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Sustaining wildlife

Protecting the Australian environment

Tackling wildlife crime

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

The global trade in wildlife and wildlife products involves thousands of species of animals and plants, which are traded in a wide variety of forms.

Live animals are traded as pets, livestock and zoo exhibits, while live plants are traded as ornamentals or crops. Non-live parts and derivatives are found in clothing and accessories, foodstuffs, complementary medicines and furniture.

Tourists and travellers also contribute to international trade by buying souvenirs and collecting hunting trophies. International trade, as opposed to domestic trade, is characterised by exposure to billions of potential buyers, with essentially limitless funds.

The demand created by the global marketplace for some products has had a devastating effect on the wild populations of certain animal and plant species. Some of these species have in the past been hunted or harvested to the point of extreme endangerment.

These effects have been exacerbated by increased global demand, driven by population growth, and ever-improving transport and communication technologies.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was drafted in 1973 in response to the decline in wild populations of many animal and plant species as a result of unregulated international trade. CITES entered into force on 1 July 1975 and became enforceable under Australian law on 27 October 1976.

### CITES Management and Scientific Authorities

Every signatory to CITES is required to designate a management authority, responsible for administering CITES in that nation. The management authority has particular responsibility for issuing permits, compliance, enforcement and reporting matters.

The work of the management authority is supported by a scientific authority. A major function of the scientific authority is to determine whether exports would be detrimental to the survival of the species, before the management authority permits their export.

In Australia, both the management and scientific authorities are located within the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts. CITES is administered under Part 13A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act).

Like many signatories, Australia relies on its customs service to implement CITES at national borders.

Contact details for other CITES authorities around the world may be found on the CITES website, at [www.cites.org/common/directy/e\\_directy.html](http://www.cites.org/common/directy/e_directy.html)

### CITES Appendices

Species subject to regulation under CITES are included by agreement of the parties in one of three appendices:

#### Appendix I

These are species threatened with extinction which are affected by international trade. Trade in specimens of these species is subject to particularly strict. Trade is generally prohibited, or permitted only in exceptional circumstances authorised by the CITES Secretariat.

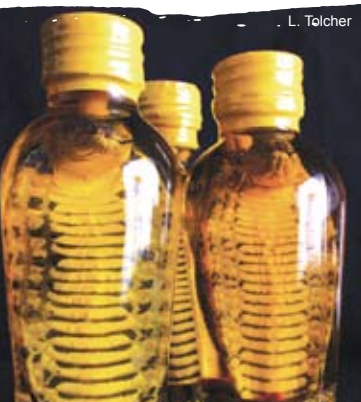
#### Appendix II

These are species which are not imminently threatened with extinction but may become so unless their trade is subject to regulation.

#### Appendix III

Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country and there is a request for other CITES parties to help control the trade.

# wildlife trade **fact sheet**



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## **CITES permits**

Parties implement CITES chiefly through a rigorous permitting regime. Permitting requirements are based on the Appendix on which the species in question is included. Consideration is also given with regard to the purpose of the transaction, the age of the specimens, and the source of the specimens (eg taken from the wild or bred in captivity).

CITES permits contain certain information in a standard form, and may only be issued by a CITES Management Authority.

## **For further information please contact:**

**International Wildlife Trade Section  
Department of the Environment, Water,  
Heritage and the Arts**

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Email: [wildlifetrade@environment.gov.au](mailto:wildlifetrade@environment.gov.au)

Website: <http://www.environment.gov.au/travel>

Or visit the CITES website: [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)

Protecting  
the world's  
endangered  
species



PLEASE NOTE: The material in this fact sheet is provided for general information only and should not be relied upon for the purpose of a particular matter. While efforts have been made to keep this material current, it may not exactly reflect Commonwealth legislation or Australia's international obligations. For further information call the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts on 02 6274 1900.