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## NEWSFLASH

### Fact Check: Travelling with Pernambuco Bows Still Possible

Recently rumours have circulated suggesting that it is no longer possible to travel internationally with bows made of Pernambuco wood. This is **not accurate**. Musicians can still **legally travel** with finished bows made of Pernambuco (*Paubrasilia echinata*), provided the wood was harvested and traded in compliance with existing international regulations.

**This message provides the key information music groups and musicians should know – please circulate it to your respective members.**

### What has caused this confusion?

Pernambuco is a threatened species native to Brazil's Atlantic forest and is protected under both Brazilian law and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The wood has been used for over 200 years in the making of high-quality bows, many of which are now located outside Brazil and have been passed down across generations of musicians.

To protect remaining wild populations, Brazil and international stakeholders have invested in conservation, including plantation-based cultivation. The **CITES listing of Pernambuco under Appendix II** allows for regulated and sustainable trade, provided there is documentation and CITES permitting at the point of first export from Brazil.

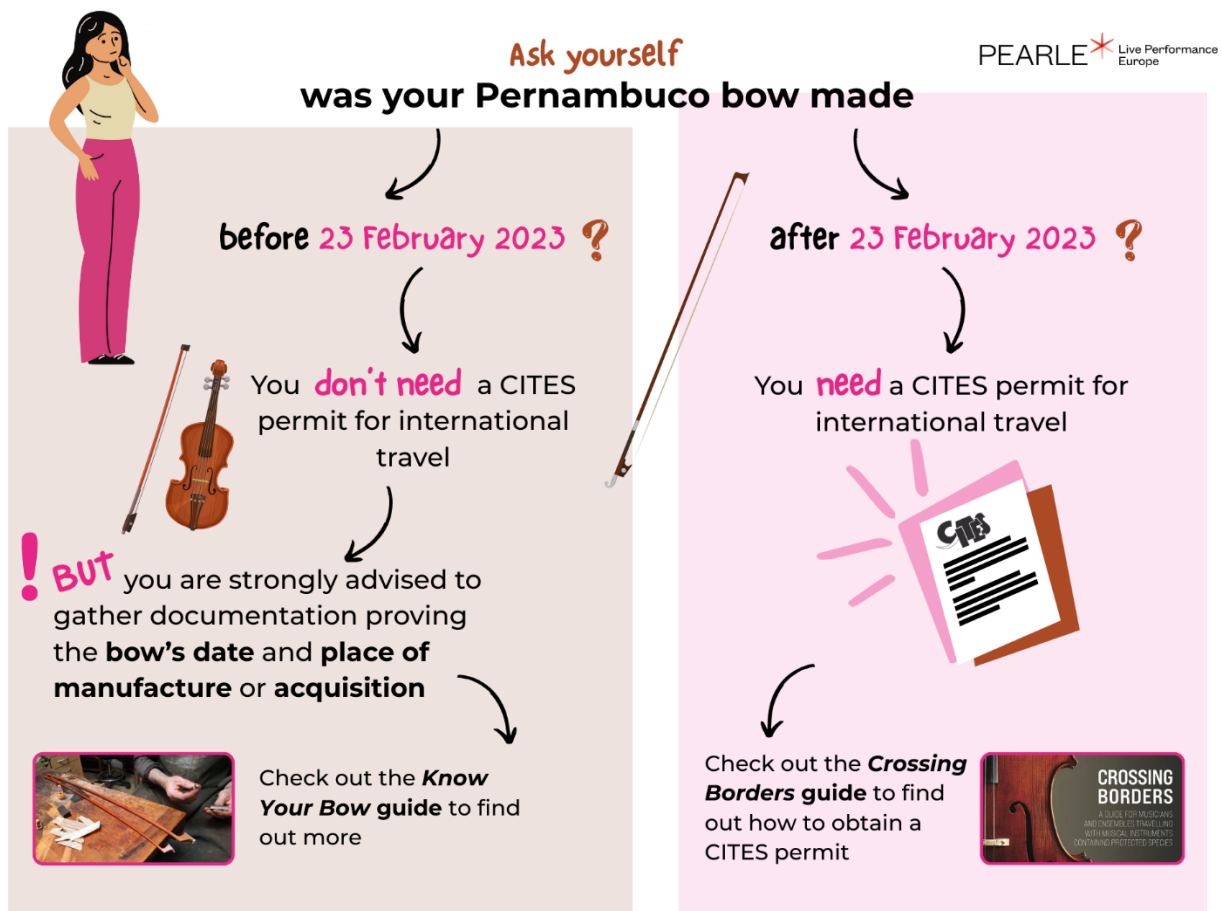
The rumours may have stemmed from ongoing discussions in Brazil on potentially requesting a stricter listing under **Appendix I**, which would prohibit most trade, including the sale and international movement of bows—even finished ones. Such a move **has not been adopted**. Pernambuco remains listed under **Appendix II**.

### What are the current rules?

**Finished Pernambuco bows that were made and already located outside of Brazil before 23 February 2023, do not require a CITES permit for international travel** (unless they contain other materials regulated under CITES, such as ivory or tortoiseshell). This is because these bows fall outside the scope of the updated CITES export rules, which only apply to Pernambuco bows leaving Brazil for the first time on or after that date.

However, **musicians are strongly advised to gather documentation** proving the bow's date and place of manufacture or acquisition, to avoid potential issues when traveling or reselling the bow.

Since **23 February 2023**, all **finished Pernambuco bows exported from Brazil for the first time** must be accompanied by a CITES permit.



## Why keeping Pernambuco under Appendix II is important

### Moving Pernambuco to Appendix I could:

- Severely hinder reforestation efforts and plantation-based trade that help relieve pressure on wild populations.
- Create an **excessive burden** on musicians, orchestras, and bow makers due to the need for permits for virtually all bows.
- Impede conservation and documentation efforts that are currently working well under the existing framework.

### Maintaining the Appendix II listing:

- Prevents illegal exploitation of wild trees.
- Supports scientific and conservation cooperation.
- Ensures sustainable use of plantation-grown Pernambuco wood.
- Keeps traditional bow making and international performance practices viable.

### **In conclusion**

While Pernambuco remains a protected species, international travel with bows made from this wood continues to be possible under current regulations. Musicians are encouraged to stay informed, gather appropriate documentation, and support sustainable practices. Pearle\*

will continue to advocate for keeping Pernambuco under CITES Appendix II, ensuring a balanced approach that protects the species while maintaining the cultural significance of music and instrument making.

Pearle\* follows closely the discussions at the international level on the CITES convention. Should there be any changes in future, Pearle\* will inform members accordingly. Stay tuned through our news posts!

## Useful resources

- [Know Your Bow: Tips for Owners and Users of Pernambuco Bows](#)
- [Pernambuco & Cites - an Overview for Musicians on the Implications of Listing Options](#)
- [Crossing Borders: A Guide for Musicians and Ensembles Travelling with Musical Instruments containing Protected Species](#)
- [CITES Appendices](#)