



ASYCUDA eCITES System

Online access to electronic Permit management

Within the framework of the MOU signed between the CITES Secretariat and UNCTAD, and a project sponsored by the Government of Switzerland, both organisations have jointly developed a cloud-based electronic permit system offering automated support for permit application, processing, issuance and reporting. The technical infrastructure of the core service is initially hosted and maintained by UNCTAD, i.e. Software as a Service (SaaS).

This electronic permit solution is targeted primarily to the Parties to the Convention that do not have access to electronic permit management systems. The ASYCUDA eCITES system, as it is called, does not require advanced technical expertise or IT systems in the Management Authorities (MAs) and is developed to improve the MAs' capacity to control trade of CITES listed species.

The *eCITES BaseSolution* can be of particular interest for Parties to the CITES Convention without a permitting system, and wishing to deploy an off-the-shelf platform, which is fully compliant with the convention and automation recommendations. The system is in operations by a few competent CITES Management Authorities since 2020, and can be deployed in any country at their requests. Parties may opt for the *AugmentedSolution* if very specific national requirements are to be accommodated and/or where automated electronic exchange with other Parties is a priority.

The *eCITES BaseSolution* or *AugmentedSolution* can be implemented through a technical assistance agreement between UNCTAD and the beneficiary country. The implementation steps are outlined in the official *eCITES* presentation, and summarized in the section *eCITES BaseSolution* implementation in the table below.

Electronic Permit Management – Base vs Augmented Solution <i>eCITES – Business Requirements, Information Flows, System Capabilities/Functionalities</i>	Base solution	Augmented solution
eCITES Implementation Framework and Electronic Permitting requirements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned with the 4 pillars of eCITES Implementation Framework 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned with the CITES Electronic Permitting Toolkit V 3.0 on the use of common information exchange formats, protocols and standards for Parties implementing CITES e-permitting systems 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliant with Species+/CITES Checklist Application Programming Interface (API) 	✓	✓
Electronic Permit Management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation of the elementary CITES permit procedures enabling paperless environment 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability and transparency in the permit process: who, what, when, where 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instant access to all permits - application, pending and issued 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction between traders and government officials is on-line, formalized and recorded 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More efficient and better controlled permit processes, traceability of all decisions and reduced opportunities for informal procedures 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures conformity with the provisions of the CITES Convention 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access from any device with an internet browser 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible configuration for automatic assessment of permit processing fees, based on conditions and rules. Facility to record payments using ePayment, Prepayment Accounts or manual 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility to adopt stricter domestic measures and to include some non-CITES species 	✓	✓

Electronic Permit Management – Base vs Augmented Solution <i>eCITES – Business Requirements, Information Flows, System Capabilities/Functionalities</i>	Base solution	Augmented solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation of other processes to support various business models and national legislations 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened Legal Acquisition and Non-Detriment Finding: Advanced quota control, traceability, workflow with Scientific Authority, assignment of tasks 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration and maintenance of a database of registered facilities 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation of exemptions and special procedures applicable for particular cases such as Personal effects & Household effects, Tourist souvenirs, Travelling exhibitions, In transit/transshipments 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates to facilitate and expedite trade having negligible impact, or none, on the conservation of the species concerned 		✓
Electronic Control		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling Customs Authority and other Enforcement Authorities to fulfil their tasks using mobile devices 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic Customs Risk Management for CITES listed species and targeted controls 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reuse eCITES data for traceability, end-to-end control and visibility of the supply chain 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic permit exchange with national Customs and border control agencies including Single Window integration 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of specimens of signatures and stamps of Management Authorities 		✓
Electronic Exchange		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe, secure and reliable cross border electronic exchange and verification of CITES permit data with EPIX (Electronic Permit Information Exchange system) 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information exchange with other law enforcement systems & databases e.g. nCEN (WCO), SADC-TWIX (TRAFFIC), ETIS (TRAFFIC) 		✓
Electronic Reporting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report on trade in CITES-listed species in line with the standard format and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission for CITES annual reports 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc reports on CITES Trade 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports on non-CITES regulated species 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dashboard with ranking of traded CITES-listed species and type of permit issued by year 	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual illegal trade report on all seizures for violations involving CITES-listed species, using the standard format for the CITES annual illegal trade report and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc reports on quota use, tags management and on actual quantities exported. Customized reports on other purposes than trade volumes and illegal trade 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting reports on permit processing fees 		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customized reports and statistical analysis to strengthen NDFs 		✓

Key principles for selecting the solution: maximizing business value ('operational improvement') and maintaining cost efficiency ('value for money') while ensuring a seamless transition from the current working procedures to the new system ('no disruptions').



While the technical infrastructure of the core service is initially hosted and maintained by UNCTAD (SaaS), countries/MAs own their respective system implementations, including the source code of the system. A Party may choose to operate the solution in their own country, or within a regional eCITES centre that is supported by a group of countries.



📍 UNCTAD / ASYCUDA
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

📺 X in @UNCTAD ASYCUDA
✉ ecites@asycuda.org
💻 asycuda.org



📍 CITES Secretariat
Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8-14
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

X @CITES
✉ info@cites.org
💻 cites.org

