



Wildlife Trade

- **Wildlife trade** refers to the commerce of products that are derived from non-domesticated animals or plants usually taken from their natural environment or raised under controlled conditions (“farmed”).
- **Legal wildlife trade is regulated** by the United Nations' Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which currently has 183 member countries called Parties.
- **Not all wildlife trade is illegal.** Wild plants and animals from tens of thousands of species are caught or harvested from the wild and then **sold legitimately as food, pets, ornamental plants, leather, tourist ornaments and medicine.**
- Wildlife trade **escalates into a crisis when an increasing proportion is illegal and unsustainable**—directly threatening the survival of many species in the wild.
- **Illegal wildlife trade is widespread** and constitutes one of the major illegal economic activities, comparable to the traffic of drugs and weapons.
- Interpol has estimated the extent of the illegal wildlife trade between **\$10 billion and \$20 billion per year.**
- Wildlife trade **threatens the local ecosystem and puts all species under additional pressure** at a time when they are facing threats such as over-fishing, pollution, dredging, deforestation, and other forms of habitat destruction.
- Many animals are kept for months in markets waiting to be sold. The **welfare of animals in trade is almost universally poor**, with the vast majority of animals failing to receive even the most basic freedom from pain, hunger, distress, discomfort, and few opportunities to express normal behavior.
- Wildlife trafficking and live animals markets **exacerbate the spread of zoonotic diseases** – diseases that can be transferred from animals to humans.

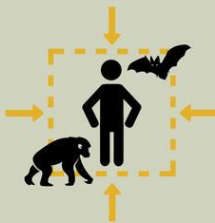


WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING & LIVE ANIMAL MARKETS: THREATS & SOLUTIONS

There is no risk-free trade or consumption of any wildlife whether they are wild-caught or farmed. | #COVID19

1. THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

The spread of zoonotic diseases is exacerbated by wildlife trafficking, wildlife markets, habitat destruction and climate change. These threats drive humans and animals into closer proximity.



2. WILDLIFE AND MARKETS

Live animal markets are a major source of new viruses, including ones that cause zoonotic diseases, which are transmitted between species. COVID-19 likely originated in a live animal market selling wildlife.



3. PERMANENT BAN



Wildlife are being poached and hunted, often to near-extinction, for exotic food, fake medicine, and pets. A permanent ban on markets trading in wildlife would protect endangered species and humans.

4. STOP TRAFFICKING



Combat trafficking of wild animals within countries and across borders. Change dangerous wildlife consumption behaviors, especially in cities.



Resources

- Wildlife Conservation Society: www.wcs.org
- CITES: www.cites.org
- World Wildlife Fund: www.worldwildlife.org
- Flora and Fauna International: www.fauna-flora.org
- World Conservation Network: <https://wildnet.org/>
- WildAid: <http://wildaid.org>
- TRAFFIC: <https://www.traffic.org/>
- Global Wildlife Conservation: <https://www.globalwildlife.org/>