



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
**BUREAU OF CUSTOMS**

December 5, 2017

**CUSTOMS MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR**  
NO. 212-2017

To: All Deputy Commissioners  
All Directors and Division Chiefs  
All District/Port Collectors  
And Others Concerned

**Subject: Interpol Purple Notice/Illegal Import of Saussurea Costus  
Roots**

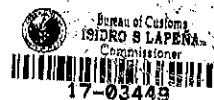
Attached is the letter dated November 27, 2017 of Undersecretary Allan C. Guisihan, Executive Director, Philippine Center on Transnational Crime, Office of the President endorsing a copy of the Interpol Purple Notice with Control No. P-711/11-2017, regarding illegal importation of *Saussurea Costus Roots* through misdeclaration.

This plant species has been listed under Appendix-I of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

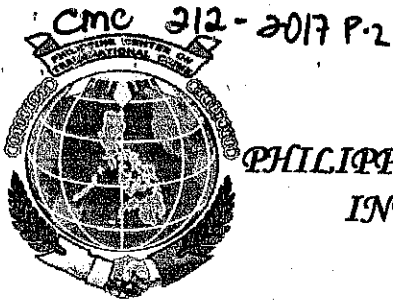
For your information and guidance.

For record purposes, please confirm the dissemination of this circular throughout your offices within fifteen (15) days from receipt hereof.

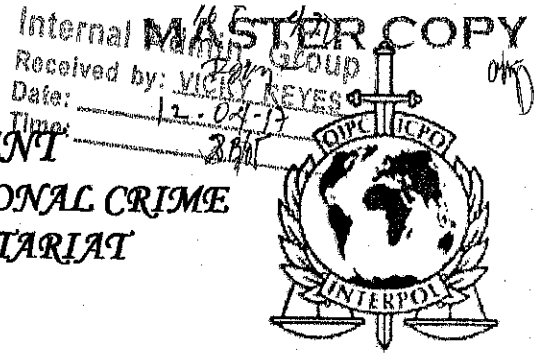
  
**ISIDRO S LAPEÑA, PhD, CSEE**  
Commissioner



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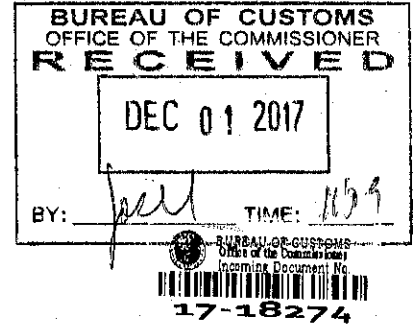


Republic of the Philippines  
**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**  
**PHILIPPINE CENTER ON TRANSNATIONAL CRIME**  
**INTERPOL NCB MANILA SECRETARIAT**  
Camp Crame, Quezon City



November 27, 2017

**COMMISSIONER ISIDRO LAPENA**  
Bureau of Customs  
Port Area, Manila




Dear Commissioner LAPENA:

We are pleased to provide your Office with copy of the INTERPOL Purple Notice No. P-711/11-2017 published upon the request of INTERPOL New Delhi regarding the illegal importation of Saussurea Costus Roots under mis-declaration, a species enlisted under Appendix-1 of CITES and Schedule-VI of the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972.

This Notice is strongly recommended for circulation to law enforcement agencies to alert them about this Modus Operandi so that they may take whatever preventive and precautionary measures deemed appropriate.

Thank you and warm regards.

Very truly yours,

  
**USEC ALLAN C. GUISHAN**  
Executive Director, PCTC/  
Head, IP NCB Manila Secretariat

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Control No.: P- 711/11 -2017

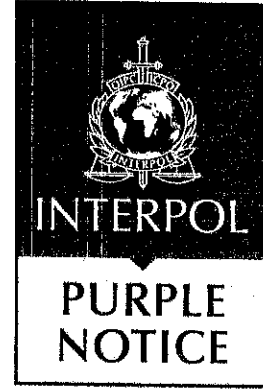
Requesting country: India

File No.: 2017/280639-1

Date of publication: 15 January 2015

Last update on: 15 November 2017

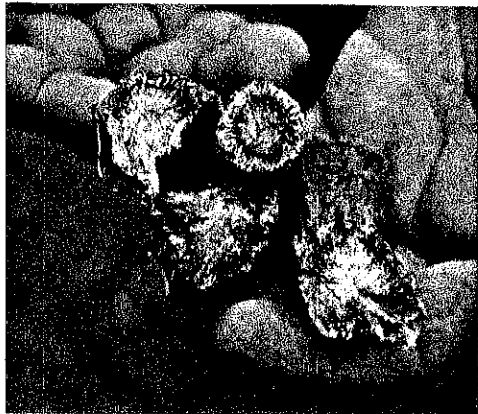
MASTER COPY



## MODUS OPERANDI

<b>Type(s) of offence:</b>	Illegal imports of Saussurea costus roots under mis-declaration, a species enlisted under Appendix-I of CITES and Schedule- VI of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
<b>Date of the offence</b>	09/03/2017, 21/04/2017 & 02/06/2017
<b>Place of offence:</b>	Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, Nhava Sheva, Maharashtra, India
<b>Country of offence:</b>	China and India
<b>Circumstances of offence:</b>	Customs referred sample of plant roots to the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau of India (WCCB) for examination. From the perusal of documents, it was found that in the description of import material, the plant roots have been declared as Puskarmoola (Inula L). However on physical examination of the sample the roots it appeared to be that of Saussurea costus. Due to the inconsistencies, the decision was taken to examine the consignments at the Port. On examination, the plant roots were found to be the roots of Saussurea costus and not Puskarmoola (Inula L) as declared in documents of import.
<b>Description of modus operandi: Object/ device/concealment method/procedure:</b>	All the three import consignments of Saussurea costus roots were being imported under mis-declaration of the Inula racemosa roots. The plant roots of Inula racemosa morphologically resemble with the roots of Saussurea costus roots to some extent. The Ports of Loading of the consignments was Shanghai and Xingang (China) under the BL No.YMLUS231183063, A567A06388 & OOLU2586938360 and were imported to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, Maharashtra, India. The exporter was Zhejian Medicines and Health Products Import & Export Co. Ltd, ZMC Building, 101-2.N, Zhongshan road, Hangzhou, 310003, China.

CMC



**Additional information:**

*Saussurea costus* has been categorized as a Critically Endangered plant species by the IUCN and endemic to small patches of the Himalayan mountain ranges in wild e.g Pakistan, China and India. Roots of this plant are widely used in the Traditional Medicines such as in Ayurvedic Formulation, Traditional Chinese Medicines and Tibetan Medicines. The oil extracted from this plant is also used in preparation of Incense, Perfumery compounds etc. and the roots of this plant are used locally, nationally and internationally. By virtue of unregulated collection and over-exploitation and rampant illegal trade, this plant species has been placed internationally under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora) and also protected by law within the Union territory of the Government of India through the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Trade, export, import, cultivation, possession, picking, uprooting of this plant and parts or products are controlled nationally by the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and also is a punishable offence.

**The species is listed under the Schedule-VI of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 and Appendix I of CITES.**

omc 212-2017 P5

**Points of contact:** INTERPOL New Delhi  
 INTERPOL General Secretariat Command and Coordination Centre

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**Recommended precautionary action:**  
 It is recommended that this notice may be circulated to the concerned regulatory / law enforcement agencies to alert them about the Modus operandi and sensitize them that the consignments declared under the description / Common Name as *Inula L*, *Inula racemosa*, *Pushkarmoola* invariably be checked to rule out the illegal shipment and mis-declaration in *Saussurea costus*.

**NCB Reference:** IP-2/82/2017