**ENVIRONMENT**

**CONEVNTION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES**

**WHY IN NEWS**?

THE HINDU: India has been removed from the **Review of Significant trade for Red Sanders**(listed in Appendix II) by CITES

**BACKGROUND**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement that aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species.

**FOUNDING**

CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN.

The [text of the Convention](https://cites.org/eng/disc/text.php) was finally agreed at a meeting of representatives of 80 countries in Washington, D.C., United States of America, on 3 March 1973, and on 1 July 1975 CITES entered in force.

**PARTIES**

184 Parties( including EU)

Though CITES is **legally binding** it does not take the place of national laws. Rather it provides a framework respected by each Party

Secretariat: Geneva, Switzerland(Administered by UNEP)

**IMPORTANT FEATURES**

* CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of listed taxa(in Appendix I, II, III) to controls as they move across international borders
* Four types of trade are recognised by CITES - **import, export, re-export** (export of any specimen that has previously been imported) and **introduction from the sea** (transportation into a state of specimens of any species which were taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any state).
* Definition of specimens: plant/ animal – dead/alive/parts or derivatives

**CITES APPENDICES**

**Appendix I**

Includes taxa that are threatened with extinction.

Commercial trade in wild-sourced specimens of these taxa is not permitted and non-commercial trade is strictly controlled by requiring an import permit and export permit to be granted by the relevant Management Authorities in each country before the trade occurs.

Eg: Red Panda

**Appendix II**

Includes taxa that are not necessarily threatened with extinction, but trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

Any trade in Appendix II taxa standardly requires a CITES export permit or re-export certificate to be granted by the Management Authority of the exporting country before the trade occurs.

**Appendix III**

Includes species that are protected in at least one country, and that country has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade.

Any trade in Appendix III species standardly requires a CITES export permit (if sourced from the country that listed the species) or a certificate of origin (from any other country) to be granted before the trade occurs.

Appendix III can be unilaterally changed by a party

**EXEMPTIONS**

* Personal/Household effects
* **Artificially propagated/Captive bred specimens** (incase of Appendix I taxa commercial use requires only export permit(Similar to Appendix II) whereas for non commercial use they may be traded with a certificate issued by Management authority)
* Scientific Exchange: permits and certificates are not required for the non-commercial loan, donation or exchange between scientific or forensic institutions that have been registered by a Management Authority of their State.
* Pre-convention specimens

**CONFERENCE OF PARTIES**

The Conference of the Parties (CoP) is held once every three years.

COP 3 (1981) was held in New Delhi

**REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE**

* This is a process through which the CITES Standing Committee places increased scrutiny on the exports of a species from a country to determine if the Convention is being properly implemented.
* India has been **under the Review of Significant Trade (RST) process for Red Sanders since 2004.**
* In the past, it has even led to a recommendation to suspend trade with India.