

# CITES

Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora & Fauna

Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies

June 26, 2012

Wichita, Kansas

## What is CITES?

CITES is an acronym for The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Years before the US Endangered Species Act and before "Endangered Species" had its present connotation; this treaty was an effort to ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants was sustainable and did not result in exploitation. Because this trade crosses country borders any effort to regulate it requires international cooperation. International wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars annually. Trade is diverse, ranging from live animals to a wide array of products derived from them including food products, fur and leather goods, tourist curios, and medicine.

## How is CITES Designed to Work?

- Establishes the international legal framework & common procedural mechanisms for the prevention/restriction of international commercial trade in some species, and for an effective regulation of international trade in others
- Legally binding, but national legislation is required to apply its provisions
- Regulates the export, re-export and import of live and dead animals and plants and their parts and derivatives (only for species listed in its Appendices)
- Regulations are based on a system of permits and certificates that may only be issued if certain conditions are met and which must be presented when leaving or entering a country
- For CITES Appendix I and II-listed species, the most important condition is that international trade in these species must not be detrimental to their survival in the wild

## CITES regulates domestic trade

**Fact:**

No, CITES applies to species in international trade.

## CITES is a global endangered species list

**Facts:**

Many endangered species are not listed on CITES.

Only species proposed by Countries and receiving a 2/3 majority vote by the Conference of the Parties may be listed in App I & II.

## CITES only lists endangered species

**Facts:**

Species on Appendix I & II don't even have to be endangered or threatened.

The word "endangered" isn't used in the Treaty except in the title.

Abundant game species in the U.S. like bobcat, otters, black bear, alligators, and sturgeon are listed in CITES.

## CITES was created as a tool for banning trade

**Facts:**

Only Appendix I species (with the exception of captive bred) have no allowable trade (~600 animal & 300 plant species).

Thousands of animals and plants listed on the CITES Appendices can be internationally traded.

## A Few Misconceptions About CITES

## External Influences on CITES Decisions

The original intent of CITES was to ensure globally sustainable use of wild plants and animals. Over the past decade participation by organizations as "Observers" has greatly increased. This is especially true of protectionist/no use organizations who outnumber sustainable use advocates 6:1. These groups are very well organized and work diligently on CITES at home and abroad. Things we've noted about protectionist groups:

- Caucus daily with like-minded organizations at CITES meetings
- Distribute handouts with their views that are not always factual or scientifically-based
- Receive & spend significant financial resources to promote their position on CITES
- Make more interventions at CITES meetings than Countries
- Actively participate in CITES Work Groups & voice their positions
- Cannot cast votes but do influence votes

**Protectionist:** International Fund for Animal Welfare, HSUS & HSI, Species Survival Network, Defenders of Wildlife, Animal Welfare Institute, Greenpeace

**Sustainable Use:** Midwest Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, AFWA, Safari Club International, IWMC, Species Management Specialists, Association of Zoos & Aquariums

### CITES Technical Work Group

*Dedicated to protect and promote State Fish & Wildlife Agencies' interests in the CITES process*

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of CITES and how it works and the potential impacts to State Fish & Wildlife Agencies.
- Maintain expertise in both CITES issues and the process.
- Ensure State's authority is maintained.
- Inform & seek input from the State Fish & Wildlife Agencies.
- Serve as a liaison between the states & USFWS.
- Engage in all aspects of CITES international negotiations and domestic implementation with the USFWS.
- Actively monitor, review, and provide objective input on CITES.
- Identify & recommend ways to improve CITES and its implementation.
- Be recognized as "the representatives of the 50 State Fish & Wildlife Agencies that have statutory authority over resident wildlife and are the management authorities with respect to species conservation and sustainable management" at CITES meetings.

### 43 CFR PART 24 Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State-Federal Relationships, Section 24.5 International Agreements.

(a) International conventions have increasingly been utilized to address fish and wildlife issues having dimensions beyond national boundaries. The authority to enter into such agreements is reserved to the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. However, while such agreements may be valuable in the case of other nations, in a Federal system such as ours sophisticated fish and wildlife programs already established at the State level may be weakened or not enhanced.

(b) To ensure that effective fish and wildlife programs already established at the State level are not weakened, the policy of the Department of the Interior shall be to recommend that the United States negotiate and accede to only those international agreements that give strong consideration to established State programs designed to ensure the conservation of fish and wildlife populations.

(c) It shall be the policy of the Department to actively solicit the advice of affected State agencies and to recommend to the U.S. Department of State that representatives of such agencies be involved before and during negotiation of any international conventions concerning fish and wildlife.

### Quotes From the Media Coverage of the 2010 CoP15 CITES Meeting

"As soon as big money gets involved the "s" in science is crossed out by two vertical stripes," -Willem Wijnstekers, CITES Secretariat General

"We had tried our best to brush off the pressures coming from politicians," - a Kenyan delegate

"The proposal (to list the polar bear in Appendix I) is based in emotion not in science, the polar bear is becoming a flag ship for many NGOs & some Countries," - International Wildlife Management Consortium (IWMC)

It is an honor and a privilege to represent the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in CITES matters. Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Caldwell

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[About Us](#)[President's Message](#)[Our Mission](#)[Our Work](#)[SSN Members](#)[Regional Bureaus](#)[Working Groups](#)[SSN Documents](#)[SSN Board](#)[Bavin Awards](#)**THE SPECIES SURVIVAL NETWORK**

The Species Survival Network (SSN) coordinates the activities of conservation, environmental and animal protection organizations around the world to secure CITES protection for plants and animals affected by international trade.

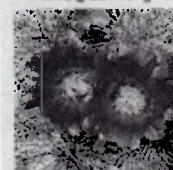
SSN's educational and outreach efforts provides organizations from around the world with the information they need to participate in the CITES process. The SSN offers an active internet list to its Members. The SSN's *CITES Digest* is a regular publication mailed to all CITES Parties free of charge; produced in three languages, the *Digest* summarizes recent developments pertaining to CITES specifically, and wildlife trade generally.

SSN's legal and scientific research and analysis provide CITES Parties and the general public with the information they can use to better understand the proposals and resolutions considered for adoption by the Parties and the impact that their decisions may have on the survival of species.

SSN's interdisciplinary Working Groups combine the talents and knowledge of SSN's membership, which includes biologists, lawyers, and trade and enforcement experts, to develop and implement plans to advocate CITES protection for species in trade. For example, the Elephant Working Group advocates the maintenance of a ban on the international trade in elephant ivory; the Whale and Dolphin Working Group advocates the maintenance of a ban on the international trade in great whales; and the Bear Working Group advocates a ban on the international trade in bear viscera which are used in traditional medicine. The SSN also has Working Groups on Amphibians, Animals in Captivity, Big Cats, Birds, Implementation, Marine Fish, Primates, Rhinos, Sea Turtles, Timber, Trophy Hunting, and Wildlife Trade.



**Contact SSN**  
info@ssn.org

**SSN Members**

- AAP, Sanctuary for Exotic Animals (NL)
- AARANYAK (IN)
- ACRES-Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (SG)
- Africa Kambe Shumpe Fellowship (KE)
- Alive-All Life in A Visible Environment (JP)
- Animal Alliance of Canada (CA)
- Animal Defenders International (UK)
- Animal Welfare Institute (US)
- Animals Asia Foundation (CN)
- APAR -Romanian Alliance for the Protection of Animals
- ARCTUROS (GR)
- Asociación de Rescate de Fauna (VE)
- Asociación Rescate y Conservación de Vida Silvestre (GE)
- Association "Our Home" (LA)
- Born Free Foundation (UK)
- Born Free USA (US)
- British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (UK)
- Canadian Marine Environment Protection Society (CA)
- Care for the Wild International (UK)
- Caribbean Conservation Corporation (US)
- Center for Marine Mammals Research Leviathan (CL)
- Cetacean Society International (US)
- Co-Habitat (UK)
- Conservacion de Mamiferos Marinos de Mexico A.C., COMARINO (MX)
- Czech Animal Protection Trust (CZ)
- David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (UK)
- Defenders of Wildlife (US)
- Dierenbescherming (Dutch Society for The Protection of Animals) (NL)
- Earthtrust (US)
- Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (MQ)
- Elephant Family (UK)
- Environmental Investigation Agency (UK/US)
- Eurogroup for Animals (EU)
- Fast Forward Foundation (NL)
- Franz Weber Foundation (CH)
- Friends of the Elephant (Vrienden van de Olifant) (NL)
- Fundación Cethus (AR)
- Gesellschaft zur Rettung der Delphine (DE)
- Greenpeace International
- Humane Society of Canada (CA)
- Humane Society of the United States (US)
- Humane Society International
- HSI Australia
- International Animal Rescue Malta (MT)
- International Environmental Law Project (US)
- International Primate Protection League (US)
- International Wildlife Coalition
- Japan Wildlife Conservation Society (JP)
- Kimya Institute (US)
- Last Great Ape Organization (IL/CM)
- Life Conservationist Association (TW)
- Maasai Environmental Resource Coalition (KE)
- Marine Connection (UK)
- National Council of Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ZA)
- Natural Resources Defense Council (US)
- OceanCare (CH)
- One Voice (FR)
- Orangutan Foundation International (UK)
- Organization for Respect and Care of Animals, ORCA (CS)
- Pan African Conservation Network (KE)
- Pan African Sanctuaries Alliance (US)
- Performing Animal Welfare Society (US)
- Pro Fauna Indonesia (ID)
- Pro Wildlife (DE)
- Rainforest Concern (UK)
- Rede Nacional de Combate ao Trafico de Animais Silvestres, RENCTAS (BR)
- Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas e.V. (REA e.V.) (DE)
- Robin des Bois (FR)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (UK)
- Save the Elephants (UK/KE)
- Shark Research Institute (US)
- Teyeliz, A.C. (MX)
- Thai Society for the Conservation of Wild Animals (TH)
- Tigris Foundation (Stichting Tigris) (NL)
- Udruga "Zivot" / Society "Life" (HR)
- Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (UK)
- Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (DE)
- WildAid (US)
- Wildlife Action Group (ZA)
- Wildlife Protection Society of India (IN)
- Wildlife Trust of India (IN)
- Wildlife Watch Group (NP)
- World Animal Net
- World Society for the Protection of Animals
- Zoocheck Canada (CA)



CENTER for BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Because life is good.

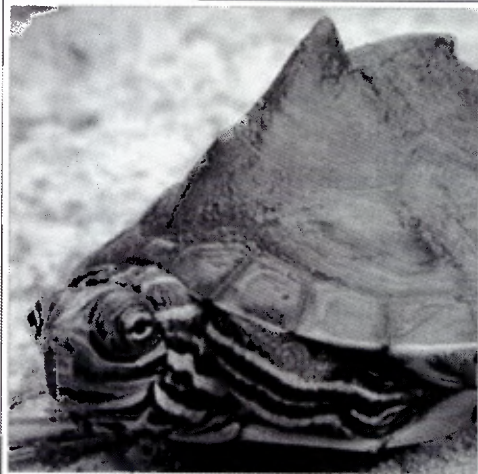
## STOP THE SLAUGHTER OF U.S. TURTLES

The United States is home to more varieties of turtle than any other country in the world. But unregulated global trade is rapidly depleting our native turtles. **Millions of wild-caught freshwater turtles are exported to Asian food and medicinal markets each year.**

Given the vastness of this market, the United States has a duty to take the lead in promoting responsible commercial turtle trade. Listing these turtles under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species is a critical step toward ensuring such trade does not threaten their survival.

In response to a petition filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently announced that it may propose 17 species of U.S. freshwater turtles for CITES protection at the next meeting in Thailand.

**Please use the form below to request that the Service propose and actively lobby to list these U.S. freshwater turtles under CITES.**



SHARE

Subject: Propose U.S. Freshwater Turtles for CITES

Your Letter:

The United States is a key player in the international turtle trade, exporting millions of live, wild-caught turtles each year. Most turtles harvested in the United States are exported to supply food and medicinal markets in Asia, where turtle consumption rates have soared and native turtle populations have already been drastically depleted.

Scientists warn that freshwater turtles cannot sustain any significant harvest from the wild without a population crash. Wild collection for meat and pets is a leading cause of turtle endangerment in the United States.

Listing under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species would help remedy this situation by requiring adequate documentation and by ensuring that trade in turtles is contingent on their survival. Export permits for species listed on Appendices I and II are issued only if the trade will not be detrimental to the

First Name\*

Last Name\*

Email\*

Street\*

City\*

State/Province\*

Select a state ▼

Zip/Postal Code\*

Send Your Message

Your letter will be sent to the following recipient(s):

Division of Policy and Directives Management

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
ATTN: FWS-R9-IA-2011-0087  
4401 N. Fairfax Dr., M.S. 2042-PDM  
Arlington, VA 22203  
US