

EU Wildlife Trade Enforcement Group



Region and countries of the network

Europe; European Union and its 27 Member States in alphabetical order: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden. In addition, other European countries are regularly invited to attend the meetings as observers.

Authorities involved

CITES Management and Enforcement Authorities, Customs, Police, Environmental Inspectorates, Nature Conservation Agencies, Wildlife inspectorates, Europol, Eurojust, Interpol, World Customs Organization and the CITES Secretariat are invited regularly.

Formal network

Brief description

The Enforcement Group is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the provisions laid down in the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and meets generally twice a year.

The enforcement group examines any technical questions relating to the enforcement of these regulations. The Group also plays an important role in the implementation of EU Action Plans against Wildlife Trafficking and acts as a forum to share knowledge and good practices.

(Reporting) structure / decision-making process

The results of the discussions from the meetings of the Enforcement group are reported to the EU CITES Management Committee that supports the EU Commission in the implementation of the EU Wildlife Trade regulations.

Key partners in the region

TRAFFIC Europe, relevant agencies and organizations such as Europol, Eurojust, Interpol, WCO, UNODC, neighboring countries like Switzerland, Norway, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key activities

Its task is to monitor enforcement policy and practice in the EU Member States and make recommendations to improve the enforcement of wildlife trade legislation. It also catalyses the exchange of information, experience, and expertise on wildlife trade control related topics between the Member States (trends in illegal trade, significant seizures and investigations), including sharing of intelligence information and establishing and maintaining databases. Reports of the findings of investigations/operations carried out by the member States are shared during the meetings, being accessible to all CITES Authorities of the Member States, the Commission, and other partners through restricted access.

In addition, subgroups have been established to handle identified important topics such as illegal trade in birds, reptiles, ivory, timber, or eels but also questions related to forensic and marking. Dedicated sessions can address issues like engagement with relevant business or transport sectors, cooperation with specifically important third countries.

Website and other useful links

Information is exchanged on a specific access restricted portal managed by the European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/eg_en.htm: In addition, EU TWIX (<http://www.eu-twix.org/>) which is a tool to facilitate information exchange on illegal wildlife trade in the European Union can be used to distribute information quickly between registered users. The EU-TWIX website and database are only accessible for officials of law enforcement authorities (e.g., customs, police and other governmental agencies such as environmental inspection services, national crime units, etc. involved in wildlife trade controls) and CITES Management Authorities of the 27 EU Members States.

Network focal points

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