for forensic analysis or for diagnostic purposes, the name and address of the sending institution and the codes of the exporting and importing institutions over the signature of a responsible officer of that registered scientific institution; or a label issued by a Management Authority containing the same information and the users of which would be responsible to that body;
  - iv) to prevent abuse of this exemption, it should be limited to shipments of legally obtained specimens, including specimens that are used for wildlife forensic research, as outlined in Annex 1, between registered scientific institutions and, if trade is to or from a non-Party, the Secretariat shall ensure that the institution in this State meets the same standards for registration, as indicated by competent authorities of the non-party governments;
  - v) the exemption should be applied to include frozen museum specimens, duplicate herbarium specimens, wildlife forensic research specimens (as outlined in Annex 1), diagnostic samples of the type listed in Annex 4 of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18)<sup>1</sup> and all other types of scientific specimens named in Article VII, paragraph 6, including those that are legally collected in one State for shipment to another State as non-commercial loans, donations, or exchanges;
  - vi) the standards for registration of scientific institutions should be as follows:
    - A. collections of animal or plant specimens, and records ancillary to them, permanently housed and professionally curated;
    - B. specimens accessible to all qualified users, including those from other institutions;
    - C. all accessions properly recorded in a permanent catalogue;
    - D. permanent records maintained for loans and transfers to other institutions;
    - E. specimens acquired primarily for purposes of research that is to be reported in scientific publications;
    - F. specimens prepared and collections arranged in a manner that ensures their utility;
    - G. accurate data maintained on specimen labels, permanent catalogues and other records;
    - H. acquisition and possession of specimens accord with the laws of the State in which the scientific institution is located; and
    - I. all specimens of species included in Appendix I permanently and centrally housed under the direct control of the scientific institution, and managed in a manner to preclude the use of such specimens for decoration, trophies or other purposes incompatible with the principles of the Convention;

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<sup>1</sup> Corrected by the Secretariat following the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

- vii) the standards for registration of forensic research institutions should be as follows:
  - A. forensic research institutions should be determined by the Management Authority as suitable to provide wildlife forensic analysis;
  - B. animal or plant specimens acquired primarily for purposes of research, to expand forensic research capabilities through development of wildlife reference databases, should be properly recorded in a permanent catalogue;
  - C. permanent records should contain information about loans and transfers to other institutions and the purpose of the transaction;
  - D. institutions should make reference to their quality management system used for research conducted;
  - E. accurate data, for example scientific name, weight, geographical origin, source code, purpose and result of research, should be recorded in the permanent catalogue, and specimens should be accurately and adequately labelled;
  - F. acquisition and possession of specimens accord with the laws of the State in which the scientific institution is located; and
  - G. all specimens of species included in Appendix I permanently and centrally housed under the direct control of the forensic institution, and managed in a manner to preclude the use of such specimens for decoration, trophies or other purposes incompatible with the principles of the Convention;
- viii) diagnostic testing laboratories recognised as an official reference laboratory or collaborating centre by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or laboratories included in the electronic directory of laboratories that conduct wildlife forensic testing maintained by the Secretariat would qualify for registration;
- ix) when registering scientific institutions, Parties should provide to the Secretariat the name, address, contact details (including, where practicable, an email and telephone number) as well as the types of services (taxonomic, species conservation research or wildlife forensic research) provided by the institutions for inclusion on the CITES Scientific Institutions register;
- x) scientists who keep private collections should be encouraged to affiliate with registered scientific institutions in order that they may take advantage of the exemption provided in Article VII, paragraph 6;
- xi) all States should take precautions to avoid damage or loss to science of museum, herbarium, forensic and diagnostic specimens or of any accompanying data;
- xii) this exemption should be implemented to ensure that non-commercial exchange of scientific specimens is not interrupted and that it occurs in a way consistent with the terms of the Convention;
- xiii) if specimens are exchanged, scientific institutions should notify the Party through which they are registered on an annual basis what types and volumes of specimens were exchanged; and
- xiv) a five-character coding system for identifying registered institutions should be adopted; the first two characters should be the two-letter country code established by the International Organization for Standardization, as provided in the CITES Directory; the last three characters should be a unique number assigned to each institution by a Management Authority, in the case of a Party, or by the Secretariat, in the case of a non-Party; and

4. REPEALS the Resolutions listed hereunder:

- a) Resolution Conf. 1.4 (Bern, 1976) *Museum and herbarium inventories*; and
- b) Resolution Conf. 2.14 (San José, 1979) *Guidelines for non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum and herbarium specimens*.

**Annex** Examples of the types of forensic reference samples that may qualify for provisions under non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum and herbarium specimens and their use (**Note:** Depending on the specific circumstances, the type of sample and typical sample size eligible for exchange under this Resolution may differ.)

Type of sample	Typical size of sample	Use of sample
blood and its derivative components	5ml maximum for liquid samples or dry blood sample on a microscope slide, filter paper or swab	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis
internal tissues (botanical or zoological), fixed	pieces of tissues (5 mm <sup>3</sup> -25 mm <sup>3</sup> ) in a fixative or histological glass slide containing a +/-5um section of fixed tissue	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis
internal tissues (botanical or zoological), frozen	pieces of tissues (5 mm <sup>3</sup> -25 mm <sup>3</sup> ),	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis
internal tissues, fresh (botanical or zoological, excluding ova, sperm and embryos)	pieces of tissues (5 mm <sup>3</sup> -25 mm <sup>3</sup> )	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis
external tissues including hair, skin, feathers, scales, bone, egg shell, teeth, ivory, horn, leaves, bark, seeds, fruit or flowers	individual samples with or without fixative for ivory: pieces of ivory approximately 3 cm x 3 cm and 1 cm thick or less depending on analysis method, in accordance with <i>ICCWC Guidelines on methods and procedures for ivory and laboratory analysis</i> <sup>1</sup>  for rhino horn: small amounts of powder/shavings sealed in a tamper proof sample bottle, in accordance with the <i>Procedure for Rhino horn DNA Sampling</i> <sup>2</sup>	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis; age analysis;
buccal/cloacal/ mucus/nasal/urinary tract/rectal swabs	Small amounts of tissue or cells on a swab in a tube	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis
cell lines and tissue cultures	no limitation of sample size	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis; age analysis
DNA or RNA (purified)	Up to 0.5 ml volumes per individual specimen of purified DNA or RNA	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis; age analysis
secretions, (saliva, venom, milk, plant secretions)	1-5 ml in vials	species identification; determination of geographic origin; sex determination; individual identification; parentage testing; toxicology analysis; age analysis

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Guidelines\\_Ivory.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/Wildlife/Guidelines_Ivory.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Republic of South Africa, Department of Environmental Affairs, *Procedures for Rhino horn DNA Sampling*