

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Reports of regional representatives

EUROPE

1. This document has been submitted by Portugal as the Regional Representatives for Europe.\*

### 1. Introduction

This Report covers activities of the Parties within the European Region in the period between the 65th meeting (Geneva, July 2014) and the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, January 2016). This Report was compiled using contributions received from Austria, **Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and European Union.**

### 2. Overview of major developments

Currently there are 49 Parties to the Convention in the European Region, from which 35 Parties adopted the Gaborone Amendment to article XXI of the Convention.

#### Belgium

Since September 2014, the fees of applications for CITES documents in Belgium have increased:

- 1) from 12,5 to 20 EUR for European certificates, and
- 2) from 25 to 30 EUR per species (animals) or genus (plants) for import, export and re-export documents with a maximum of 300 EUR (in place of 125 EUR) per document.
- 3) From 0 to 40 EUR for Ownership, Travelling exhibition and Sample collection certificates.

Two CITES inspectors attached to the Belgian Federal Administration for Environment were recruited from January 2015 onwards in replacement of the former Animal Welfare and CITES inspectorate which, subsequently to the regionalization of the Animal Welfare competency effective end 2014, no longer existed.

Since March 2015, applications for CITES documents in Belgium are submitted through an online application available on the website of the Belgian CITES administration ([www.citesinbelgium.be](http://www.citesinbelgium.be)). This means also that from this date onwards Belgian CITES documents are electronically signed and stamped.

Since March 2015, Belgium is member of the Steering Committee of the African Elephant Fund.

Since 1st of January 2015, Belgium has started with standardized marking of raw ivory before issuing a EU-certificate or CITES re-export certificate (pre-convention ivory), in accordance with the relevant Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev COP16);. The Belgian marking consist thus of the following elements: BE/xxx(serial number given by the MA)/2015/xx,xkg (weight of the specimen).

#### Czech Republic

A progress in the investigation of the cases of illegal trade in rhinoceros hunting trophies has been made. Until now 16 persons have been indicted, 3 other persons have been sentenced recently for 5 (2 persons) and 3 years (1 person) imprisonment (the sentence is not effective yet). As a form of symbolical event to raise public awareness about rhino poaching and illegal trade in rhino horn a rhino horn burning ceremony and appeal was organized in the ZOO Dvur Kralove (Czech Republic) on 21st

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\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

September 2014 under the patronage of the Czech Minister of the Environment and with the attendance of CITES Secretary General, Mr. John Scanlon and many other guests from governmental and intergovernmental institutions. At this event 50 kilograms of a rhino horn were burnt (partially from confiscated horns). The Czech Republic suspended issuing CITES permits for re-export of raw pre-convention ivory from the Czech Republic (in force from 15th May 2015) as a form of stricter domestic measures.

### **Estonia**

A permanent CITES exhibition was opened in Tallinn airport in the second half of the year 2015.

### **Germany**

Initiated by Gabon and Germany the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted on 30 July 2015 the first ever [resolution](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/pr/2015/N1522120-E.pdf) (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/pr/2015/N1522120-E.pdf>) on "tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife" with a high number of co-sponsors, including all EU Member States. The resolution confirms important commitments for action at national, regional and global level and acknowledges the links with good governance, regional stability, and organized crime. The UNGA will revisit the issue on an annual basis and expects proposal from the SG for future action at the next session. The EU statement upon adoption of this resolution is attached [here](#).

Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium are as donors members of the [African Elephant Fund Steering Committee](#). In 2015 Germany donated USD 174,950. For more information see SC 66 Doc. 47.1.

As a significant contribution to the implementation of the 'African Elephant Action Plan' Germany considers [the research project on the determination of age and the geographical origin of African elephant ivory by using stable and radioactive isotopes](#) (see CoP16 Inf. 19).

A developed database, [www.ivoryid.org](http://www.ivoryid.org), as working enforcement tool is already available on the internet and freely accessible (username and login 'guest'). It currently stores nearly 900 ivory reference samples of verified origin from 29 African and six Asian elephant range states. The isotope ratios of these samples serve as reference values and are used to assign ivory samples of unknown origin to areas of presumed provenance. Actually a proficiency test coordinated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) just started with participation of many laboratories worldwide. Countries or Laboratories willing to take part in the proficiency test and/or would like to use the database for determination of the origin of ivory are requested to contact either the German CITES Management Authority or the IAEA in Vienna. The database is currently under conceptual revision. Additional sections should be included until February 2016, among others a new and important one for the age determination. Not only the description of the combined method (using carbon, strontium and thorium) is included, also a window where you can insert the result of a C<sup>14</sup> analysis. As consequence you will get information whether the data are sufficient for age determination and how old the ivory is, or the advice that additional tests with strontium and/or thorium are necessary to determine the accurate age of the sample.

On the occasion of the World Wildlife Day 2015 Germany in close collaboration with Brazil draw the attention of the public to the ambitious plan to reintroduce one charismatic species into its natural habitat again. The German NGO ACTP works as partner of the [Spix's Macaw Action Plan](#) and supports the respective Captivity Program. According to this two specimens of Spix's Macaw bred in captivity in Germany in 2014 were sent to Brazil in March 2015 to be included in the founder stock there. To inform the public about this collaboration the German Federal Minister for the Environment held a press meeting at the airport to highlight the work of ACTP, the important international cooperation to rescue the species and to say goodbye to the birds. In Brasilia in a ceremonial act on a press conference ACTP handed over the ownership certificate for the bird in its possession to the Minister for the Environment of Brazil.

#### Significant seizures:

Cooperation with China, cacti: More than 800 strictly protected cacti, worth about 60.000 €, found during a search in Dortmund/ Germany. The action was part of a joint investigation with colleagues from China Customs, which was initiated because of a hint from China Customs. The German national, a cacti trader, sold the plants without any documents to buyers all over the world (i.e. China). The search in Germany was conducted at the same time when in China houses and premises from consignees have been searched and 5 arrest warrants have been enforced by China Customs.

On 28th July colleagues from China Customs (Bureau of Anti-Smuggling Nanjing Customs District) visited the German customs investigators to talk about the joint actions taken and exchange experiences, information and possible future cooperation. The investigations are still ongoing. As soon as all evidences are evaluated German customs will inform the involved countries (cacti customer).

Shinisaurus crocodilurus: Customs investigation service and police officers caught 3 Chinese national who tried to sell protected specimens at a reptile fair in Hamm/ Germany. German CITES MA gave the hint to customs investigation service a few days before the fair took place. The offenders were temporarily arrested. Beside others at least 2 live specimens of *Shinisaurus crocodilurus* have been seized. One of the Chinese persons involved had placed some advertisement on Internet offering specimens of *Shinisaurus crocodilurus* which shall be taken from the wild in Viet Nam. Investigations are completed. The judgement of the Court is awaited.

The specimens are placed in a German zoo and shall form part of a breeding project which will be carried out in cooperation with the Vietnamese CITES authorities.

Cooperation with Switzerland, shatoosh: Following an information by the CITES Management Authority of Switzerland we had carried out some investigation concerning the illegal trade in shatoosh shawls. A German person had been stopped by the authorities of Switzerland because she had several of these high valuable shawls in her possession when she entered Switzerland. Consequently a house search at her German residence was carried out but this house search did not lead to further seizures. The case is still under investigation and will be conducted in close cooperation with the investigation agencies of Switzerland.

SC working group on sturgeons: At SC 65 Germany was nominated as chair of the SC working group on sturgeons to review Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) 'Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish'. After intensive discussions the WG reached consensus in several aspects but also identified issues which need further discussions by the Parties. With SC66 Doc. 55.1 the WG provides a detailed report on its work, deliberations and recommendations and submits a draft revision of the respective resolution.

Germany's representatives participated in several SC working groups, e.g. on Annotations, Special Reporting Requirements, Multilateral Measures, Implementation and Enforcement of the Convention as it relates to the trade in species listed in Appendix I.

## **Hungary**

An EU-funded Twinning Light Project on "STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF AUTHORITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR CITES AND WILDLIFE TRADE REGULATIONS ENFORCEMENT IN SERBIA" has been launched on 31 March 2014. The lead partner of the project is the Ministry of Rural Development of Hungary. The project is being implemented by Hungarian experts, in close cooperation with experts from several other EU Member States, such as the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain, who assist Serbian colleagues to raise the capacities of authorities responsible for CITES and wildlife trade regulations enforcement in the Republic of Serbia.

This project is funded by the EU with EUR 194 thousand and will be implemented for 6 months until September 2014. The principal objective of this Twinning project is to raise the capacities of all the relevant authorities in Serbia involved in CITES and national wildlife trade legislation enforcement through specialized trainings for the project target beneficiaries. Implementing EU standards in this field will be important for Serbia as it advances in the process of EU integration. Not only will it be necessary for EU accession but the activities of this project will contribute to the priorities set in the National Sustainable

Development Strategy, in particular the protection of the environment and the rational use of natural resources with one of the measures being the establishment of a system to protect and sustainable use the natural resources such as wild fauna and flora. But most importantly, complying with EU standards will contribute to preserving biodiversity on the local, regional and global level and to the efficient control legal transboundary movement and trade, internal trade and possession, and to sanction illegal activities related to protected species of wild fauna and flora. MS experts will focus on the following results to be achieved: - legislation analysed and recommendations developed for full harmonization with the acquires; - enforcement officers adequately trained for conducting wildlife trade controls in both trans boundary and internal trade, with the ability to detect wildlife smuggling attempts; - public prosecutors and judges adequately informed on proper sanctioning procedures for infringements related to wildlife trade, with the ability to properly prosecute and sanction wildlife smugglers; - stakeholders involved in the disposal and care of confiscated live specimens of wild animals adequately trained in basic procedures; - national action plan for wildlife trade enforcement developed and prepared for adoption; - inter-sectoral cooperation strengthened and capacity of stakeholders increased for more efficient enforcement of CITES and national wildlife trade regulations provisions.

The Hungarian Government adopted the Hungarian national Biodiversity Strategy from 2014-2020 in February 2014. The Strategy includes a specific target for the protection of species endangered by trade which refers to those species that are listed on the CITES Appendices and occur in Hungary as well as on raising awareness in order to increase with CITES provisions.

The national CITES implementing regulation was changed in 2013 with regard to registration of Hunting trophies and requirements for the authorization of caviar processing and (re-) packaging plants. The amendment, as a stricter national measure, prohibited keeping of primates for private persons.

## **Malta**

The Malta Environment and Planning Authority serves as the CITES Management and Enforcement Authority for Malta. In January 2015, a newly-created Unit within the Authority's Environmental Protection Directorate, namely the Monitoring and Compliance Unit, was entrusted with CITES responsibilities as one of its main focuses.

This new Unit had embarked on a programme to give better exposure to CITES. Even as part of the World Environment Day, officers from the Unit participated in various TV and radio programmes with the aim of sensitizing the general public on CITES requirements. The main target cohort was that sector of the population

more prone to purchasing goods over the internet. Other initiatives were also taken, including with the pet shop sector.

The Authority also has a CITES Office, that is open three days per week, that services clients who prefer meeting in person for advice, and to obtain clearances. The Unit also operates an emergency service throughout the day and night.

Various CITES-related seizures were effected over the July 2014 – January 2016 period. The most significant of these was the interception at the Malta International Airport in July 2014 of two suitcases filled with more than 400 bird skins, of which 119 were CITES-protected birds from 19 different species. The birds belonged to a Maltese national returning from a hunting trip in Argentina, and another 55 CITES-listed taxidermy specimens were later found at his home in his private collection. Court proceedings are underway.

## **Portugal**

Recognizing the problem of the illegal wildlife trade and in particular of ivory specimens which contributes to the severe increase of poaching of African elephants and rhinos in recent years, Portugal as a country with strong relationships namely with some African Portuguese speaking countries has built its efforts to tackle that issue.

Trade of legal pre-Convention ivory specimens is strictly regulate with each item always accompanied with an EU certificate issued after analyzes from Portuguese CITES Management Authority. Furthermore, each company that transfers ivory specimens, even if it is not commercial trade, need to be registered in CITES MA and update all details every year.

The Portuguese CITES MA together with the judiciary Police have made progress in their investigation tackling the illegal trade of birds specially parrots. Within this operation sixteen household checks were conducted with the seizures of hundreds of birds. The investigation is ongoing and is leading for new persons.

As a result from those investigations Portuguese Enforcement Authorities were able to seize in March 2015, two Lear's Macaw, one of the most important species of parrots in the illegal trade. They were juveniles that entered illegally in Portugal as eggs, most probably in January 2015, in flight coming from Brazil. In close collaboration with Brazil, Portugal was were able to send those birds back to that country and managed a fruitfully meeting with the Brazilian enforcement authorities. The birds were included in an international captivity program of the species which hopefully will release specimens into its natural habitat to help the survival of this species. The person which circulate with the two Lear's Macaw is in prison since then waiting for a definitive decision from the court.

Portugal had implemented its action plan for enforcement for the period 2014-2015 with special focus in the control of illegal trade of parrots, glass eels and ivory.

Portugal has contributed to the review of EU wildlife trade regulations; Council Regulation 338/97/EC and Commission Regulation 865/2006, following changes initiated to this legislation by activates at CoP16.

## **Republic of Moldova**

1. The most threatened species CITES were recently included in the 3rd Edition of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova (2015 year): total 427 species (219 wild animals and 208 plants).

2. *Legal basis of the implementation and enforcement of CITES in Republic of Moldova was improving in the last years and including:*

- 1) National Council Law No. 1246-XIV from September 28, 2000 on the Adherence of the Republic of Moldova to the CITES
- 2) Procedure on authorizing the export and import of plants and animals of wild flora and fauna, their body parts and derivatives, as well as the import/export or re-export of the flora and fauna species regulated by the CITES (Decree of the Ministry of Ecology, Construction and Territorial Development and Ministry of Justice No. 14 from January 25, 2002
- 3) Law no.1515-XII1, 1993 on Environmental Protection.
- 4) Regulations for the foundation, register, completion, keeping, export and import of wild flora and fauna collection of plants and animals. Governmental Order Nr.1107 from September 11, 2003.
- 5) Laws for the completion and modified the Law on Animal Kingdom no. 439-XIII from 27 April 1995 (no. 61 from 01.04.2011, no. 232 from 16.05.2008, no. 461 from 20.11.2003). Last modification was approved in the Parliament meeting from December 3, 2015.
- 6) Law on Vegetal Kingdom no. 239 from November, 8, 2007.
- 7) The Custom Code of Republic of Moldova no. 1149-XIV from 20.07.2000.
- 8) The Contravention Code of Republic of Moldova, no. 218 from 24.10.2008.

*Legal basis of the implementation and enforcement of CITES in Republic of Moldova were developed in the period 2013 – 2015 years:*

- 1) The Contravention Code of Republic of Moldova, no. Nr. 218 from 24.10.2008 with some amendments from October, 9, 2015 (Government Decision No. 700) , polished in the Official Gazette MO nr.281-290 din 16.10.2015). In art. 140 of the Contravention Code of Republic of Moldova, „Contravention of rules for the protection and use of animal and plant

kingdom, included in the CITES and Red Book of the Republic of Moldova” was introduce amendments for 2-fold increase fines for administrative contraventions.

2) The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova approved, on December, 3, 2015, the Law for the completion and modified the Law on Animal Kingdom and Law on the found of the natural protected area December 3, 2015. (including regulation for hunting species protection)

3) Strategy on Biological Diversity of the Republic of Moldova for 2015-2020 and the Action Plan for enforcing it (approved by Government Decree no. 274 of 18 May 2015 ).

4) Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023 and the Action Plan to enforce it, approved by the Decree of the Government no. 301 of 24 April 2014.

5) Published the third edition of the Red Book of Republic of Moldova, 2015 – RB includes all CITES species that are in Moldova.

### **Slovak Republic**

In December 2013 the Slovak Government has adopted National Action Plan 2014 – 2019 for the enforcement of Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein. Based on the tasks arising from it, control of internet trade in endangered species has been identified as priority for control activities in the year 2014. Suitability and capacity of placement options for seized and confiscated specimens was also reviewed.

Ministry of Environment in cooperation with the Customs Office in Bratislava and ZOO Bojnice prepared within the framework of the international action in September 2014 public combustion of rhino horns seized by Slovak customs authorities by the illegal import into the EU. Aim of the event was to draw attention of the public to the critical situation in illegal killing and trade in rhino horns.

### **Turkey**

Turkey has been a party of the CITES Convention since 1996. By-law on the Implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora was published in the Official Gazette dated December 27, 2001 with no. 24623 and was revised in 2004.

Turkish Responsible Authorities have been identified according to the By-law on the Implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Management Authorities are the Ministry and Forestry and Water Affairs, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and Scientific Authority is the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) and Enforcement Authorities are Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Customs and Trade.

Ministry and Forestry and Water Affairs, General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks is the focal point of the CITES Convention and responsible for the coordination, co-operation, communication between the Secretariat, Parties, Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities and the other Institutions and organizations and preparing of the annual and biannual reports. Management Authorities give a training program on CITES implementations for customs officers regularly.

EU Twinning Project – “Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations”

Twining Contract number: TR/2009/IB/EN/02

Duration of the project: 25 months

Project Partner: Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of Spain

Overall cost: 1,425,000 €

Beneficiary: Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks)

Co- Beneficiary: Ministry of Customs and Trade, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK)

Stakeholders: Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Economy

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The aim of the project was to strengthen the technical and institutional capacity of CITES implementation of all the authorities involved. Also, to increase the public awareness about what CITES is, its rules and conditions for the international trade of the specimens of the species regulated under the Convention.

#### **Extent of coverage**

The project covered the 100% of the CITES Offices and officials, 107 Customs officers, 30 enforcement officers, 100% of the staff of the Scientific Authority and general public.

#### **Implementation Process**

The mechanisms used have been the following:

*25 different activities:* covering all the relevant aspects for CITES implementation. During these activities 27 experts from Spain, Portugal, United Kingdom and Italy have participated working closely with the BC members and elaborating reports with recommendations.

*Training seminars:* Six training seminars on CITES implementation were hold in Ankara, Izmit, Antalya (2), Çesme and Rize. The trainings were conducted by Spanish experts, dealt with all aspect involved in CITES implementation and focused on practical exercises using confiscated specimens in Spain that were given to the

Turkish CITES authorities. All the participants received the CITES Appendices and the Convention text in Turkish, a CD containing all the presentations and exercises, a CD with identification material (identification guides and posters in English, Spanish and French) and a participation certificate.

*Study visits:* four study visits to Spain (2), France and United Kingdom. During these visits the participants were shown the way of working to manage and control the CITES specimens trade in three EU member States. Also 10 Turkish experts performed a visit to three Rescue Centers in Spain.

*Internships in Spain:* three people from the IT Department were in Madrid working with IT Spanish experts to learn about the electronic permitting system given by Spain to Turkiye. Also, four people from the principal Turkish Management Authority were in two local offices of the Spanish Management Authority (Madrid and Tenerife) dealing with all the aspect related with CITES implementation.

*Exchange program:* Ten Turkish experts were in Spain visiting three rescue centers for confiscated live animal and two Spanish experts were visiting rescue centers in Turkiye. During this exchange program the experts had the opportunity of sharing experiences and analyzing the way of dealing with confiscated live animals.

#### Results

- 30 staff received Training of Trainers on CITES and related conservation issues.
- 269 individuals of the target group have been benefited.
- 269 trainees have perceived an average of 90% of the training subjects.
- All the training material was translated into Turkish and distributed to all the participants: CITES appendices, CITES Convention text and the Turkish legislation
  - o All the practical exercises presented during the seminars.
  - o A CD containing all the lectures and practical exercises.
  - o A CD containing all the identification guides and posters presented and used during the seminars.
- 10 Turkish experts performed a visit to three Rescue Centers in Spain.
- 57 people participated in four study visits to Spain (2), France and United Kingdom.
- 4 Turkish experts participated in an internship in Spain.
- Spanish electronic permitting system was given to Turkiye. Preparing of Central CITES Database program was one of the project's main benchmarks. The trade monitoring and database system was established to issue the CITES permits and certificates electronically.
- 10 Identification Guides and 543 identification sheets have been translated into Turkish and 300 copies of each one have been published and distributed among Customs and CITES Local Offices
- Ten identification guides: Turtles and Tortoises, Hunting Trophies, Crocodiles, Birds, Sturgeons, and Paddlefish, Sharks, Ivory, Shahtoosh (Tibetan Antelope), Tropical Wood, Cactus
- 100% of the staff of each local CITES office have participated in one of the training seminar and the technical and administrative capacities have been strengthened.
- A Website has been designed and established. The objective of this activity was to help CITES Turkish Department designing and creating the web-page CITES Turkiye using the existing resources in the Turkish IT Department.
- 10.000 informative brochures, 1.000 posters and 5.000 booklets have been performed, published and distributed.

Necessary field equipments and materials were purchased. Also four wheel drives and one transporter (for animals) were purchased for the four local CITES offices and one Rescue Center.

#### Impact

The knowledge about CITES has improved significantly among the Turkish authorities involved in its implementation.

There was a poster competition among the twinning projects organized by the EU Delegation in order to improve the awareness of the public on the Twinning Projects. The poster prepared for the team of this project was the winner among 9 posters of several Twinning.

#### Ukraine

According to the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 22.04.2015 № 228 new CITES Scientific Authority has been designated: Institute of Marine Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine dealing with marine fauna and flora.

##### *Sturgeon species conservation and sustainable use*

Since 2000 a full ban on commercial fishing of sturgeon species had been enacted in Ukraine. Thus it was prohibited to sell sturgeon species of natural origin in the domestic market as well as to export them.

During 2014–2015 downstream migration of sturgeon young fish have been studied in the main channels of the Danube mouth (Kilia, Ochakiv, Starostambulsky and Bystry channels). In addition, a by-catch of sturgeon juveniles in fishing gears during commercial catch has been investigated.

In the framework of the project POP 18/22.04.2013 "Evaluation of survival and distribution in the Black Sea of young sturgeons stocked experimentally in the Lower Danube", Romania (2013–2015), there were activities on searching CWT tags using T-wand detectors provided by the Lower Danube University, Galati, Romania.

In 2015 the celebration of the World Wildlife Day had been organized in Ukraine.



## United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK supported Botswana in hosting the Kasane Conference ( March 2015) on Illegal wildlife trade (IWT). This built on the actions/recommendations in the London Declaration by identifying further actions and recommendations in the Kasane Statement. The UK has established a £13 million fund to support action around the world to reduce demand, strengthen law enforcement, and develop sustainable livelihoods for communities affected by IWT. This money is distributed primarily through our Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund. Through Round One, over £5 million is being distributed to 19 projects in developing countries.

## European Union

On 8 July 2015, the European Union (EU) has become a Party to CITES.

CITES is implemented in the European Union through Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97/EC of 9 December 1996<sup>1</sup> on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein.

The European Union has adopted the following measures relating to wildlife trade which entered into force on 5 February 2015:

- The first measures concern the import of hunting trophies of 6 species and are designed to ensure that any such imports are legal and sustainable.

Trophy hunting is a widespread practice and, when managed sustainably, it can help conserve species and generate income that benefits biodiversity protection and rural communities.

There have however been concerns about the trade in hunting trophies of a number of species. Until now, there was no systematic scrutiny by CITES Scientific Authorities in the EU Member States to ensure that trophies from these species imported to the EU were the result of sustainable hunting. Those species or populations are indeed included in Annex B of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 (the equivalent of CITES Appendix II) and, because hunting trophies are considered as personal effects, were exempted from the import permit requirement in place in the EU. Questions were also raised with regards to the legality of some hunting trophies operations: the system was for example abused by criminal gangs to import rhino horns as hunting trophies into the EU, which were then fraudulently exported to Vietnam.

The new measures address these problems by introducing a requirement for an import permit guaranteeing the legal and sustainable origin of the trophy. The permit will only be delivered by the importing EU Member State once the EU is convinced that the import meets criteria demonstrating that it is sustainable. If the criteria are not met, the import will not be possible.

The species concerned are the African lion (*Panthera leo*), the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), the African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) (for populations not included in Annex A of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 and CITES Appendix I, for which the import permit requirement already applies), the Southern white rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum simum*) (for populations not included in Annex A of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 and CITES Appendix I, for which the import permit requirement already applies), the hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) and the argali sheep (*Ovis ammon*).

- The other new measure introduced into EU law aims at making it clear that import permits should not be issued by EU Member States in cases where no satisfactory information has been obtained from the exporting or re-exporting country regarding the legality of wildlife products to be imported and subject to Regulation (EC) No 338/97. This will create a solid basis for Member States to act when they deal with shipments whose legality is subject in doubt.

- The Commission has also introduced new measures to facilitate travel for musicians using instruments that contain items derived from species protected under the CITES Convention. Today, musicians often need to obtain CITES permits each time they cross a border to ensure that they can travel with such instruments. The new measures create a specific certificate which can be used for multiple cross-border movements and which is valid for three years. It should make it easier for musicians based in the EU to travel to third countries with their instruments. Those measures are in line with CITES Resolution Conf. 16.8 on frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments which was adopted at the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the CITES Convention in March 2013.

The new Regulations amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 792/2012 can be found here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32015R0870&from=EN>

More information on the EU wildlife trade rules can be obtained via the specific webpage of the European Commission: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home_en.htm).

The Commission has adopted a new "Suspension Regulation" (Commission Regulation (EU) No 2015/736 on 7 May 2015 which was published in the Official Journal L 117 of 8 May 2015 (p. 25). The Regulation can be found here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1432742448901&uri=CELEX:32015R0736>.

The next revision of the "Suspension Regulation" is scheduled for the first half of 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 61 of 3.3.1997, p. 1

The Commission has also revised the Annexes to Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 which have been adopted on 1 December 2014 and published in the Official Journal L 361 on 17 December 2014. The Regulation can be found here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1432737579738&uri=CELEX:32014R1320>. This latest version has been updated in accordance with CITES Notification 2013/052; furthermore, the electric blue gecko (*Lygodactylus williamsi*) has been included in Annex B. The next revision of the Annexes will be prepared in the near future.

Further to the Commission stakeholder consultation of April 2014 (COM (2014) 64) on the EU Approach against Wildlife Trafficking, which also included an expert conference in April 2014, the European Commission is now elaborating a dedicated Action Plan which aims at ensuring the implementation of the commitments taken at global level and at making EU action against wildlife trafficking more focused and more strategic. It is expected that the adoption of this Action Plan will occur in the first half of 2016.

More information on the Action Plan against wildlife trafficking can be obtained via the specific webpage of the European Commission:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/trafficking\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/trafficking_en.htm).

#### *Implementation*

Council Regulation (EC) 338/97 establishes the Committee on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, the Scientific Review Group and the Enforcement Group. The Committee on Trade in Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which agrees on implementation measures for CITES, met four times in 2014 and 2015. The Scientific Review Group, which consists of the Member States' Scientific Authorities and examines any scientific question relating to the application of the Regulations, also met four times in 2014 and 2015. The Enforcement Group, which consists of representatives of each Member State's authorities with responsibility for monitoring compliance and enforcement of the Regulations, met twice in 2014 and 2015. This group plays a key role for exchanging enforcement related information among enforcement, customs and police authorities.

### **3. Activities of the regional representatives**

#### **Italy**

- In the context of the EXPO our Enforcement Authority organised a workshop on illegal logging and wildlife crime (September 2015) training of police officers engaged at custom and territory level on investigation techniques for fighting wildlife crime (December 2013)

- Italian Customs, State forestry Corps and Legambiente realized the CIVIC project to identify vulnerabilities of trade chains of waste cycle, alimentary products and on endangered species protected by international Conventions. Project with the contribution of the EU Programme on Prevention of and Fight against Crime

- Italian Customs, State forestry Corps and Ministry of Economic Development organised a workshop on CITES controls for training of Custom officers and officers of the State forestry Corps (December 2015)

#### **Norway**

In 2015 Norway hosted a two day Nordic CITES meeting in 2015, to coordinate, collaborate and exchange experience. This is now an annual happening and participants are very satisfied with the resulting improvement of CITES handling. The participants were from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

#### **Portugal**

Portugal MA coordinated:

-training of police officers engaged at custom and territory level on investigation techniques for fighting wildlife crime

-elaboration of a draft memorandum of understanding between Portuguese CITES MA and Brazilian colleagues

-training of police officers engaged at custom and territory level on CITES matter and related issues

Portugal CITES MA and SA took part in:

- 65<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, July 2014)

- 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee (Tel Aviv, Israel, 30.08 to 03.09.2015)

- 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee (Tbilisi, Georgia, 19 to 23.10.2015)

Portugal is alternate member of Plant Committee.

Portugal also participate as expert in the EU-funded Twinning Light Project on "Strengthening the capacities of authorities responsible for CITES and wildlife Trade Regulations Enforcement in Serbia" with Hungary as lead partner, in the EU Twinning Project –"Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations in Turkey" with Spain as lead partner, and in the 3 days workshop on CITES and the EU wildlife trade regulations organised by the EU in June 2015 in Podgorica (Montenegro).

#### **Republic of Moldova**

Moldova's CITES Management Authority has provided support in drafting OECD cards for CITES species, which will be translated into Romanian and Ukrainian and used by the Ukrainian and Moldovan customs officers to determine CITES species (project OSCE and ENVSEC).



## **Ukraine**

There was a permanent exchange of correspondence between CITES Management Authorities of Ukraine and other countries.

## **4. Regional cooperation**

### **Belgium**

Belgian Customs and Federal Police do regularly make use of the EU-TWIX list-server to share information on seizures and others related enforcement subjects with colleagues of CITES authorities in other EU Member States.

### **Czech Republic**

The declaration on cooperation in the field of CITES implementation was signed between the Czech Republic and Viet Nam on 20th November 2015 in the Czech Republic. The mutual cooperation of the two countries should help to improve the exchange of information and experience with management of populations of endangered species protected by CITES as well as raise public awareness to address illegal trade with endangered species, especially ivory and rhino horn.

### **Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden**

The Nordic countries have an annual meeting of cooperation where CITES enforcement and the work at the administrative authorities are discussed. In 2014 the meeting was hosted by Finland. In 2015 Norway hosted a two day Nordic CITES meeting in 2015, to coordinate, collaborate and exchange experience. This is now an annual happening and participants are very satisfied with the resulting improvement of CITES handling. The participants were from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

### **Portugal**

Portugal also participate as expert in the EU-funded Twinning Light Project on “Strengthening the capacities of authorities responsible for CITES and wildlife Trade Regulations Enforcement in Serbia” with Hungary as lead partner, in the EU Twinning Project – “Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations in Turkey” with Spain as lead partner, and in the 3 days workshop on CITES and the EU wildlife trade regulations organised by the EU in June 2015 in Podgorica (Montenegro).

### **Ukraine**

There is ongoing cooperation between Ukraine and Romania on sturgeon conservation and restoration. In the framework of the Ukrainian-Russian Commission for Fisheries in the Sea of Azov there are activities on joint management of shared stock of sturgeons in the Sea of Azov.

There is cooperation between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine and OSCE on CITES related issues aimed at enhancement of cooperation between CITES enforcement authorities of Ukraine. In addition, CITES Management authorities of Ukraine actively cooperate with WWF Ukraine.

### **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

The UK chairs the CITES working groups on Rhino and Special Reporting Requirements (SRRWG) and co-chairs the Advisory Working Group on the Evaluation the Review of Significant Trade. UK (JNCC) is a Member for Europe of the Animals Committee). RBG Kew assisted Georgia with implementation of CITES for Geophytes and also undertook field work in Georgia. Kew produced guidance on CITES listed tree species which was funded by Sweden.

### **European Union**

EU funds have been granted or approved for the following projects:

- Strengthening capacity in developing countries for sustainable wildlife management and enhanced implementation of CITES wildlife trade regulations, with particular focus on commercially-exploited aquatic species (August 2013-July 2016, EUR 1.3 million granted to the CITES Secretariat) ([http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20130914\\_shark\\_ray.php](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20130914_shark_ray.php))
- Combating wildlife crime (2013-2015, 1.7 Mio EUR granted to ICCWC through Interpol) ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1428\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1428_en.htm))
- “Minimising the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species (MIKES)” (successor of MIKE, more focused on enforcement and with larger scope); the programme will run in the period 2014-2018 (12.3 Mio EUR granted to the CITES Secretariat) ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-1193\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1193_en.htm))
- Implementation of CoP 16 decisions (2013-2016, 0.7 Mio EUR)
- Species+ and monitoring of the status of several CITES-listed species (0.65 Mio EUR granted to UNEP-WCMC)

- ITTO-CITES Program for Implementing CITES Listings of Tropical Timber Species (5 Mio EUR granted to ITTO for the period 2012-2015)
- The EU approved in 2015 a project to finance a programme jointly carried out by CITES and UNODC to strengthen law enforcement and reduce the demand for illegal wildlife products in South East Asia (through a EUR 5 million grant).

## 5. Meetings and workshops

### Belgium

#### Meetings:

Belgian CITES authorities participated in all CITES meetings at international level since July 2014 :

- o Standing Committee 65 (Geneva, 7 to 11 July 2014)
- o European Regional CITES Plants meeting (Wageningen, Netherlands, 11 to 14.11.2014)
- o 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee (Tel Aviv, Israel, 30.08 to 03.09.2015)
- o 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee (Tbilisi, Georgia, 19 to 23.10.2015)

Belgian CITES authorities participated in all CITES meetings at EU level since July 2014 :

- o 68<sup>th</sup> to 73<sup>rd</sup> CITES Management Committee meetings (Brussels, September 2014 to December 2015)
- o 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Expert Group meetings (Brussels, September and December 2015)
- o 69<sup>th</sup> to 74<sup>th</sup> SRG meetings (Brussels, September 2014 to December 2015)
- o 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> CITES Enforcement meetings (October 2014 to November 2015)

Other meetings :

- o Chatham House workshop on links between EUTR and CITES (London, 26 and 27 January 2015)
- o 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 11 and 12 September 2015)
- o CITES Workshop NDF on tree species (Isle of Vilm, 11-14 November 2015)

#### Training Activities:

Belgian CITES Management Authority performed several sessions of CITES training for CITES Controlling Authorities in the course of 2015.

For the Belgian Sanitary Agency : 16.10.2015 (Zaventem Airport); 22.10.2015 (Liège Bierset Airport); 23.10.2015 (Antwerpen haven)

For Belgian Customs : 30.10.2015, 12.11.2015, 19.11.2015 & 26.11.2015 (Liège Bierset Airport)

The CITES inspectors attached to the Belgian Federal Administration for Environment participated during 2015 at several joint federal controlling operations (so-called "BACON OPERATION") taking place, approximately twice a month, at different airports in the country (Zaventem, Gosselies and Bierset). It is a initiative conducted by the Belgian Customs in cooperation with the Belgian Federal Sanitary Agency, the Belgian Federal Agency for Medicines and Health Products and different departments of the Federal Public Service Public Health, Security of the Food Chain and Environment. The aim of this initiative is to detect illegal products brought back in the EU by passengers coming from third countries.

### Czech Republic

The following CITES workshops for the state authorities and the public were organized in the Czech Republic:

- A 2-day workshop "The CITES evergreens" in June 2015 was organized by the Czech Scientific Authority (Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic) and opened to the public. The workshop was focused on the issues of trophy hunting of animals protected by CITES.
- A 2-day conference "Question - marks about the CITES" was organized by the University of South Bohemia in Ceske Budejovice in October 2015 focusing on how science can assist CITES.- Two 3-day workshops "Wildlife crime in the Czech Republic" for the Enforcement Authorities, prosecutors, Police, etc. were organized by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate in November 2014 and 2015. Participants from the Slovak Republic took part as well at both of these workshops.

### France

From 29 September to 6 October 2015, an expert from the Management Authority of France carried out a mission to Paraguay, where he participated in the First International Workshop for the Conservation of Palo santo (*Bulnesia sarmientoi*) in the Gran Chaco Region (Asunción, Paraguay, 30 September - 2 October 2015), which was organized by SEAM, the Paraguayan Ministry for Environment. He then participated in a field trip to the Chaco region where this species occurs. This mission was made possible thanks to the European Commission, through TAIEF - the Environmental Technical Assistance & Information Exchange Facility, which offers short-term peer-to-peer assistance to support environmental policy development and implementation in a number of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. TAIEF allows rapid mobilisation of experts from EU Member State Administrations in order to build professional networks and improve knowledge transfer globally through contributions to workshops or seminars, or providing targeted assistance on environmental challenges.

### Germany

Germany's Management Authority participated at the face-to-face meeting of the CITES SC working group on special reporting requirements held in January 2015 in Geneva. The working group has conducted its work by email, telephone and video conference. The working group prepared document SC 66 Doc. 30.2. It proposes:

- a new structure of the 'Biennial Report' (proposed as triennial 'Implementation Report'),
- concluded a consolidated list of report requirements which should be made available on the CITES website
- an Online Reporting System using information technology to aid reporting by Parties,
- a proposal for annual reports on illegal trade separated from the annual report on legal trade.

## **Hungary**

Between the 3 March and 30 September 2014, the Hungarian CITES Management Authority completed a TWINNING Project in Serbia with the title: "*Strengthening the capacities of authorities responsible for CITES and Wildlife Trade Regulations enforcement in Serbia*".

### **Objective**

The overall objective of the project was to help Serbia implement CITES, national and the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations provisions which was fulfilled. The project has contributed to the harmonization of the relevant Serbian legislation to the international and EU framework by reviewing the current laws and regulation, identifying gaps and making recommendations for their improvement. It had a significant role in training the staff of enforcement bodies, prosecutors, judges and Scientific Authorities, as well as zoo experts responsible for handling and caring confiscated live animals. This will have an impact on the implementation and enforcement of wildlife trade regulations in Serbia. The project significantly contributed to the cooperation between relevant authorities – inter alia by drafting MoUs – and also identified actions that should be done in the future for increasing the efficiency of enforcement.

### **Main activities**

- *Gap analysis of the Serbian legislation:*

Analyses of the relevant Serbian pieces of legislation have been completed. Both general and specific recommendations, including concrete textual recommendations for amendment of the relevant pieces of legislation were made, that can be used for drafting new legislation by the Serbian Partner.

- *Capacity building:*

Training of enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges, staff of the Scientific Authority as well as zoo and veterinary experts was the core activity of the project, which was successfully fulfilled. The acquired knowledge of the participants has been assessed at the end of each workshop. Through 10 specialized workshops, altogether 275 Customs officers, 182 Border police officers, 13 police officers, 19 judges, 6 public prosecutors, 3 Environmental Inspectors, 14 Scientific Authority staff and 30 zoo and veterinary experts have been trained on wildlife trade control protocols and procedures as well as on prosecutions, filing processes and housing and handling confiscated live animals. In addition a special workshop was organized for trainers from the different bodies.

Beside the workshops, a study visit was conducted in Portugal, where the participant had a good opportunity to see the work in practice and the cooperation between the Portuguese authorities.

- *Cooperation between relevant authorities and other bodies:*

All the workshops contributed greatly to the strengthening of inter-sectorial cooperation in wildlife trade control as the participants actively exchanged experiences from their field of work during the workshop discussions and contacts of all workshop participants have been distributed and exchanged for facilitating future cooperation on wildlife trade control issues. Two different MoUs have been prepared for adoption, one between the CITES MA and the Customs Authority and the other between the CITES MA and the Ministry of Interior.

- *Action Plan on Implementation:*

A draft Action Plan for wildlife trade enforcement was prepared for adoption. The adoption of this document depends entirely on the BC and the relevant national strategic document revision (mainly the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan) which would be the basis for adopting this Action Plan, envisaged to be revised during 2015.

### **Partners**

The project was led by the Hungarian CITES MA with the participation of experts from the National Tax and Customs Administration and zoos. Beside the Hungarian team, a number of experts from other EU MSs (Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain) participated in the project. This provided a good opportunity for the beneficiary to see the experiences and practices of a good range of EU Member States.

## **Italy**

Participation in FLEGT week in Brussels (March 2015)

Participation in European Regional CITES Meeting on Plants in The Netherlands (November 2014)

Liaison activities and meetings with the CITES Secretariat and the Responsible Ecosystems Sourcing Platform (RESP) on their initiative for the proof of concept of a traceability system for reptile skins (summer 2015)

## **Latvia**

CITES MA of Latvia every year organizes seminars and workshops about CITES for enforcement authorities. In 2015 (from September to November) CITES MA of Latvia organized 7 workshops for custom officers about CITES implementation. Totally, more than 100 custom officers were trained about CITES legislation and CITES species recognition. After CITES training as always increased the number of seizures and increased the interest of officials to focus more on CITES control. CITES MA of Latvia organized one workshop for police officers and judges, too, with aim to inform about wildlife crime and to improve communication between different institutions, as well as to involve judges in CITES implementation process. More than 40 police and judicial staff, and wildlife inspectors attended this workshop.

### **Malta**

Over the past year, the Unit has attended all the EU Commission's Management, Enforcement, Group of Experts and Scientific Group meetings, and is also attending the Standing Committee of January 2016. Cooperation with various parties is being developed.

### **Portugal**

Portuguese CITES authorities participated in all CITES meetings at international level since July 2014 :

- Standing Committee 65 (Geneva, 7 to 11 July 2014)
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- 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee (Tel Aviv, Israel, 30.08 to 03.09.2015)
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Other meetings :

- CITES Workshop NDF on tree species (Isle of Vilm, 11-14 November 2015)

Portugal also participate as expert in the EU-funded Twinning Light Project on "Strengthening the capacities of authorities responsible for CITES and wildlife Trade Regulations Enforcement in Serbia" with Hungary as lead partner, in the EU Twinning Project –"Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations in Turkey" with Spain as lead partner, and in the 3 days workshop on CITES and the EU wildlife trade regulations organised by the EU in June 2015 in Podgorica (Montenegro).

### **Republic of Moldova**

1.Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) in partnership with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) organized 2 Meetings „Detection and prevention of cross-border environmental crimes at the border”for customs and environmental specialists from Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (23-25 April 2013 in Kiev, Ukraine and 27-28 March, 2014 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova).

2. The specialists Moldova's CITES Management Authority participated at 12 *training seminars for Customs inspectors with thematic "Implementation of CITES legislation in the Republic of Moldova"*, which were organize in the Custom's Training Centre. At the trainings were participate more 360 specialists.

### **Slovak Republic**

Slovak Republic has organized several training seminars regarding CITES issues:

November 2014: one day training of new district officers

May 2015: one day training of district officers and inspectors

June 2015: one day training of new district officers

21 October 2014: training of customs officers of Bratislava Customs Office

1 October 2015: training of customs officers of Trnava and Nitra Customs Office

In October 2015, Slovakia attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee, held in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Representatives of the Slovak CITES Management Authority, Slovak CITES Scientific Authority and Slovak Environmental Inspectorate participated on the Workshop on "E-commerce in CITES species – how to measure the scale and dynamics of this phenomenon" held on 8 – 10 June 2015 in Warsaw, Poland, organized by the Polish CITES Scientific Authority and CEEweb. The seminar was focused on the internet wildlife crime.

Slovakian CITES representatives regularly participate on the Management Committee, the Group of Experts, Scientific review group and Enforcement group meetings organized by the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium.

### **Ukraine**

Odesa branch of Southern Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography and Odesa Sturgeon Complex Ltd. jointly with the Danube Sturgeon Task Force (DSTF) have organized and convened in Odesa (16–19 July 2015) the meeting devoted to the Ukrainian activities within the project *Ex-situ survey to preserve sturgeon genetic diversity in the Middle and Lower Danube (Acronym: STURGENE)* which is a part of *Sturgeon 2020*

*Program.* Head of State Fishery Agency, other officials, representatives of commercial companies and scientific institutions, local authorities, EU countries were the participants of the meeting.

The aim of the project is restoration of sturgeon population in the Danube mouth and surrounding Black Sea areas. The meeting intended to enhance cooperation between DSTF and Ukrainian stakeholders involved in sturgeon conservation.

Final workshop of the European pilot project "Evaluation of survival and distribution in the Black Sea of young sturgeons stocked experimentally in the Lower Danube, Romania (2013-2015)" had been convened in Galați, Romania, 14–18 September 2015, where the scientists from Odesa branch of the Southern Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography took part. Workshop had been organized under initiative and financial support of Lower Danube University, Galați, Romania, in the framework of the project POP 18/22.04.2013. Representatives of Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Germany, Ukraine, Poland, and Turkey participated in the workshop.

Workshop "Training dogs for detection of the CITES specimens on the border" had been organized in Khmelnytsky, Ukraine, 1–3 October 2014.

### **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

UK chaired a meeting of the SRRWG in Geneva in January 2015. UKBF attended meetings of the Interpol Wildlife Crime Working group in Singapore (December 2015) and supported the WCO Project INAMA to encourage 21 sub Saharan African countries to review CITES enforcement.

UK Border Force (UKBF) delivered training to:

- Malawian Revenue Authority, Immigration, Anti-Corruption Board and the Department of national parks and Wildlife in CITES enforcement in December 2015 with RSPCA International
- World Customs Organisation (WCO) in Uganda and Tanzania (container control project)
- CITES training to the Greek Management Authority with RSPB/Birdlife

### **European Union**

- The European Commission representing the European Union attended as observer the 65<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee in 2014.

- The European Union attended for the first time as Party the CITES Animals and Plants Committees in 2015, where it participated in a number of working groups.

- The EU organised in June 2015 in Podgorica (Montenegro) a 3 days workshop on CITES and the EU wildlife trade regulations with the management, scientific and enforcement authorities from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo<sup>2</sup>, Montenegro and Serbia. This allowed to get an overview of the implementation status of CITES and the EU wildlife trade rules and identify priority actions to improve the situation.

## **6. Problems faced by the regional representatives**

### **Republic of Moldova**

Unfortunately, the state institutions apply insufficiently measures in conservation of flora species, and local authorities don't provide sufficient assistance and efficient mechanisms for contributing in rare and endangered species protection and Customs provide insufficient attention to control of the procedures of flora and fauna international trade.

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<sup>2</sup> *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence*