

INDIA TO SEEK BOOST TO PROTECTION STATUS OF 5 SPECIES AT CITES

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

India is among the parties proposing uplifting of the Indian Star Tortoise from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I.

India has submitted proposals regarding changes to the listing of various wildlife species in the CITES secretariat meeting, scheduled later this month in Geneva, Switzerland.

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species on Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international treaty to ensure that trade in wild animals and plants do not threaten their survival.

The proposals submitted are regarding changes in the listing of the smooth-coated otter, small-clawed otter, Indian star tortoise, Tokay gecko, wedgefish and Indian rosewood.

The country seeks to boost the protection of all the five animal species as they are facing a high risk of international trade.

For the Indian rosewood, the proposal is to remove the species from CITES Appendix II. The species covered by CITES are listed in three appendices on the degree of protection they require.

India is among the parties proposing the re-listing of the star tortoise from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I. The species faces two threats: loss of habitat to agriculture and illegal harvesting for the pet trade.

With regard to the two otter species, India, Nepal and the Philippines have proposed that the listing be moved from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I for the more endangered species. A similar proposal has been made to include the Tokay gecko in Appendix I.

Saket Badola, head of TRAFFIC India told *The Hindu*, that India would also support proposals, such as the boosting of protection status for tarantulas, made by other countries. TRAFFIC is an international wildlife trade monitoring network.

Mr. Badola said that the proposals from India on lesser known species indicate the broadening of the conservation spectrum.

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