



Wildlife trade in the European Union

The European Union represents one of the largest wildlife consumer markets in the world. Ireland, along with the rest of the EU, has signed up to CITES. Within the EU, CITES is implemented through the 'EU Wildlife Trade Regulations'.

EU wildlife imports

Many wildlife products are imported by the EU each year. Between 2002 and 2006, EU imports of CITES-listed species included:

- approximately 40,000 live **mammals** and one million mammal skins;
- over 1.5 million live **reptiles** and 7.5 million reptile skins;
- 230 tonnes of **caviar**;
- 2,000 tonnes of **coral**; and
- nearly 100,000 m³ of **timber**.

In 2005 alone, the legal imports of wildlife products into the EU were worth an estimated €93 billion.

EU Wildlife Trade Regulations

The EU Wildlife Trade Regulations control and monitor the trade in wildlife to the EU. They follow the same framework as CITES, with species listed in one of four 'Annexes'– A, B, C, D, but provide a higher level of protection for some species.

Under the EU Regulations, the import of species can be restricted if there are conservation concerns or in order to prevent the import of invasive species.

Wildlife trade regulations in Ireland

Ireland implements the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations through the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000, which also regulates the trade in native species. Before importing wildlife products, check for restrictions that may apply.