

**25 May 2020 – Joint statement by CSFI-CAFIM, FIM and Pearle*
regarding the implementation of the exemptions contained in Annotation #15**

The undersigned organizations representing the music industry are pleased to contribute to the survey carried out by the CITES Secretariat about the implementation of the exemptions contained in Annotation #15 for finished musical instruments, parts, and accessories, and the conservation implications thereof, pursuant to decision 18.321 made at the CoP18, in August 2019.

For all the musicians whose jobs rely on their ability to travel, and particularly for orchestras, ensembles and music groups, the end of non-commercial exemption in Annotation #15 would create acute difficulties and uncertainties. It would not only hinder international cultural activities but also generate unnecessary burdens for CITES management authorities. Customs and permit application delays are very costly and disruptive for permit applicants and can entail the missing of a performance. This is a situation that no musician, orchestra, ensemble or music group can afford, particularly in the context of the disastrous economic consequences of the Covid-19 crisis for the entire live performance sector.

The making of musical instruments requires minimal quantities of rosewood and Bubinga. For example, guitars, violins, violas, double-basses, clarinets, piccolos, oboes, flutes, xylophones and many pianos contain less than 10kg of rosewood. Marimbas and some pianos generally contain less than 30kg per instrument. Instrument makers, retailers, and musicians rely on the trade in instruments for their livelihoods and produce art that uplifts human experience. In aggregate, these instruments represent a tiny proportion of the worldwide trade in rosewoods and *Bubinga*. According to our data, less than 3% of the global consumption of *Dalbergia* is used for the making of musical instruments. In 2018, the global music industry consumed 6,000 trees to manufacture both oboes and clarinets. This figure dropped down to 1,500 in 2019.

Instrumental manufacturing is, therefore, a small sector representing only a tiny part of the *Dalbergia/Bubinga* exploited worldwide. Out of 250 existing species, no more than ten species of *Dalbergia* are used for musical instrument manufacturing. Most of those *Dalbergia* used by musical instrument manufacturers, such as *Dalbergia melanoxylon* or *latifolia*, come from plantation woods. The outstanding added value that these wood species bring to the sound of musical instruments is the result of ancestral know-how. Not only does its use by the sector of musical instruments not endanger the preservation of the habitat of these natural resources but, on the contrary, it brings high financial value to these woods, thus preventing them from being replaced by agricultural and forestry crops for commercial purpose, at the expense of biodiversity.

The music industry and those that supply wood product inputs to music instrument manufacturers actively support efforts to conserve rosewood and *Bubinga* as well as to study their biology, conservation, and trade. Protecting these species is a priority for us to ensure the rational and sustainable exploitation of tropical forests, hence the preservation of the diversity of timbers. This is why members of the music community are directly involved in projects aiming to improve forest management and to preserve biodiversity through reforestation of tropical forests. For example, in France, several replanting initiatives have emerged. The first one, initiated by the CSFI and some of its members (Buffet-Crampon, Henri Selmer Paris, F. Lorée Paris, Marigaux Paris and organisations such as ALADFI, UNFI and APLG), consists of financial support to the ABCP¹ association for the replanting of *Dalbergia melanoxylon* in Tanzania, which is essential for the making of clarinets. Furthermore, the APLG (Association of Guitar Luthiers) collaborates with the American association *One Tree Planted*² to set up projects for the replanting of endangered wood species. Likewise, the *Anjanaharibe* project in the Makira Natural Park (Northeastern Madagascar), which fights against intentional burning of trees and unregulated chopping of exotic woods such as ebony, rosewood, and palisander, is supported by the German association of music instrument manufacturers and the German Orchestras Association³.

For these reasons, we continue to believe that it is both necessary and appropriate to exempt finished musical instruments, parts, and accessories from the permitting process. As a matter of course, we remain actively engaged in CITES conservation and trade discussions in the long term, particularly on rosewood conservation and permitting, and the effectiveness of annotations.

¹ <https://www.blackwoodconservation.org>

² <https://onetreepanted.org>

³ <http://eben-holz.org/projektgeb.htm>

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