



CITES & Turtles

The United States Fish & Wildlife Service
International Affairs



CITES

- CITES - The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- CITES is an agreement among governments (i.e., a convention or treaty) that entered into force on July 1, 1975.
- Currently, 183 countries and the European Union are Parties to CITES.
- Its aim is to ensure that international trade in species listed in its Appendices does not threaten their survival.



Misconceptions about CITES

- *CITES deals with all aspects of wildlife conservation*
 - CITES only deals with international trade in certain species included in its Appendices
- *CITES aims to ban all wildlife trade*
 - CITES aims to regulate international trade
 - (for some species, trade is highly restricted)



Misconceptions about CITES

- *CITES regulates domestic trade*
 - **With some exceptions, CITES addresses only international trade**
- *The CITES Appendices are a listing of the world's endangered species*
 - **The CITES Appendices include species that are or may be affected by international trade**



How CITES works

- CITES regulates the export, re-export, and import, and introduction from the sea, of live and dead animals and plants, and their parts and derivatives, of species listed in its Appendices.
- International trade is regulated based on a system of permits and certificates that:
 - are only issued if certain conditions are met;
 - must be presented when leaving or entering a country



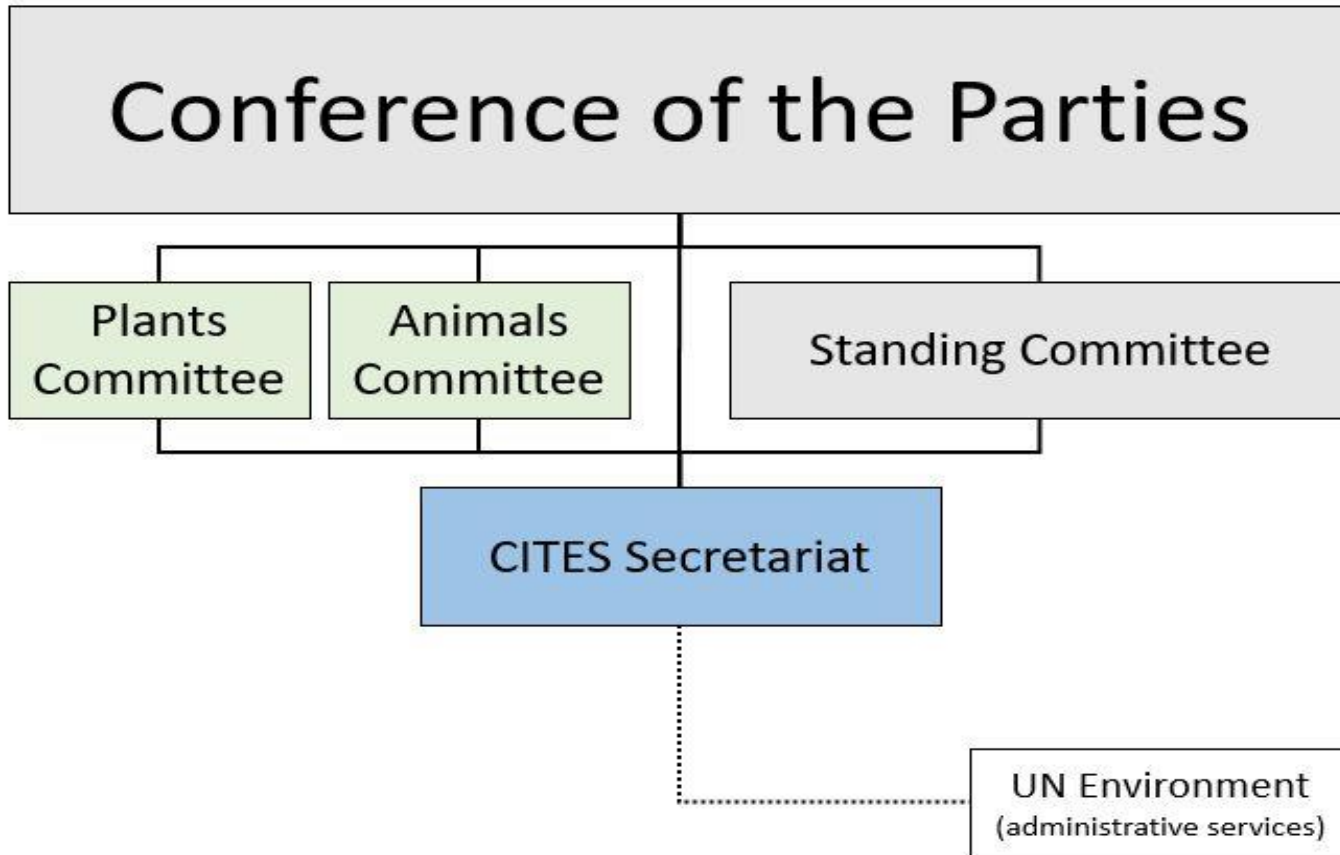
How CITES works

Appendix	I	II	III
International trade is	generally prohibited	permitted but controlled	controlled to complement national controls
Taxa	704 animals 395 plants	5,466 animals, 33,764 plants	372 animals, 134 plants

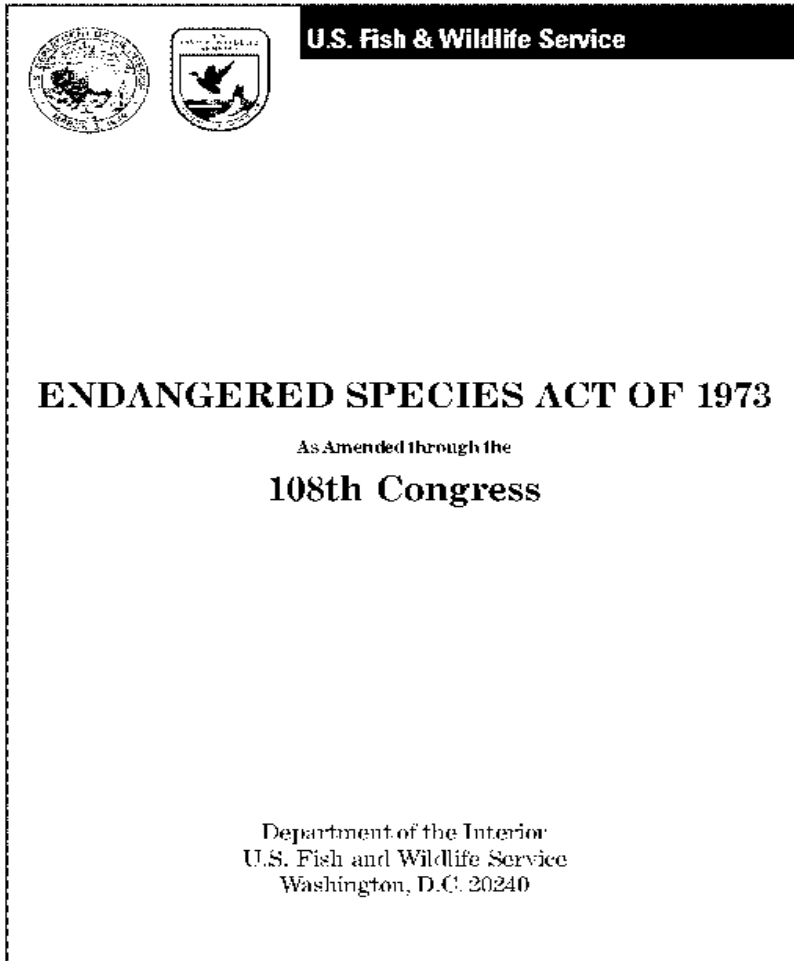
For Appendix-I and -II listed species: The Management and Scientific Authorities must determine that international trade in these species is not detrimental to their survival before permits/certificates may be issued and that they have been legally acquired



The Structure Of CITES



U.S. implementing legislation



The Secretary of the Interior: designated as the **Management Authority and the Scientific Authority** for purposes of the Convention and the respective **functions of each such Authority** shall be carried out through the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**.



Implementation of CITES

- The purpose of CITES is to ensure that international trade in wild fauna and flora is legal and conducted in a sustainable manner



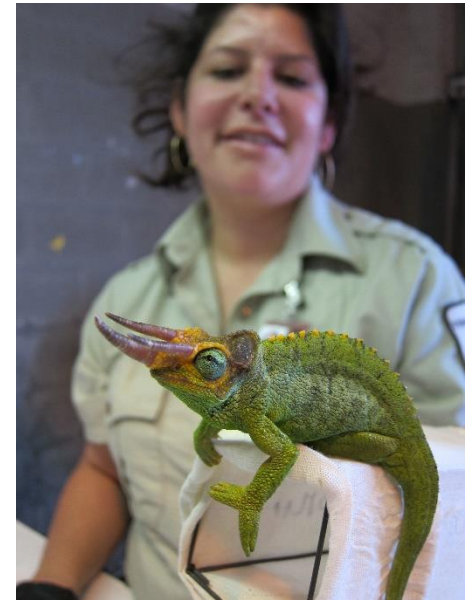
U.S. CITES Authorities

- **One Management Authority**
 - A single office for CITES policy and coordination
 - No taxonomic, geographic, or other division
 - Legal acquisition finding
 - All permits issued by one office, except for some delegation of permit issuance to Law Enforcement

- **One Scientific Authority**
 - A single office for CITES science policy
 - Responsibilities for both plants and animals
 - Provides all non-detriment findings for permits and findings on whether recipients are “suitably equipped to house and care for” live Appendix-I specimens



CITES Compliance and Enforcement



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement

- Investigates CITES violations
- Designates ports of entry for wildlife shipments and inspects shipments at ports for compliance with CITES and other legal requirements
- Collects wildlife trade data through wildlife declaration system for both CITES and non-CITES wildlife
- Issues some types of CITES permits and certificates at ports
- Provides input on CITES regulations and serves on delegations to CITES meetings to provide expertise on enforcement matters
- Provides CITES-related wildlife enforcement training to other countries
- Participates in regional wildlife enforcement networks (NAWEG, ASEAN-WEN)



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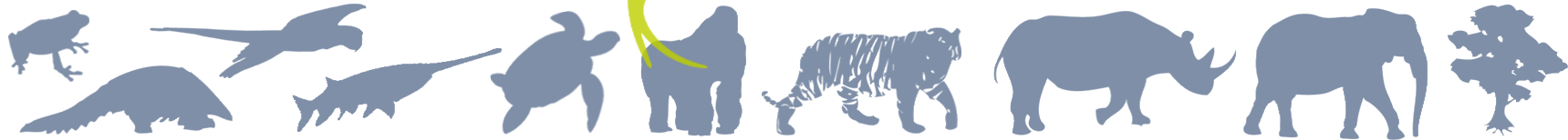


CITES



COP 19
Conferencia Mundial
sobre la Vida Silvestre

PANAMÁ
2022



Why include Turtles?

- A series of Federal Register Notices (4-6) and a public meeting starting 18-20 months before a CoP solicits input from the public
- Suggestion: All turtles and tortoises not currently on CITES ~ 185/350 species
- Native - Chrysemys, Pseudemys, Trachemys, Deirochelys, Graptemys, Spotted, Blandings, Woods, Diamondbacks, Western pond, snappers, softshells, mud & musk
- Turtle vulnerable to trade because of life history characteristics:
 - adult longevity, late maturity, limited annual reproductive output, and high juvenile/egg mortality
- Trade in turtle species continues to follow a boom and bust pattern in which exploitation and trade shift from one species to another when:
 - 1) a species becomes so depleted or rare that it is no longer commercially exploitable; or
 - 2) a species becomes the subject of stricter regulation, and as such is less exploitable
- Initial assessment based on trade and threat



CITES Inclusion Criteria Overview

- Background on the taxon
 - Taxonomy, distribution, description, etc.
- Status & Trends
 - Habitat, population, geographic, etc.
- Threats
 - Intensity, effects, etc.
- Utilization & Trade
 - Uses, legal, illegal, impacts
- Legal protections
 - National, international
- Species Management
 - Monitoring, control, captive breeding, etc.



U.S. Sponsored ./ Co-sponsored Species Proposals



- **Big-headed map turtles (*Graptemys barbouri*, *Graptemys ernsti*, *Graptemys gibbonsi*, *Graptemys pearlensis*, and *Graptemys pulchra*):** transfer these five species from Appendix III to II.
- **Softshell turtles (*Apalone spp.* not including subspecies already in Appendix I):** transfer the genus from Appendix III to II
- **Alligator snapping turtle and common snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii* and *Chelydra serpentina*):** transfer from Appendix III to II
- **Musk turtles (*Sternotherus spp.*):** include the genus in Appendix II
- **Mud turtles (*Kinosternon spp.*):** include 20 species in the genus in Appendix II and two in Appendix I



CoP 20 – Fall of 2025

- **First Federal Register Notice – ~April 2024**

- Call for Potential Species Proposals
- Call for Resolutions, Decisions, and other Agenda Items



Effective Implementation of
these CITES Reptile
Inclusions/Transfers Will
Require



Collaboration and Communication
between USFWS, AFWA & State Agencies



Information Sharing



Understanding of State management and
regulation of these species



Update IUCN Red Data List Assessments
for these Species



Outreach to Stakeholders – articles,
webinars, presentations





Helpful Links and Resources

CITES legal acquisition
U.S. regulations: [50](#)
[CFR 23.60](#)

Application form
download and
additional information:
[3-200-75](#)

CITES species :
[Species+](#)

USFWS electronic
declarations: [eDecs](#)

Designated wildlife
ports: [contact and](#)
[addresses](#)

THANK YOU



Questions?



<https://reptilesmagazine.com/new-2023-cites-herp-listings/>

