Prohibiting entry of certain wild fauna and flora species into the EU

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EU prohibits certain wild fauna and flora species from entering the EU, in line with biodiversity conservation rules

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/2770 of 12 December 2023 prohibiting the introduction into the Union of specimens of certain species of wild fauna and flora in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein

Update

This EU Regulation prohibits certain wild fauna and flora species from entry into the European Union, in line with existing conservation rules set out by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as an international agreement between governments. It aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of species.

Impacted products

Certain species of wild fauna and flora and their products

What is changing?

The current list of species for which introduction into the EU is prohibited was established in October 2017 (Regulation (EU) 2017/1915). Taking into account recommendations made by the CITES Standing Committee at its 69th and 70th meetings, and conclusions of the EU Scientific Review Group, this new Regulation updates the list of species and adopts changes to the CITES status of certain species.

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Why?

Reports prepared for the EU Scientific Review Group indicated that the conservation status of certain additional species, listed in Annexes of Regulation (EC) 338/97, could be significantly threatened if their introduction into the EU from specific countries of origin is not prohibited or more effectively controlled. The Group also concluded that for some other species the prohibition is no longer required.

Timeline

This Regulation applies from **2 January 2024**.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

The Regulation has minimal implications for exports of agri-food products to the EU.

Recommended Actions

Exporting countries should closely follow CITES and EU rules, and monitor trade in protected species. Cooperation with international bodies and other nations will ensure compliance and promote responsible trade. Adhering to these guidelines will support both business interests and wildlife conservation.

Background

The European Union plays a big role in the worldwide trade of animals and plants. It follows the rules in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). CITES started in 1975, and has 184 member countries in 2023. It works by using permits and certificates, and each country has special authorities to make sure the rules are followed.

Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 is the principal instrument implementing CITES within the EU, categorising species into EU Annexes A to D, which correspond to CITES Appendices.

- Annex A: Species threatened with extinction (CITES Appendix I); trade is highly restricted.
- Annex B: Species potentially at risk (CITES Appendix II); trade allowed with permits.
- Annex C: Species protected in one country (CITES Appendix III); trade allowed with specific permits.

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- Annex D: Species warranting monitoring; trade permitted with adherence to specific regulations.

The EU's commitment to wildlife conservation often transcends standard CITES provisions, leading to more stringent measures for certain species and trade scenarios. Regular updates to the EU Regulations reflect international conservation status changes, often stemming from CITES meetings and resolutions.

Resources

Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/1915 prohibiting the introduction into the Union of specimens of certain species of wild fauna and flora

Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein

Sources

Regulation 2023/2770 prohibiting the introduction into the Union of specimens of certain species of wild fauna and flora

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