



Going on holiday? Don't forget CITES!

Bringing home souvenirs and mementos can be a great way to remember your holiday, but when animal and plant products are involved, don't forget about CITES!

Does CITES apply to souvenirs?

CITES covers live animals and plants and also products made from animals and plants, including crocodile leather, tortoise shells, wood carvings and coral necklaces. These are protected by CITES in order to prevent the overexploitation of the wild animal or plant they are made from.

It is illegal to bring home certain wildlife souvenirs without the necessary CITES permits, and these are likely to be seized by customs upon arrival in the European Union (EU). Commonly confiscated wildlife souvenirs include alligator and snake skin bags, shahtoosh shawls, rain sticks (made from cacti), conch shells, corals, and other curios.

What restrictions apply to souvenirs and personal possessions?

When travelling or moving between countries with personal items containing or made from animals or plants, CITES documents may be needed. For example, to import an Annex A-listed leopard hunting trophy both an import and export permit are required, whereas the import of an Annex B-listed coral necklace only requires an export permit.

To determine which documents you might need, check with the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Management Authority in the country of export. If you are in doubt, do not buy wildlife souvenirs -- they may be CITES species.