



Environment
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*Wild Animal and Plant Protection
and Regulation of International
and Interprovincial Trade Act*

Annual Report

for 2011



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Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) © Environment Canada, Neil K. Dawes 2012

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Canada has been active in the work of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Animals Committee, Plants Committee and Standing Committee, participating in a number of key working groups, according to the priorities of our country and our role as representative for North America on the Animals Committee.
- Canada is the North American region representative on the CITES Animals Committee and continues as the alternate North American representative on the CITES Plants Committee.
- Canada is currently finalizing standing non-detriment finding reports for the Grizzly Bear, Black Bear and Sandhill Crane, to substantiate the scientific basis for legal export of these species. Once finalized, these reports will be publicly available on the CITES Canada website.
- A total of 23 405 export shipments of wild specimens, products and derivatives were made in 2011.
 - Canadian jurisdictions issued 7203 export permits and re-export certificates in 2011 under the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* (WAPPRIITA), authorizing 23 405 shipments of wildlife specimens, products and derivatives.
 - Shipments in 2011 consisted primarily of artificially propagated plants (mostly cultivated American Ginseng) and wild-harvested animals (primarily the American Black Bear) as well as their parts and derivatives.
 - Of the 7203 export permits and re-export certificates, 1711 permits were designated for multiple shipments, accounting for 17 407 shipments.
- In 2011, 155 import permits were issued, 49% of which were for commercial purposes.
- Environment Canada conducted 197 investigations in 2011. Section 4.2.2 of this annual report includes details of four major convictions under WAPPRIITA: one for illegal trade of an endangered species, and three for unlawful import of wildlife.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Annual Report

This report fulfills the Minister of the Environment's obligation, under section 28 of the *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act* (WAPPRIITA), to report annually on the administration of the Act. This report covers the administration of the Act for the year 2011.

This section provides background information on WAPPRIITA and outlines the responsibilities of Environment Canada under the Act. Subsequent sections discuss the following issues:

- wild animals and plants in trade
- assessing the risk to species from trade
- compliance promotion and enforcement
- international cooperation

1.2 WAPPRIITA and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

WAPPRIITA is the legislative vehicle through which Canada meets its international obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES; see www.cites.org).

CITES sets controls on the trade in and international movement of animal and plant species that have been, or may become, threatened with overexploitation as a result of trade pressures. Such species are identified by the parties to the Convention and are listed in one of three appendices to the Convention, according to the level of control considered necessary:

- Appendix I lists species that are threatened with extinction. Trade in these species is strictly regulated to ensure their survival, and trade for commercial purposes is prohibited.
- Appendix II lists species that are not currently threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is strictly regulated to avoid

overexploitation. Also listed in Appendix II are “look-alike” species that are regulated to provide additional protection for Appendix II species. Many species with healthy populations within Canada, such as the American Black Bear and the Grey Wolf, are listed in Appendix II for this purpose.

- In Appendix III, individual parties may list species found within their borders, which are subject to regulations, in order to manage international trade in those species. Canada has listed the Walrus in this appendix.

The text of CITES was agreed upon by 80 signatory countries, including Canada, in 1973. The Convention came into force in 1975, and it has now been adopted by 175 sovereign states.

WAPPRIITA, which is the implementing legislation providing the authority in Canada for the regulation of trade in wild species in conformity with CITES, received Royal Assent on December 17, 1992. The Act and associated regulations—the *Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations* (WAPTR)—came into force on May 14, 1996. The purpose of WAPPRIITA is to protect Canadian and foreign species of animals and plants that may be at risk of overexploitation because of unsustainable or illegal trade, and to safeguard Canadian ecosystems from the introduction of harmful species. It accomplishes these objectives by regulating the international trade in wild animals and plants, as well as their parts and derivatives, and by making it an offence to transport illegally obtained wildlife between provinces or territories or between Canada and other countries.

The species whose trade is controlled in Canada are listed on the three schedules of the WAPTR:

- Schedule I includes all animals listed as fauna and all plants listed as flora in the three CITES appendices. These species require permits for import/export or interprovincial transport, unless otherwise exempted.
- Schedule II lists other plant and animal species requiring an import permit that do not necessarily appear in the CITES appendices. These are species that may pose a risk to Canadian ecosystems.

- Schedule III lists the Schedule I species that are recognized as endangered or threatened within Canada.

1.3 Responsibilities under WAPPRIITA

Environment Canada is responsible for administering WAPPRIITA and is the designated Management and Scientific Authority, as required by CITES. The Department issues CITES permits and certificates, directs the national implementation of CITES, and advises on non-detriment findings for the issuance of import permits and other scientific matters. Representatives of the Management and Scientific Authorities are located at Environment Canada, which hosts the national office responsible for the implementation of CITES in Canada. Environment Canada has designated Fisheries and Oceans Canada as responsible for CITES-listed aquatic species, including fish, aquatic plants and marine mammals. Natural Resources Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency serve as advisors on CITES issues related to forests and artificially propagated plants, respectively. Further information on the responsibilities of the Management and Scientific Authorities can be found at www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=0BB0663F-1.

The arrangements for managing the control of trade in wildlife species differ across the provinces and territories. Provinces and territories with which memoranda of understanding (MOU) are in place oversee the trade in wildlife species in their jurisdiction. Each has appointed a Scientific Authority and a Management Authority responsible for indigenous species leaving its jurisdiction. At present, the federal government has memoranda of understanding in place with all provinces and territories except Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec. In these provinces, CITES permits are issued by Environment Canada.

Enforcement of WAPPRIITA is overseen by Environment Canada and is carried out by five regional offices (Pacific and Yukon, Prairie and Northern, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic), in cooperation with other federal agencies such as the Canada Border Services Agency and with provincial

and territorial wildlife agencies. Customs officials play a key role at ports of entry, manually verifying and validating permits and referring shipments to Environment Canada personnel for inspection.

Environment Canada maintains enforcement agreements and memoranda of understanding with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Under the agreements and MOUs, these four provinces are responsible for enforcing WAPPRIITA with respect to interprovincial wildlife trade, while Environment Canada oversees the enforcement of WAPPRIITA for international trade.

To provide for ticketing for WAPPRIITA offences under the *Contraventions Act*, the Department of Justice has signed agreements with Ontario, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Quebec and British Columbia.

2. WILD ANIMALS AND PLANTS IN TRADE

2.1 CITES permitting

2.1.1 Permitting overview

The effective implementation of CITES depends on international cooperation to regulate cross-border movement of listed species through a global system of permits that are verified at international borders. In Canada, CITES permits are issued pursuant to the authority of WAPPRIITA.

There are different permit requirements depending on the CITES Appendix in which a species is listed.

- Appendix I species require both an import and export permit, unless otherwise exempted.
- Appendix II species require an export permit.
- Appendix III species require an export permit or certificate of origin.

Federal, provincial and territorial agencies issue permits according to their specific jurisdiction. Types of CITES permits and certificates that are issued by Canada are described in Table 1.

Environment Canada's national Management Authority office issues all import permits, export permits and re-export certificates on behalf of Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada issues the majority of the export permits that involve CITES-listed aquatic species, including fish, marine mammals and aquatic plants.

With the exception of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec, the provinces and territories issue export permits required under WAPPRIITA and CITES for indigenous species leaving their jurisdictions.

A CITES export permit may not necessarily be issued by the jurisdiction from which the specimen was collected. For example, if a Polar Bear hunted in Nunavut was exported by a Canadian citizen to a taxidermist in Ontario, only an interprovincial export permit would be issued by Nunavut. However, if that Polar Bear is further exported from Ontario to another country, Ontario would issue the CITES export permit.

Table 1: Types of Canadian permits required under CITES and WAPPRIITA and certificates issued pursuant to the WAPTR

Type of permit or certificate	Description
Import permit	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR that are also listed in CITES Appendix I, and for specimens of species that are included in Schedule II of the WAPTR. An export permit from the exporting country is required for the issuance of an import permit. Import permits are valid for up to one year.
Export permit	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR to be exported from Canada. Multiple shipments under a permit can be authorized when the applicant intends to make multiple transactions during the period for which the permit is valid. Export permits are valid for up to six months.
Re-export certificate	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR to be exported from Canada after having been legally imported into Canada at an earlier time. Re-export certificates are valid for up to six months.
Certificate of ownership	Issued to authorize frequent cross-border movement of personally owned live animals (also known as a pet passport). Certificates of ownership are valid for up to three years.
Temporary movement certificate	Issued for specimens that are only temporarily imported into Canada and that will, within a limited amount of time, be re-exported to the country of origin. Authorization can be provided for circus specimens that are either pre-Convention or captive-bred and for artificially propagated specimens. Temporary movement certificates are valid for up to three years.
Scientific certificate	Issued for the exchange between registered scientific institutions of frozen, preserved, dried or embedded museum and herbarium specimens, and live plant material. Scientific certificates are valid for up to three years.
Phytosanitary certificate	Issued for the export by registered nurseries of artificially propagated plant species included in Schedule I of WAPTR and listed in CITES Appendix II or III.

2.1.2 Exemptions

WAPPRIITA authorizes exemptions, in specific situations, for the importation and exportation of CITES-listed species without permits. These exemptions are specified in the WAPTR and apply to non-commercial purposes only. Canadian threatened or endangered species listed on Schedule III of WAPPRIITA are not included in these exemptions. They still require all the necessary CITES permits.

Four other similar exemptions are included in the Act: tourist souvenirs, personal effects, household effects and hunting trophies (Black Bear and Sandhill Crane). Further information on exemptions is available at www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=DC8E2E3F-1.

2.1.3 Improvements to issuance and monitoring of CITES permits

In 2010, Environment Canada began the task of improving communication and support between the national office responsible for CITES and the regional and provincial offices. To this end, a reorganization was conducted with the view of increasing capacity and the efficiency of CITES permit issuance. In 2011, further staffing and organizational changes continued with this goal in mind.

In 2007, the national CITES Management Authority, in cooperation with the national CITES Scientific Authority, launched a working prototype of the CITES electronic permitting system (CEPS). The transition of some processes for the issuance of export and import permits from the previous CITES permitting system to CEPS was completed in 2009. Further development work on CEPS was undertaken in 2010 and 2011, with a release planned for 2012, at which time it will be made available to federal and provincial partners.

Environment Canada is also planning to incorporate the CITES permitting requirements into the Department's larger e-permitting initiative. This initiative consists of developing an infrastructure that will enable individuals to apply online for all wildlife-related permits issued by Environment Canada.

The Environment Canada CITES permit office usually requires six to eight weeks to review an application once all the required documents and information are complete before a permit is issued. In 2011, Environment Canada began the task of reviewing and preparing to update its service standards, as well as instituting policies and guidelines to more effectively monitor future performance.

2.2 CITES permits issued in 2011

2.2.1 Export permits and re-export certificates

Export permits are issued by Canada for specimens (animals, plants, their parts or derivatives) of CITES-listed species that originated in Canada and that are being exported from Canada for the first time. Export permits are good indicators of Canada's wildlife resources legally traded and controlled under CITES.

In 2011, Canada issued 5375 export permits. The wildlife exports authorized under those permits consisted primarily of artificially propagated specimens of native plants (mostly American Ginseng) and wild-harvested animals (primarily the American Black Bear), as well as their parts or derivatives.

Whereas the trade in wildlife specimens originating within Canada can be tracked through export permits, the issuance of re-export certificates allows the tracking of specimens that were imported into Canada under the authorization of export permits issued by foreign states, and then re-exported from Canada. In 2011, Canada issued 1828 re-export certificates.

The 7203 export permits and re-export certificates issued by Canada in 2011 authorized a total of 23 405 export shipments.

Table 2 shows the number of export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2011 by each Canadian jurisdiction. Note that the jurisdiction issuing the export permit may not necessarily be the jurisdiction where the specimen was collected.

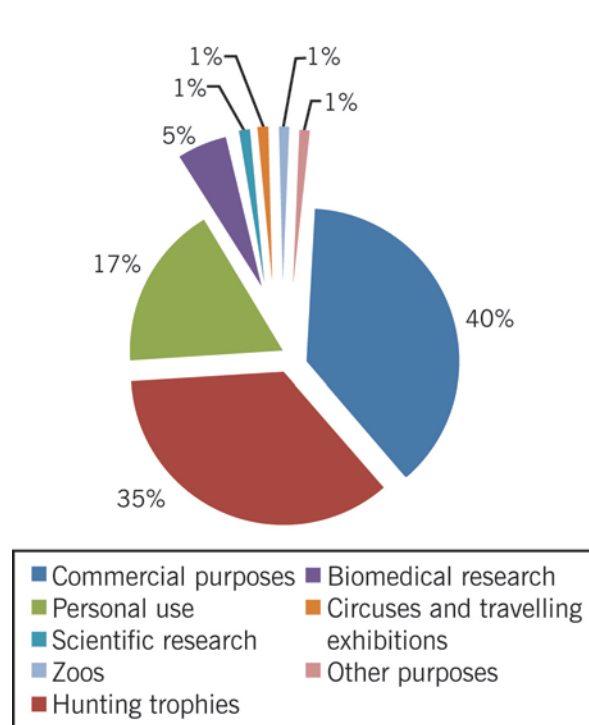
Table 2: CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued by Canadian jurisdictions in 2011

Canadian jurisdiction	Number of export permits and re-export certificates issued	Share of export permits and re-export certificates issued (%)
Federal		
Environment Canada	4703	65.29
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	185	2.57
Provincial and territorial		
British Columbia	1325	18.40
Ontario	742	10.30
Yukon	122	1.69
Newfoundland and Labrador	72	1.00
Nova Scotia	28	0.39
Northwest Territories	20	0.23
New Brunswick	3	0.04
Nunavut	3	0.04
Prince Edward Island	0	0
Alberta*	—	—
Saskatchewan*	—	—
Quebec*	—	—
Manitoba*	—	—
TOTAL	7203	100

* Alberta (as of January 1, 1995), Saskatchewan (as of July 1, 2004), Quebec (as of November 1, 2005) and Manitoba (as of December 15, 2007) ceased issuing CITES permits. CITES permits for exports from these regions are issued by Environment Canada.

Of the 7203 export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2011, 2847 (39.5%) were for commercial purposes, 2508 (34.8%) were for hunting trophies, 1249 (17.3%) were for personal use, 365 (5.1%) were for biomedical research, 78 (1.1%) were for scientific research, 77 (1.1%) were for circuses and travelling exhibitions, 53 (0.7%) were for zoos, and 26 (0.4%) were for other purposes. Figure 1 shows the distribution, by purpose, of wildlife export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2011.

Figure 1: Percentage of CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2011, by purpose



Export permits and re-export certificates can authorize the export of multiple specimens or species, but must list the species and their parts or derivatives. In 2011, plant species accounted for 11 396 of the 23 405 authorized export shipments. Most frequently exported of the plant species were American Ginseng, Venus Fly-trap, Euphorbia Lomi and the Crimson Pitcherplant. The most common mammal species, or their parts and derivatives, listed on export and re-export permits include the American Black Bear, Crab-eating Macaque, Bobcat, Canadian Lynx, Polar Bear, Grizzly Bear, Brown Spectacled Caiman, Mountain Lion and North American Otter.

2.2.2 Export permits for multiple shipments

An export permit may authorize multiple shipments and is valid for up to six months from the date of issue. This six-month time frame allows an applicant to conduct many transactions over a fixed period. Of the 7203 export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2011, 1711 were designated for multiple shipments. Throughout the year, 17 407 shipments

were sent using multi-use permits. The largest share of export permits for multiple shipments was issued to growers and distributors of American Ginseng and to nurseries exporting artificially propagated plants. Multiple-shipment permits issued in 2011 also authorized shipments of mammal species and their parts or derivatives, notably those of the Crab-eating Macaque.

2.2.3 Multiple-shipment stickers

In Canada, the national CITES Management Authority allows the export of small quantities of artificially propagated American Ginseng (up to 4.5 kg for personal use), through a simplified permitting procedure that allows each shipment to be accompanied by a permit sticker identifying the permit number under which the multiple shipments are authorized.

In 2011, artificially propagated American Ginseng exported with permit stickers accounted for over 9000 shipments.

2.2.4 Imports into Canada

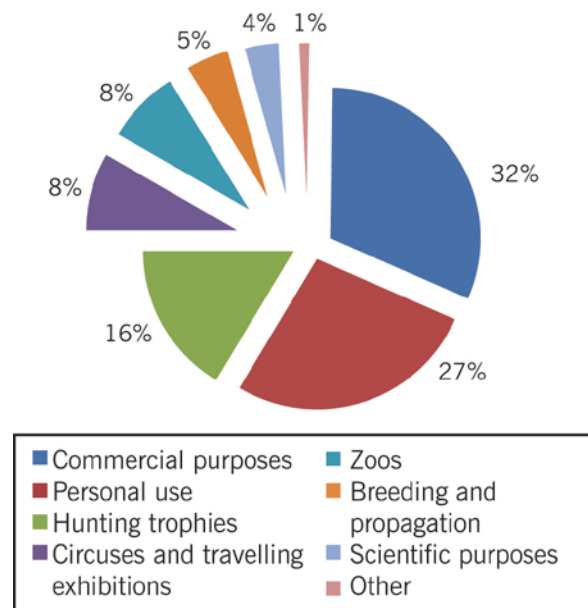
Canada collects data from CITES export permits issued by other countries, which are collected by the Canada Border Services Agency and submitted to the national CITES Management Authority at Environment Canada.

Canada issued 155 import permits in 2011, and permitted the import of a total of 457 authorized shipments. These shipments consisted of a wide variety of species, or their parts or derivatives, including, most notably, the Arowana, Black-footed Ferret, African Elephant, Leopard, Gyrfalcon and Costus.

Of the 155 import permits authorized in 2011, 49 (31.6%) were for commercial purposes, 42 (27.1%) were for personal use, 25 (16.1%) were for hunting trophies, 13 (8.4%) were for circuses and travelling exhibitions, 12 (7.7%) were for zoos, 7 (4.5%) were for breeding and propagation, 6 (3.9%) were for scientific purposes, and 1 (0.6%) was for another purpose.

Figure 2 indicates the distribution, by purpose, of CITES import permits issued in 2011. The percentage for commercial purposes mainly represents artificially propagated plants, pre-Convention specimens and captive-bred specimens.

Figure 2: Percentage of CITES import permits issued in 2011, by purpose



2.3 Canada's trading partners

Canada's major trading partners under CITES, particularly for exports, are the United States, the member countries of the European Union, and the countries of East and Southeast Asia. The largest importers of Canadian wild animal specimens in the European Union were Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Spain, France and Austria. The species most commonly exported from Canada to Asia, particularly East and Southeast Asia, was artificially propagated American Ginseng, with these regions accounting for the majority of Canada's foreign market for this species.

3. ASSESSING THE RISK TO SPECIES FROM TRADE

3.1 Non-detriment findings

Countries exporting specimens of species listed in CITES Appendix I or II must provide scientific advice that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. This advice is referred to as a “non-detriment finding.” Some jurisdictions, such as the United States and the European Union, enforce regulations that are stricter than those of CITES, leading to a higher level of scrutiny of exporting countries and their non-detriment findings.

In Canada, for more heavily traded species, the basis for the scientific advice by the CITES Scientific Authority is documented in a publicly available “standing non-detriment finding report”.

Although there is no international standard for non-detriment finding reports, material providing guidance on how to prepare standing non-detriment findings has been prepared by the CITES Secretariat and the International Union for Conservation of Nature and through various international CITES workshops. The Canadian Scientific Authority uses this material to structure its non-detriment finding reports.

Each standing non-detriment finding report is prepared following an approved process involving a federal–provincial/territorial CITES Scientific Authorities working group, and also involving an Aboriginal Consult Working Group.

Standing non-detriment finding reports have been completed for the Bobcat, American Ginseng, Goldenseal, Grey Wolf, Polar Bear, River Otter and Canada Lynx. These reports are available on Environment Canada’s website at www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=2942DC30-1. Canada is currently finalizing standing non-detriment reports for the Black Bear, Grizzly Bear and Sandhill Crane.

3.2 Review of Significant Trade process for certain listed species in CITES

The Review of Significant Trade is the process by which trade in wild species listed on Appendix II of CITES is examined to ascertain that the trade is non-detrimental to the survival of the species. The Animals and Plants Committees have primary responsibility for this multiple-staged process and focus on species for which international trade is a concern and for which evidence suggests that efforts toward sustainable management could be improved. The process requires countries to demonstrate sustainable trade and could lead to the imposition of global trade restrictions for a species or restrictions on individual countries.

Canadian trade was not included in the Review of Significant Trade for any species in 2011.

4. COMPLIANCE PROMOTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF CITES AND WAPPRIITA

4.1 Compliance promotion

Environment Canada works in partnership with a broad range of enforcement partners to ensure compliance with WAPPRIITA. These partners include the Canada Border Services Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and provincial and territorial law enforcement bodies and conservation authorities. Environment Canada is also an active partner on the international stage in promoting and verifying compliance with CITES.

Compliance with WAPPRIITA is monitored by such means as verifying permits, auditing importers’ and exporters’ declarations, conducting inspections at ports of entry, conducting routine or spot inspections of wildlife businesses, sharing information with border officials and other national and international agencies, gathering intelligence, and following up on information provided by the public.

In 2011, Environment Canada worked to promote compliance with WAPPRIITA through displays at key airports and online information regarding regulatory requirements. More specifically, Environment Canada published a brochure entitled *Animal and Plant Ingredients in Traditional Medicine* (www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=91DC8C3C-F3F7-4545-973D-C9F48EF641CA) and is currently updating two other brochures: *Endangered Species and the International Traveller* and *Endangered Species and Trade (import/export)*.

Environment Canada’s wildlife officers continued to give interviews, issue press releases and provide other communications materials on enforcement issues, for television, radio and print media.

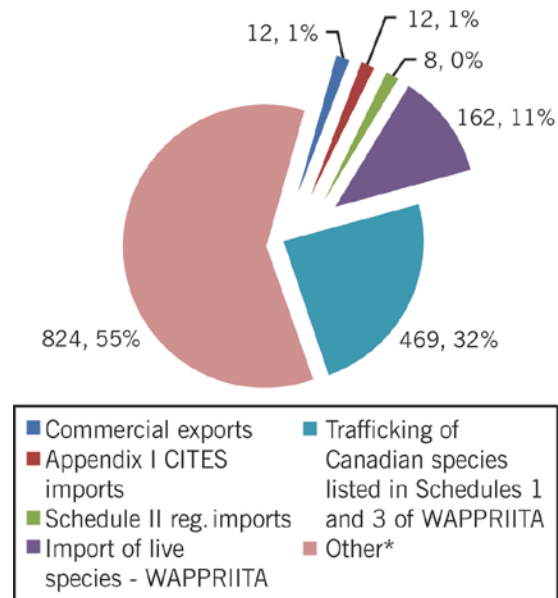
4.2 Enforcement activities

Environment Canada’s mandate is to ensure that businesses and individuals act in accordance with the conservation objectives of the legislation and regulations regarding the protection of the environment and wildlife. In 2011, Environment Canada relied on the work of 87 wildlife officers who were designated for enforcing WAPPRIITA and other environmental legislation.

4.2.1 Inspections

Environment Canada conducted 1487 inspections under WAPPRIITA in 2011. Each fiscal year, Environment Canada establishes inspection priorities for that year. For fiscal year 2011–2012, inspections were aimed particularly at the trafficking of Canadian species listed under Schedules I and III of WAPPRIITA and the importing of live species.

Figure 3: Number of inspections conducted in 2011, by national priority (number, percent of total)



* "Other" includes all WAPPRIITA inspections that were not related to national priorities.

4.2.2 Investigations

In 2011, under the provisions of applicable federal, provincial/territorial or foreign legislation, Environment Canada investigated 197 incidents of poaching or trafficking involving international or interprovincial movement of wildlife.

The following are four examples of investigations that led to prosecution and resulted in convictions for having violated the law and regulations under WAPPRIITA.

Conviction and fine of \$1,500 for illegal import of orchids

An individual pleaded guilty in April 2011 before the Ontario Court of Justice for illegally importing orchid plants into Canada. He was ordered to pay a \$500 fine and all the plants in his possession were confiscated. The offender must also make a \$1,000 donation to the Nature Conservancy of Canada for the purpose of conducting stewardship on lands in Canada where wild orchids are known to grow.



Example of a species of orchid: Blue Vanda
© Environment Canada – Photo: Véronique Brondex

WAPPRIITA and its associated regulations require that orchids being imported into Canada be accompanied by a valid permit issued under CITES. CITES permits are required to verify that the international trade of orchids does not threaten wild populations of the species.

Fine of \$8,000 for illegal import of Kulans

An Ontario resident pleaded guilty in August 2011 in the Ontario Court of Justice to illegally importing into Canada three live Kulans (*Equus hemionus*) without the required permits.

The guilty party was ordered to pay a total fine of \$8,000 and to forfeit the seized animals to the authorities. In addition, he was ordered to contribute \$2,545.89 toward the housing of the seized Kulans.

The offender was ordered to notify Environment Canada one week prior to any importation or exportation of any animals for the next three years.

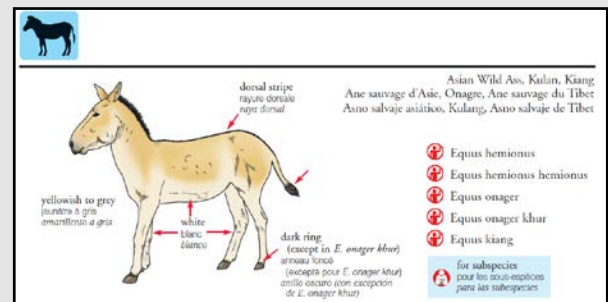


Image taken from the CITES Identification Guide – Hunting trophies
© Environment Canada

Also known as an Onager or an Asiatic Wild Ass of the Russian steppes, the Kulan is a large mammal belonging to the horse family and native to the deserts of Syria, Iran, India and Tibet. It can be found in Turkmenistan and has been re-introduced in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. There is also an introduced hybrid population in Israel. This species is listed under CITES as a species that may become endangered if its trade is not controlled.

Mont-Saint-Hilaire man found guilty of illegally importing tortoises

A resident of Mont-Saint-Hilaire, Quebec, was fined \$4,000 on September 2, 2011, for having illegally imported 20 live *Geochelone sulcata* tortoises.

In September 2009, the accused was charged by Environment Canada of having contravened subsection 6(2) of WAPPRIITA. He did not have the permit required under CITES to import *Geochelone sulcata* tortoises.

The allegations against the offender were based on a secondary inspection of a vehicle at the St-Armand border crossing that revealed that 20 live tortoises were hidden in the bottom of a golf bag in the trunk of the vehicle used by the defendant.

The Canada Border Services Agency requested the assistance of wildlife officers from Environment Canada, who seized the animals and the golf bag.

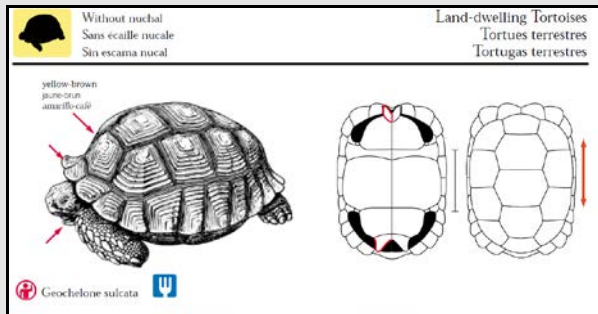


Image taken from the CITES Identification Guide – Tortoises
© Environment Canada

The *Geochelone sulcata* is a tortoise native to Central Africa. It lives in the southern Sahara, and in Senegal, Mauritania, Chad and Niger.

Individual fined \$40,000 for engaging in the illegal trade of an endangered species

The Quebec component of an investigation into the illegal trade of Queen Conches, initiated in October 2006 by Environment Canada, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and fisheries officers from the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other regions in Canada, ended in a guilty verdict in September 2011.

In this case, the offender was found guilty in Quebec Provincial Court. The individual was accused of importing a shipment of Queen Conches (*Strombus gigas*) into Canada from Colombia without the required CITES permits (an export permit from Colombia and an import permit from Canada).

The Laval native was fined \$40,000 payable to the Environmental Damages Fund (EDF) for having violated the law. The EDF is administered by Environment Canada and directs funds received as a result of fines, court orders and voluntary payments to priority projects that will benefit our natural environment.



© Photos.com – 2010, Environment Canada

The Queen Conch, also known as the pink conch, is a large mollusk—the flesh of which is highly sought after—found in the waters of 36 Caribbean countries. The species is protected under CITES.

Environment Canada publishes the outcomes of its main investigations on the Department's website. Media releases and enforcement notifications are available at www.ec.gc.ca/alef-ewe/default.asp?lang=En&n=8F711F37-1.

4.3 Overview, effort and collaboration of our provincial partners

While WAPPRIITA is federal legislation, several provincial agencies have officers designated to enforce the Act. The collaboration between Canada and the provincial partners extends WAPPRIITA's influence further than ever.

As mentioned in Section 1.3 of the report, MOUs exist between Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia so that they can support the efforts provided for under WAPPRIITA in accordance with their own legislation.

A total of 561 designated officers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia are authorized to enforce WAPPRIITA: 119 in Manitoba, 172 in Saskatchewan, 120 in Alberta and 150 in British Columbia.

In 2011, Alberta assisted other agencies with two investigations of possible WAPPRIITA violations, and initiated three prosecutions. A total of eight inspections and investigations were conducted by British Columbia conservation officers; seven of these are now closed and one is ongoing. Manitoba had one investigation resulting in a charge under WAPPRIITA and Saskatchewan reported none.

It is important to emphasize the impact of the provinces' capacity for supporting wildlife officers. The collaboration results in additional resources, which are a significant advantage especially during large-scale federal operations.

5. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

5.1 CITES Conferences of the Parties

The CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP) meets once every three years. During the intersessional period between CoPs, it is the role of the Animals Committee, Plants Committee and Standing Committee to undertake the directives given to them by the meeting of the previous CoP and prepare results for the next CoP meeting. The activities carried out by these committees in 2011 are described in more detail in Section 5.2 below.

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15) to CITES took place in March 2010. CoP16 will take place March 3–15, 2013, in Thailand. At each conference, Canada's objectives are to ensure that decisions made are based on sound science, to seek consistency between the Conference of the Parties' decisions and Canadian environmental policy, and to highlight Canadian approaches and successes in sustainable wildlife management.

Additional information on the Conference of the Parties is available on Environment Canada's website at www.ec.gc.ca/cites/default.asp?lang=En&n=C873C243-1.

5.2 CITES committees and working groups

Canada participates in a number of committees and working groups to foster ongoing cooperation with international partners under the Convention. In particular, the meetings of the CITES Standing Committee, Plants Committee and Animals Committee are instrumental in developing international policy for implementation of the Convention. Decisions made by these bodies affect Canada's obligations under CITES and greatly influence the decisions ultimately taken at the Conferences of the Parties. It is therefore important that Canadian concerns be heard in these forums.

Members of these committees are elected on a regional basis after every Conference of the Parties. Canada, Mexico and the United States are the parties of the North America region under CITES. Members of the Animals Committee and Plants Committee are elected as individuals on a regional representation basis. Carolina Caceres of Canada serves as representative for the North America region on the Animals Committee, and Adrienne Sinclair of Canada continues to serve as alternate regional representative on the Plants Committee.

The Plants Committee and Animals Committee met in April and July of 2011, and the Standing Committee met in August. Canada was very active in the work of all three committees, participating in a number of key working groups, according to the priorities of our country and our role as representative for North America on the Animals Committee.

The North America Region of CITES met by teleconference and in person during 2011. A videoconference in January 2011 focused on issues of common interest. The Region also met by teleconference and in person onsite prior to meetings of the CITES Animals Committee, Plants Committee and Standing Committee in 2011 to focus on regional preparations and positions for these meetings. Regional meetings allow Canada to better understand other North American parties' views and concerns, especially regarding shared species.

The Internet Toolkit

At the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee, the Committee directed the CITES Secretariat to develop an online toolkit to assist the parties in conducting searches of CITES-listed specimens targeted for trade. Canada took the lead and developed the "Internet Toolkit: A Manual for Conducting Research on the Internet," which has since been reviewed by the CITES Secretariat and by INTERPOL. The manual, which is for law enforcement purposes only, will be completed in 2012.

5.3 INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group

With 187 member countries, INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organization. In addition to being an active member country, Canada also holds the vice chair of the Environmental Crimes Committee.

The INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group, a subgroup of the Environmental Crimes Committee, represents several CITES member countries at INTERPOL. The group has been meeting regularly since 1994 to discuss issues related to law enforcement, strategies and ways in which INTERPOL can help maintain and support an international network of law enforcement experts specializing in wildlife crimes. A meeting of this working group that was scheduled to take place in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2011 was postponed to 2012 because of extreme weather conditions.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) sponsored an INTERPOL wildlife law enforcement training course in Botswana in 2011. Ten southern African countries participated in the training facilitated by Environment Canada, which focused on efforts to stop the illegal ivory and rhino horn trade plaguing their region.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

More information about WAPPRIITA is available on Canada's CITES website at www.ec.gc.ca/cites, or by contacting the Department:

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