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Title: **For actions against trade with endangered species**

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1 The illegal trade of endangered animals is the fourth biggest illegal trade in
2 the world. If alive, animals can be moved all across the world to be sold as
3 exotic pets. If dead, their parts and derivatives are sold as everything from
4 ingredients in traditional medicines and food to clothing and accessories.

5 In 1973 the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild
6 flora and fauna (CITES) was created. The stated goal was to ensure that the
7 trade of wild animals and plants weren't the driving force behind their
8 extinction. To this date 180 countries have ratified the convention.

9 In order for trade to be legal it needs to be traceable and sustainable, with
10 different criteria based on the classification of the species. The
11 classifications are laid out in appendices to the convention, of which the EUs
12 version is as follows:

- 13 • Appendix A lists species which are the most endangered and which must not
14 be part of generalised trade, with some exceptions made in certain
15 circumstances.

- 16 • Appendix B lists species which are not necessarily endangered at the
17 moment, but are at a significant risk if trade is not regulated

18 • Appendix C lists species where the country of origin has requested the
19 inclusion of a species to ensure cooperation with other member states with
20 already existing monitoring

21 • Appendix D lists species which aren't included in the previous appendices,
22 but are imported to the EU in an amount that monitoring is justified.

23 In 2022 a new Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) was created in the EU to guide the
24 unions' work towards ending wildlife trafficking. This plan has [four main](#)
25 [priorities](#):

26 • Preventing wildlife trafficking and addressing its root causes

27 • Strengthening the legal and policy framework against wildlife trafficking

28 • Enforcing regulations and policies to fight wildlife trafficking
29 effectively

30 • Strengthening the global partnership of source, consumer and transit
31 countries against wildlife trafficking.

32 We believe that these priorities are the right way forward, but need to be
33 followed up with sufficient national implementation.

34 **Transparent database over CITES-listed species:**

35 Not all of these animals are hunted in the wild. Quite a few are instead bred in
36 private hands in the EU. At first glance, this might seem a good thing. It could
37 mean that natural populations aren't put under pressure by hunters, and
38 therefore be a positive move towards having healthy populations.

39 However, the problem with this trade is that it creates a demand for these

40 products. A demand which drives up prices and makes illegal hunting more
41 profitable. Therefore it is imperative that the EU seeks to abolish the trade
42 and sale of goods relating to endangered animals. As European Greens we support
43 animal rights in every corner of the world and need to acknowledge and make use
44 of the cumulative effects stemming from cracking down on the trafficking of
45 endangered species.

46
47 It's imperative that each country knows how many endangered and CITES-listed
48 animals there are in private hands. Each animal in private hands needs to be
49 identifiable by authorities, whether it be by ID-chips, photos or DNA. This
50 information also needs to be widely accessible and kept up to date across
51 jurisdictions and borders. This entails regular inventory checks as well as
52 cooperation with relevant authorities.

53 All listed species in CITES should be kept record for, in order to make sure
54 that parts from the animals don't end up on the black market.

55 **Collaboration and coordination**

56 Today there is a huge variety in the type of agencies, what level of legislation
57 and what combination of competencies different countries' laws regarding animal
58 trafficking have. This creates loopholes which criminal organisations can use,
59 especially combined with the lack of oversight that countries have over private
60 owners of CITES-listed animals. To combat this, the EU legislation needs to be
61 translated and adopted into national legislation. A comprehensive Monitoring,
62 Evaluation and Learning system should also be implemented and law enforcement
63 agencies on all levels should deepen the cooperation with CSOs.

64 The implementation of the Action Plan should also make use of financial
65 investigations and asset recovery, using approaches which could allow
66 authorities to identify organised criminal networks. This also includes working
67 towards creating legislation enabling authorities to recover or freeze the
68 assets of persons associated with wildlife trafficking.

69 **Banning imports and exports:**

70 Today, one of the main ways in which exemptions from CITES is given to hunting
71 trophies. As the most desired trophies tend to be the distinguishing features of

72 a healthy animal (an elephant's tusk e.g.), this leads to a reverse evolutionary
73 pressure where the weaker animals are left alive. As such, the acquisition of
74 these trophies hampers the chances of long term survival of the species in
75 question.

76 The private import and export of trophies, for commercial use or other, from
77 CITES-listed animals should therefore be banned within the EU.

78 **Funding:**

79 The relevant agencies will need to have the resources that they require, both in
80 terms of financial as well as human resources. This goes for agencies involved
81 in the investigations and prosecution leading to convictions, as well as
82 agencies tasked with closing farms.

83 EU institutions and the EU Member States should make efforts to identify and
84 allocate budgets dedicated to implement the [Action Plan](#).

85 **Education:**

86 National law enforcement agencies need to be fully mobilised, trained and
87 specialised to investigate and prosecute this type of crime and have clear and
88 followable national targets. This goes for customs officials as well as actors
89 in the traditional legal system. CSOs should also be acknowledged and supported
90 in these efforts.

91 **Therefore, the European Green Party:**

- 92 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to create a register of each
93 CITES-listed animal kept in private hands, including those owned by
94 farming, zoo, circus and private ownership and ensure that said register
95 remains accessible and transparent to prevent animals or their parts and
96 derivatives ending up on the black market

- 97 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to ban the farming and breeding of
98 CITES-listed animals in all cases except for the conservation of natural
99 populations

100 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to identify and allocate dedicated
101 budgets to ensure that sufficient funds and human resources are available
102 to the relevant authorities to ensure the successful implementation of the
103 EU WAP.

104 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to promote the cooperation and
105 coordination between different levels of authorities as well as with CSOs
106 in order to combat animal trafficking

107 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to ban the private import and
108 export of trophies, for commercial use or other, from CITES-listed animals

109 • Calls upon every Member State of the EU to promote the training and
110 specialisation of national law enforcement to combat animal trafficking