

MEPs call for an end to all illegal trade in wildlife by 2025

- The market for exotic pets is growing both in the EU and worldwide
- Global wildlife trade increases the risk of zoonotic diseases transmission from animals to humans
- Need to review and expand the existing EU legislation regulating wildlife trade

To improve the global protection of endangered species, Parliament demands stepping up the fight against illegal trafficking of wild fauna and flora.

Ahead of the global UN meeting on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Panama on 14-25 November 2022, Parliament today adopted its position on the EU's strategic objectives by 549 votes to 28 and 50 abstentions.

MEPs want to go further than reduce illegal trade in [CITES-listed wildlife species](#) and eliminate it altogether - so that by 2025 there would only be legal and sustainable trade in wild fauna and flora. This is necessary, MEPs say, because of the threat posed by wildlife trade to individual animals and species, and to human and animal health and the environment. The pandemic has brought into focus the risk of animal-to-human zoonotic diseases transmission, which is linked to the global wildlife trade. MEPs emphasise the important role that CITES should play in preventing future pandemics, as the world's wildlife trade regulator.

Parliament also expressed a concern that the market for exotic pets and the range of affected species being traded are growing both in the EU and internationally.

The resolution calls on all countries to significantly improve their enforcement of the UN Convention, as the current application of bans and restrictions on the trade in protected species is inadequate due to lack of resources. To successfully combat the involvement of organised criminal groups, MEPs say that transnational wildlife crime should be recognised as serious organised crime under the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Strengthening the EU's role in the global fight against wildlife trafficking

Parliament calls on the EU to review and expand the existing legislation regulating wildlife trade to make it illegal to import, export, sell, acquire or buy wild animals or plants that are taken, possessed, transported or sold in violation of the law of the country of origin or transit. They also want dissuasive sanctions, in cases of non-compliance, urgent action to ban the import of hunting trophies of [CITES-listed species](#), and the creation of a science-based EU-wide approved list of animals allowed as pets. Only animals where trade does not cause harm to wild populations and to European biodiversity should be on the list.

MEPs welcome the renewed commitment to the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking but stress the need for adequate funding and clear and implementable targets and actions as well as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. They also underline the need to tackle both online and offline trade in the revised Action Plan.

Further information

[Adopted text \(05.10.2022\)](#)

[Video of debate \(04.10.2022\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

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