



Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Background

- The aim of CITES is to ensure that international trade of wild animal and plant species does not threaten their survival.
- CITES three appendices that list internationally-traded wild animal and plant species:
 - **Appendix I:** species endangered due to international trade, permitting such trade only in exceptional circumstances
 - **Appendix II:** species that may become endangered if their trade is not regulated, thus they require controls aimed at preventing unsustainable use, maintaining ecosystems, and preventing species from entering Appendix I
 - **Appendix III:** species subject to domestic regulation by a Party requesting the cooperation of other Parties to control international trade in these species.
- Over 40,900 species—including roughly 6,610 species of animals and 34,310 species of plants—are listed under CITES
- Parties regulate international trade of CITES listed species through a system of permits and certificates that are required before specimens of these species are imported, exported, or introduced from the sea
- Each Party is required to adopt national legislation and to designate two national authorities, namely, a Management Authority responsible for issuing permits and certificates based on the advice of a Scientific Authority
- These two national authorities also assist with CITES enforcement through cooperation with customs, police, and other appropriate agencies
- Parties maintain trade records that are forwarded annually to the CITES Secretariat, thus enabling the compilation of statistical information on the global volume of international trade in an appendix-listed species.

Principles in the Rio Declaration covered by CITES include:

- All species threatened with extinction which are or may be affected by trade must be subject to particularly strict regulation in order not to endanger further their survival and must only be authorized in exceptional circumstances (Principle 2)

This factsheet on **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** is included in the comprehensive report: *Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)*, pp. 18–21.