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Canada



## ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017

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

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# HIGHLIGHTS

## *Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPRIITA)*

- **International:** Canada participated at the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee, the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee and the 69<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee for the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES). Canada is currently serving as the North American Regional representative of the Standing Committee and as Chair for both the Plants Committee and Standing Committee.
- **Domestic:** In May 2017, Canada introduced a one-year prohibition on the import of salamanders, unless accompanied by a permit. This measure was put in place to help protect native salamanders from a devastating fungal disease, while longer-term options were being explored.
- **Exports:** In 2017, Canadian jurisdictions issued 5,578 CITES export permits and re-export certificates under WAPPRIITA, the legislative vehicle by which Canada meets its CITES obligations. As with past years, the majority of shipments in 2017 were of cultivated American Ginseng and wild-harvested animals (primarily the American Black Bear), as well as their parts and derivatives.
- **Imports:** In 2017, Canada issued 157 CITES import permits, which were mainly for the import of old ivory and hunting trophies from legitimate hunts. In addition, five import permits were issued for the import of species posing a risk to Canadian ecosystems, including raccoon dogs and salamanders.
- **Enforcement:** In 2017, the Enforcement Branch of ECCC conducted 652 individual inspections resulting in 25 convictions. About 32% of the inspections conducted under WAPPRIITA focused on Canadian species at high conservation risk and/or facing a high level of non-compliance, and 68% were focused on foreign species meeting these criteria.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

This report fulfills the Minister of the Environment's obligation, under section 28 of WAPPRIITA, to report annually on the administration of the *Act*. This report covers the administration of the *Act* for the year 2017.

This section provides background information on WAPPRIITA and outlines the responsibilities of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) in administering the *Act*. Subsequent sections discuss the following:

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

Walrus  
Photo: © Getty Images



## 1.2. WAPPRIITA AND CITES

WAPPRIITA and the *Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations*:

- came into force on May 14, 1996;
- provide Canada with the authority to regulate trade in animal and plant species; and
- help Canada meet its international obligations under the *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES).

WAPPRIITA's main purpose is to protect certain species of animals and plants, by implementing CITES, regulating international and interprovincial trade in animals and plants, and safeguarding Canadian ecosystems from the introduction of harmful species.

The *Act* applies to species whose trade is controlled once listed on the schedules in the *Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations*, which include:

- species whose capture, possession, distribution and transport are prohibited or regulated by the laws in a foreign state; and
- species whose capture, possession, distribution and transportation are regulated by provincial or territorial laws.

# ABOUT CITES

*Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*

Sets controls on trade in and international movement of animal species that are, or may become threatened with over-exploitation as a result of trade pressures.

It came into force in **1975**

It has been adopted by over **180 countries**

There are **3 groups** of species listed

## Appendix I

Species that are threatened with extinction

## Appendix II

Species that are not currently threatened but may become so unless trade is restricted

## Appendix III

Species included upon request of a country to seek cooperation of other countries

### 1.2.1. Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations (WAPTR):

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.
- Schedule II lists other plant and animal species requiring an import permit. These are species that may be harmful to Canadian ecosystems.
- Schedule III lists the Schedule I species that are recognized as endangered or threatened within Canada.

### 1.3. RESPONSIBILITIES IN ADMINISTERING WAPPRIITA

ECCC is responsible for administering WAPPRIITA, and is the designated Management Authority and Scientific Authority for the purpose of CITES.

As the Management Authority, ECCC has overall responsibility for verifying and validating requests for international trade of specimens of animals and plants that are regulated under CITES originating from or destined for Canada. This responsibility includes activities such as issuing CITES permits and certificates. As the Scientific Authority, ECCC has overall responsibility in Canada for determining whether or not international trade of a species is detrimental to the survival of the species. This responsibility includes monitoring the international trade of wild animals and plants to and from Canada to ensure that current levels of trade are sustainable.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada is responsible for the issuance of permits and validation of export requests for specimens of CITES-listed aquatic species. Natural Resources Canada serves as an advisor on CITES issues related to timber and tree species. Further information on the roles and responsibilities of federal departments in the implementation and administration of CITES can be found online at [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/roles-responsibilities.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/roles-responsibilities.html).

Enforcement of WAPPRIITA is overseen by ECCC and carried out in cooperation with other federal agencies, such as the Canada Border Services Agency, and with provincial and territorial wildlife agencies. Customs officials play an important role at ports of entry, manually verifying and validating permits, and referring shipments to ECCC personnel as required for inspection.

ECCC maintains enforcement agreements and memoranda of understanding with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Under the agreements and memoranda of understanding, these four provinces and two territories are responsible for enforcing WAPPRIITA with respect to interprovincial wildlife trade within their jurisdiction, while ECCC oversees the enforcement of WAPPRIITA for international trade.

## **2. WILD ANIMALS AND PLANTS IN TRADE**

### **2.1. PERMITTING OVERVIEW**

#### **2.1.1. Requirements**

##### **CITES**

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 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.
- Appendix II species require an export permit.
- Appendix III species require an export permit or certificate of origin.

ECCC issues all export permits and re-export certificates for non indigenous species, as well as all import permits and other specialized CITES certificates. In collaboration with some of Canada's provinces and territories, ECCC issues export permits and re-export certificates for specimens of indigenous species harvested in Canada. Fisheries and Oceans Canada issues the majority of the export permits for CITES-listed aquatic species.

##### **OTHER PERMITS**

In addition to CITES-listed species, ECCC issues all import permits for species that may pose a risk to Canadian ecosystems. These species are listed in Schedule II of the WAPTR.

Table 1 describes the various types of CITES permits and certificates that are issued in Canada.

**Table 1: Types of Canadian permits and certificates under WAPPRIITA**

Type of permit or certificate	Description
<b>Import permit</b>	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR that are also listed in CITES Appendix I. An export permit from the exporting country is also required to authorize the importation into Canada. Import permits are valid for up to one year.
<b>Export permit</b>	Issued for all specimens of species included in Schedule I of the WAPTR that are also listed in CITES Appendix I and II to be exported from Canada. Species that are listed in CITES Appendix III require an export permit when Canada has listed the species in CITES Appendix III (e.g. Walrus). 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.
<b>Re-export certificate</b>	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.
<b>Certificate of ownership</b>	Issued to authorize frequent cross-border movement of personally owned live CITES-listed animals (also known as a pet passport). Certificates of ownership are valid for up to three years.
<b>Temporary movement/travelling exhibition certificate</b>	Issued for specimens that are only temporarily exported from Canada and that will, within a limited amount of time, be returned to Canada. Authorization can be provided for orchestras, museum exhibits or circus specimens that are either pre-Convention, captive bred or artificially propagated. Authorization can also be provided for individuals wanting to travel with musical instruments containing parts made from CITES-listed species (e.g., ivory, Brazilian rosewood). Temporary movement certificates are valid for up to three years.
<b>Scientific certificate</b>	Issued for the exchange between CITES-registered scientific institutions of museum, research and herbarium specimens. Scientific certificates are valid for up to three years.
<b>Injurious wildlife permit</b>	An Injurious wildlife permit is necessary for importing specimens of species posing risks to Canadian ecosystems that are included in Schedule II of the WAPTR, or in paragraph 5(a) of the WAPTR for the temporary import restrictions. Injurious wildlife permits are valid for up to one year.

### **2.1.2. Exemptions**

WAPPRIITA authorizes exemptions, in specific situations, for the import and export of CITES listed species without permits. These exemptions are specified in the WAPTR. Canadian threatened or endangered species listed on Schedule III of the WAPTR are not included in these exemptions and require all the necessary CITES permits.

Four exemptions are included: tourist souvenirs, personal effects, household effects and certain hunting trophies. The hunting trophy exemption applies to fresh, frozen or salted trophies of Black Bear and Sandhill Crane for American hunters returning to the United States with their trophy harvested in Canada, or for Canadian hunters returning to Canada with their trophy harvested in the United States. Further information on exemptions is available online at [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/wild-animal-plant-protection-act/permitting-exemptions.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/wild-animal-plant-protection-act/permitting-exemptions.html)

### **2.1.3. Issuance and monitoring of CITES permits**

ECCC has established service standards for WAPPRIITA permit decisions and the issuance of permits. ECCC's goal is to provide permit decisions within these standards for at least 90% of all permit applications. The performance is tracked on a fiscal year basis: for April 2017 to March 2018, ECCC met or exceeded all targets. The Department's performance against these standards is published online at [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/permits/service-standards-performance-targets.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/permits/service-standards-performance-targets.html)

## **2.2. CITES PERMITS ISSUED IN 2017**

### **2.2.1. Export permits and re-export certificates**

Export permits are issued for specimens (animals, plants, their parts or derivatives) of CITES-listed species that originate in Canada and are being exported from Canada for the first time.

Re-export certificates are used to track trade in specimens that entered Canada under the authorization of permits issued by foreign states and were then re-exported from Canada.

Table 2 shows the number of export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2017 by Canadian CITES permitting offices, which totalled 5,578 permits.

**Table 2: CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in Canadian CITES permitting offices in 2017**

Canadian jurisdiction	Number of export permits and re-export certificates issued	Share of total export permits and re-export certificates issued (%)
<b>Federal government</b>		
<b>Environment and Climate Change Canada</b>	3,923	70.33
<b>Fisheries and Oceans Canada</b>	145	2.60
<b>Provinces/Territories</b>		
<b>British Columbia</b>	781	14.00
<b>Ontario</b>	455	8.16
<b>New Brunswick</b>	149	2.67
<b>Yukon</b>	109	1.95
<b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b>	16	0.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,578</b>	<b>100</b>

Each export permit or re-export certificate can authorize the export of multiple specimens or species and each species and their parts or derivatives is listed. In the case of export of biomedical samples, a permit could have hundreds of individual specimens listed (e.g. blood, serum, microscope slides, paraffin blocks, etc.). In other cases, there may be few specimens listed on the permit, but large quantities for each specimen (e.g. hundreds of Bobcat skins from a fur auction). As in past years, the most common mammal species listed on export and re-export permits include the American Black Bear, Crab-eating Macaque, Bobcat, Canadian Lynx, Wolf, Mountain Lion, North American Otter, Grizzly Bear and Polar Bear.

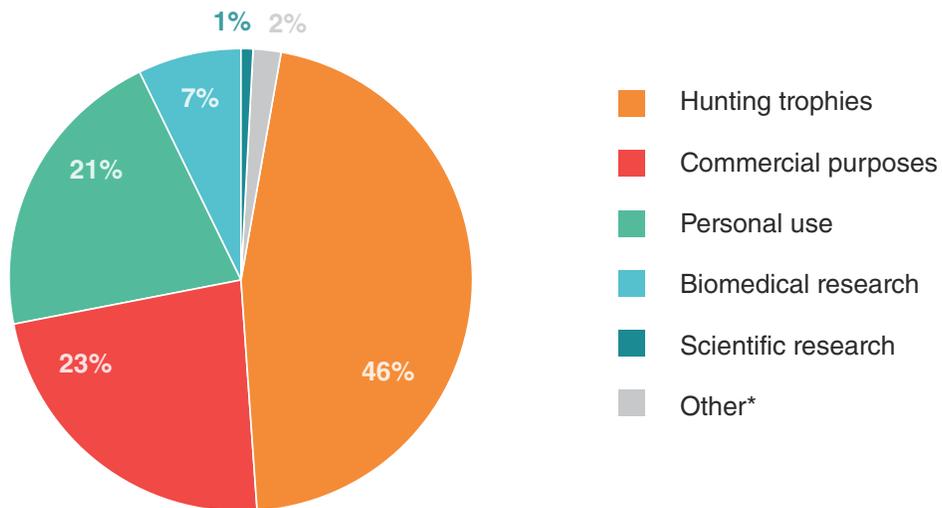
Every country that is Party to CITES is required to submit to the CITES Secretariat a detailed report of what was permitted by that country in a calendar year. It provides an in-depth view of all the specimens permitted by the country. This report is due on October 31st of the following year (e.g. the 2016 annual report was due on October 31, 2017, the 2017 annual report is due October 31, 2018). Based on the information submitted by Canada in the 2016 CITES annual report, the following quantities were exported or re-exported from Canada for the common mammal species mentioned in the previous paragraph:

- 4,463 American black bear skins, mounts or garments
- 14,393 Macaque samples
- 22,592 Bobcat skins, mounts or garments
- 8,459 Canadian Lynx skins, mounts or garments
- 2,068 Wolf skins, mounts or garments

- 231 Mountain lion skins, mounts or garments
- 10,254 North American otter skins, mounts or garments
- 162 Grizzly Bear skins, mounts or garments
- 267 Polar Bear skins, mounts or garments

In 2017, Canada issued export permits and re-export certificates for the following purpose-of- transaction codes as defined in CITES Resolution 12.3<sup>1</sup> (totals in brackets): hunting trophies (2590), commercial (1277), personal use (1162), biomedical research (383), scientific research (75), and other purposes (91). Figure 1 shows the percentage of distribution, by purpose-of-transaction, of export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2017. Purpose-of-transactions for export and re-export permits are relatively constant from year-to-year.

**Figure 1: Percentage of CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued in 2017, by purpose-of-transaction**



\* Other purposes include exhibitions (9), zoos (44), educational (48), breeding (49), law enforcement (42), botanical gardens (2) and reintroduction in the wild (17). They each account for such a small quantity that they are grouped and represented together.

<sup>1</sup> CITES Resolution 12.3 on Permits and Certificates was agreed to in 2002 and reviewed in 2016

**Table 3: Percentages of CITES export permits and re-export certificates issued by purpose-of-transaction from previous years (some numbers have been rounded)**

Year	Hunting trophies	Personal use	Scientific research	Commercial purposes	Biomedical research	Other
2017	46	21	1	23	7	2
2016	54	14	1	20	8	2
2015	48	15	1	27	7	2
2014	43	16	1	32	6	2
2013	45	14	1	33	5	2
2012	39	16	2	37	4	2
2011	35	17	1	40	5	3
2010	36	19	1	37	3	3

Table 4 indicates the number of export permits issued in each of the past 4 calendar years for Polar Bears obtained in Canada from different harvest seasons. It is important to note that even if a permit for a specific Polar Bear is issued in a calendar year, the actual export may not take place for various reasons (e.g. permit expired before shipment could take place, cancelled shipment, changes from rug to full mount, etc). A permit could be reissued in subsequent years for a Polar Bear which was never actually exported under a previously issued permit.

**Table 4: Number of CITES export permits issued per year for Polar Bears harvested in Canada and breakdown of the total number by the season in which the bears were harvested.**

Year of export	Total N°. of Polar Bears exported	N°. of Polar Bears by harvest season*								
		2016 2017	2015 2016	2014 2015	2013 2014	2012 2013	2011 2012	2010 2011	2009 2010	Prior to July 2009
2017	215	45	79	29	24	16	9	7	0	6
2016	232	0	67	57	50	28	7	11	0	12
2015	292	0	0	50	87	88	27	20	7	13
2014	237	0	0	0	56	99	32	18	6	26

\* Harvest season starts in July of one year and ends in June of following year. For example, harvest season 2012–2013 starts on July 1, 2012 and finishes on June 30, 2013.

### 2.2.2. Permits for multiple shipments

An export permit or re-export certificate may authorize multiple shipments of specimens that have been approved by the permitting office. The permit or certificate holder is responsible for identifying the destination, specific specimens and quantities that make up each shipment. This provides a simplified procedure for permit holders who trade in specimens with very little or no impact to the conservation of species. Of the 5,578 export permits and re-export certificates listed in Table 2, 611 were for multiple shipments, authorizing 37,927 shipments. By far, the largest share of multiple shipment permits was issued to growers and distributors of American Ginseng.

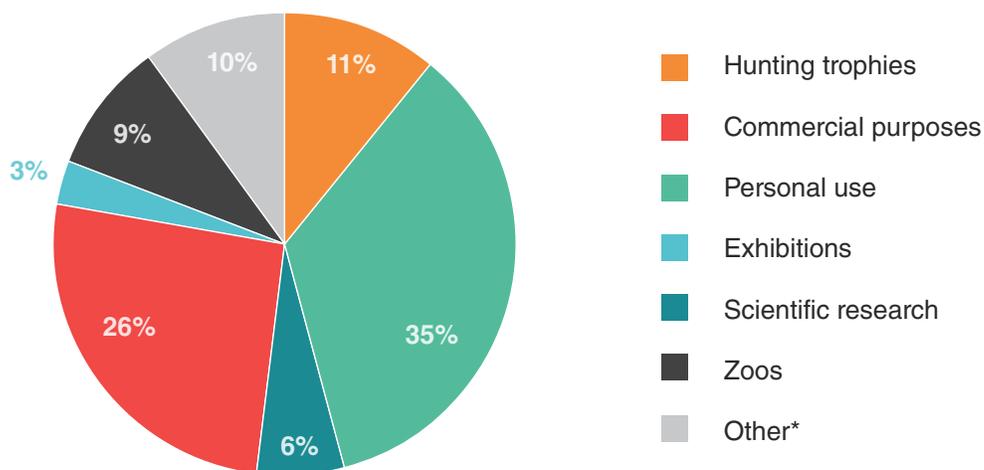
In Canada, the export of a small quantity of artificially propagated American Ginseng for personal use (up to 4.5 kg for personal use) is authorized through a simplified permitting procedure using ginseng stickers. Each shipment is accompanied by a permit sticker identifying the permit number under which the multiple shipments are authorized. Individual stickers accounted for 26,320 of the 37,927 shipments for ginseng authorized in 2017.

### 2.2.3. Imports into Canada

Canada issued 157 import permits in 2017 for the following purpose-of-transaction codes, as defined in CITES Resolution 12.3<sup>2</sup> (totals in brackets): personal use (55), commercial (40), hunting trophies (17), scientific research (10), zoos (14), exhibitions (5) and other purposes (16).

Figure 2 indicates the distribution, by purpose-of-transaction code, of CITES import permits issued in 2017. The imports for commercial purposes consists mainly of artificially propagated plants, pre-Convention specimens (e.g., antiques containing ivory) and captive-bred animals (e.g., falcons, parrots).

**Figure 2: Percentage of CITES import permits issued in 2017, by purpose-of-transaction**



\* Other purposes include exhibitions, zoos, educational, breeding, law enforcement and reintroduction in the wild. They each account for such a small quantity, that they are grouped and represented together.

<sup>2</sup> CITES Resolution 12.3 on Permits and Certificates was agreed to in 2002 and reviewed in 2016

Table 5 indicates the percentage of overall CITES import permits issued by purpose-of-transaction between 2010-2017.

**Table 5: Percentage of CITES import permits issued by purpose-of-transaction from previous years**

Year	Hunting trophies	Personal use	Scientific research	Commercial purposes	Exhibitions	Zoos	Other
2017	11	35	6	26	3	9	10
2016	21	21	3	36	5	9	5
2015	21	19	3	35	4	13	5
2014	18	38	7	23	4	7	3
2013	11	30	7	25	9	15	3
2012	17	23	6	29	7	6	12
2011	16	27	4	32	8	8	5*
2010	13	14	8	37	8	10	10

\*Includes breeding and propagation purposes

### 2.3. OTHER PERMITS ISSUED IN 2017

Raccoon Dog  
Photo: © Getty Images



Canada requires import permits (referred to as Injurious wildlife permits) for certain species that may pose a risk to Canadian ecosystems, but do not necessarily appear in the CITES appendices. These include raccoon dogs, mongooses, starlings, mynas and oxpeckers, as listed in Schedule II of the WAPTR.

New requirements for an import permit for salamanders were introduced in May 2017 for a one-year period, to protect Canadian salamanders and ecosystems from a devastating fungal disease while longer-term options were being explored.

In 2017, Canada issued one import permit for a coat made from raccoon dog fur, and four import permits to scientific institutions and zoos for live salamanders.

## 2.4. CANADA'S TRADING PARTNERS

Canada's major trading partners under CITES, particularly for exports, continue to be the United States, the member countries of the European Union, and the countries of East and Southeast Asia. The exports to the United States and the European Union cover a wide-range of specimens and species. In the case of Asia, particularly East and Southeast Asia, the species most commonly exported from Canada was cultivated 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 Appendices I or II must provide a scientific determination that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. This determination is referred to as a non-detriment finding (NDF). Some countries, such as the United States and member countries of the European Union, enforce regulations that are stricter than those of CITES, leading to a higher level of scrutiny by those countries when they are considering exports and NDFs from exporting countries.

Canada's NDFs are consistent with a Resolution on NDFs adopted by the CITES Conference of the Parties at the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in March 2013 (Resolution 16.7) amended at the Conference of the Parties at the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting (COP17), international guidance for CITES Scientific Authorities, and guidance provided by the CITES Secretariat.

In Canada, NDFs are determined on a permit-by-permit basis. For more heavily traded species, standing NDF reports are prepared to support the issuance of export permits. Canada's species-specific standing NDF reports are developed following a process that involves a federal-provincial/territorial CITES Scientific Authorities working group, as well as participation and review by species experts and Indigenous peoples. Canada has standing NDFs that cover the majority of Canada's trade including for American Ginseng, Atlantic Sturgeon, Black Bear, Bobcat, Canada Lynx, Cougar, Goldenseal, Grey Wolf, Grizzly Bear, Narwhal, Polar Bear, River Otter and Sandhill Crane. Standing NDF reports are reviewed and, if necessary, updated with the most recent information every three years. They are available at: [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/non-detriment-findings.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/non-detriment-findings.html).

The standing NDF report for Polar Bear was updated in 2017. The previous NDF conclusion did not allow the export of polar bears harvested from the Baffin Bay subpopulation after March 10, 2010. On July 1, 2017, in consideration of new information on population size and trends as well as on harvest quotas, it was concluded that harvest and export from the Baffin Bay management unit is non-detrimental for bears harvested before March 10, 2010 and after July 1, 2013.

ECCC, as the Canadian Scientific Authority, is updating the Canadian standing NDF report for cougar to reflect the changes made in 2016 at CoP17 in which the Eastern Cougar (*Puma concolor cougar*) was moved from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II. The updated report is expected to be published in 2018. The NDF conclusion will not change.

### **3.2. REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF CITES APPENDIX II SPECIES**

The Review of Significant Trade is an ongoing process of the Animals Committee and the Plants Committee of CITES to review trade in wild species listed in Appendix II to ensure trade is not detrimental to the survival of the species. Species on Appendix II are those that are not necessarily currently threatened by trade but for which trade needs to be monitored and regulated. The first step in this review process is to consider trade over the previous five years to identify species that could benefit from a detailed review. The most recent selection of species for review occurred at the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animal Committee and 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Plant Committee held in July 2017. Based on volume of trade, many of Canada's species were considered, but none were selected for in-depth review.

### **3.3. PERIODIC REVIEW OF SPECIES INCLUDED IN APPENDICES I AND II OF CITES**

The Periodic review of species included in CITES Appendices I and II, is a process adopted by the Conference of the Parties to ensure that species are appropriately listed, based on current biological and trade information. In July, 2017, during its 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Animals Committee selected twenty species as candidates for a potential Periodic Review. Two species listed in Appendix I for which Canada is a range state were selected: *Branta canadensis leucopareia* (Aleutian cackling goose) and *Phoebastria albatrus* (short-tailed albatross). Both reviews will be led by the United States, with Canada participating as required. Of the seven plant species selected for the periodic review process at the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee, no species were selected for which Canada is a range state.

## **4. COMPLIANCE PROMOTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF CITES AND WAPPRIITA**

### **4.1. COMPLIANCE PROMOTION**

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

Compliance with WAPPRIITA is verified by various means, such as reviewing 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 tips provided by the public.

#### **4.1.1. Compliance promotion activities**

In 2017, ECCC continued to promote compliance with CITES and WAPPRIITA through more than 20 displays located at various venues, including airports, science centres, customs offices, zoos and border crossings as well as Digital Display Network (visual communication tool which runs a continuous "loop" of messaging related to Government of Canada programs and services) located in the Service Canada Centres and Passport Offices across Canada. This included working with the Toronto Zoo to create a new CITES exhibit, anticipated to be completed in 2018. The purpose of CITES displays is to educate and inform Canadians about the impacts of the illegal wildlife trade, and the plant and animal species they cannot bring into the country without a CITES import permit.



ECCC also undertook targeted activities to promote awareness of new CITES requirements resulting from the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties held in 2016. This included sending fact sheets to affected Canadian industries to inform them of CITES requirements for rosewoods (*Dalbergia*) and bubinga (*Guibourtia*) which are commonly used to make products such as furniture, musical instruments and flooring. Fact sheets were also sent to zoo, aquarium, pet industries and interest groups to inform them of new CITES permit requirements when importing, exporting, or traveling internationally with African grey parrots.

ECCC promoted compliance with its new one-year salamander import restriction to the pet industry, zoos, and aquariums. Activities included social media messages, mail outs, fact sheets distributed at pet industry trade shows, and cross promotions through Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada (PIJAC) newsletters.

#### 4.1.2. Enforcement activities

Illegal trade in wildlife threatens the conservation of species and the socio-economic benefits that legal trade in wildlife can provide. Poaching and trafficking undermines conservation efforts to manage populations, for example, through use of quotas (maximum number of specimens that can sustainably be removed from the wild population). Populations of species may be decimated by over-exploitation driven by illegal trade.

Wildlife trafficking worldwide has been increasing in value since 2005. There is now clear recognition in the international community that the issue of the illegal wildlife trade has reached significant global proportions. Illegal wildlife trade and environmental crime involve a wide range of flora and fauna across all continents, estimated to be worth \$70 to \$213 billion USD annually.<sup>3</sup> Based on UN statistics and criminal intelligence through INTERPOL,<sup>4</sup> the illegal trade and poaching of plants and other wildlife is estimated to cause loss of resources worth \$7 to \$23 billion USD per year globally (2016 estimate).

#### 4.1.3. Inspections

Inspections are conducted to ensure that imports and exports of animals and plants comply with the requirements of WAPPRIITA. They are instrumental for on-going information collection of emerging non-compliance risks and threats. The subsequent analysis of this information informs the development of risk-based priorities for compliance verification.

In 2017, there were 2,759 inspections under WAPPRIITA.

Inspections are often either proactively planned or conducted in response to a referral from another federal department or agency such as the Canada Border Services Agency, provincial or territorial governments or the public. About 32% of the inspections conducted under WAPPRIITA focused on Canadian species at high conservation risk and/or facing a high level of non-compliance, and 68% were focused on foreign species

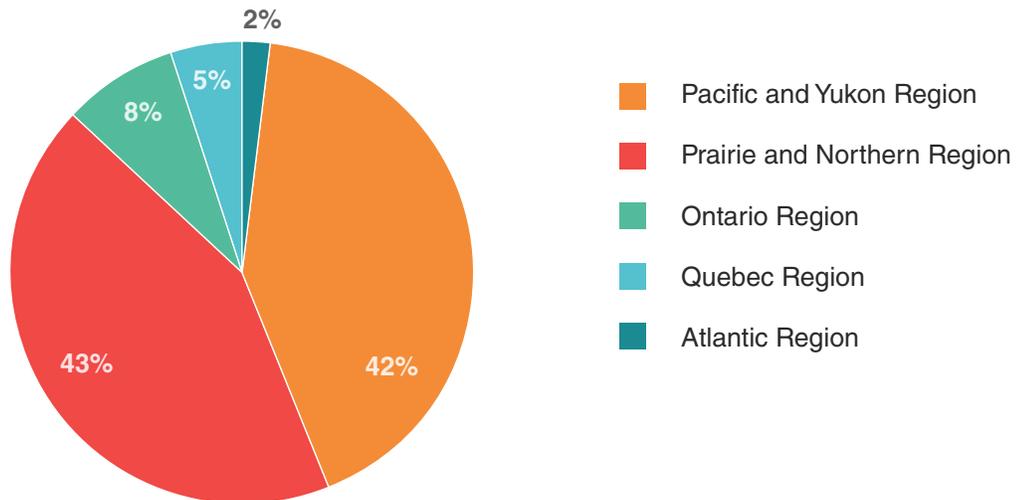
<sup>3</sup> Nellemann, C., Henriksen, R., Raxter, P., Ash, N., Mrema, E. (Eds). 2014. The Environmental Crime Crisis – Threats to Sustainable Development from Illegal Exploitation and Trade in Wildlife and Forest Resources. A UNEP Rapid Response Assessment. United Nations Environment Programme and GRID-Arendal, Nairobi and Arendal. {[www.grida.no](http://www.grida.no)}; [www.grida.no/publications/rr/crime](http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/crime)

<sup>4</sup> Nellemann, C. (Editor in Chief); Henriksen, R., Kreilhuber, A., Stewart, D., Kotsovou, M., Raxter, P., Mrema, E., and Barrat, S. (Eds). 2016. The Rise of Environmental Crime – A Growing Threat To Natural Resources Peace, Development And Security. A UNEPINTERPOL Rapid Response Assessment. United Nations Environment Programme and RHIPTO Rapid Response–Norwegian Center for Global Analyses, [www.rhipto.org](http://www.rhipto.org);

meeting these criteria. In response to referrals for verification of compliance with WAPPRIITA, or planned maintenance inspections, other species were inspected under the Act and its regulations; however they were not identified as species at high risk for conservation and/or high risk for non-compliance.

Figure 3 presents the inspections conducted in 2017 under WAPPRIITA and its regulations by region.

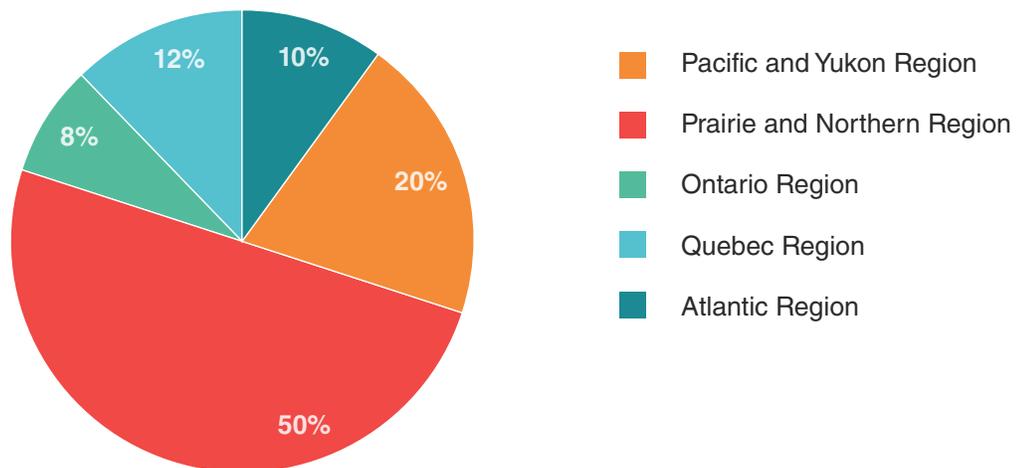
**Figure 3: Inspections conducted in 2017 under WAPPRIITA by region**



#### 4.1.4. Investigations

In 2017, ECCC opened 40 new investigations involving international or interprovincial movements of wildlife. The outcomes of ECCC’s main investigations, including media releases and enforcement notifications, are published online at: [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-enforcement/notifications.html)

**Figure 4: Investigations opened in 2017 under WAPPRIITA by region**



#### 4.1.5. Violations

There were 362 cases of violation of WAPPRIITA or its regulations recorded in 2017 that resulted in prosecutions, seizures, tickets and warnings.

#### 4.1.6. Convictions

In 2017, a total of 25 convictions (which includes tickets) were made for violations of WAPPRIITA or its regulations, which resulted in fines totalling of \$114,849. Only one prosecution did not result in a conviction.

Five examples of investigations that led to prosecutions and resulted in convictions in 2017 for violations of WAPPRIITA or its regulations are described below.

1. Smuggling of illegal ivory resulted in \$75,000 penalty
2. Ontario company ordered to pay \$25,000 for the illegal import of coral
3. Quebec company guilty of illegally exporting polar bear skin rugs
4. Ontario man sentenced to jail for illegal importation of endangered reptiles
5. Smuggling protected plants and animals into Canada results in conditional sentence of imprisonment and probation for offenders

### 1 - Smuggling of illegal ivory resulted in \$75,000 penalty



Forfeited items made from protected animal species.  
Photo: Max McDonald © Environment and Climate Change Canada

On February 28, 2017, an individual plead guilty to two charges under subsection 6(2) of WAPPRIITA and the illegal importation of elephant, ivory, black rhino horn, lion, and sea turtle. The individual was fined \$75,000 and prohibited for two years from importing and exporting items made from species listed by *Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES).

The case was opened in October 2014, when ECCC Enforcement Officers received a referral from the Canada Border Services Agency at Vancouver International Airport after undeclared ivory pendants, bracelets, carvings, chopsticks, and ornaments were found in a passenger's luggage. The individual was entering the country on a return trip from China.

An Enforcement Officer detained the items and sent them for forensic DNA testing. The testing confirmed that the items were made from animal species protected by CITES. They included African and Asian elephants, lion, white rhinoceros, and hawksbill turtle.

Of the fine, \$70,000 was directed to the Environmental Damages Fund. All items seized were forfeited.

## 2 - Ontario company ordered to pay \$25,000 for the illegal import of coral



Live corals from the Philippines concealed with tropical fish.  
Photo: Andrew Bruce © Environment and Climate Change Canada

This case was opened in November 2015 when ECCC Enforcement Officers inspected a shipment of live tropical fish. Eight live corals were concealed within the shipment of tropical fish and were not accompanied by the appropriate CITES permits. On August 25, 2017, a coral retailer and import company was ordered to pay, in the Ontario Court of Justice, a combined total penalty of \$25,000 for illegal importation and smuggling of live corals originating from the Philippines, in violation of WAPPRIITA (\$15,000) and the *Customs Act* (\$10,000). The total penalty will be directed to the Environmental Damages Fund. The company's name will be added to the Environmental Offenders Registry.

## 3 - Quebec company guilty of illegally exporting polar bear skin rugs

In 2015, when permit discrepancies were detected, ECCC Enforcement Officers launched an investigation. Under CITES polar bear skins require an export permit. On October 3, 2017 a company pleaded guilty, in the Court of Quebec, to three counts under WAPPRIITA to the illegal exportation of three polar bear skin rugs. The company was fined \$22,500, which will go to the Environmental Damages Fund. In addition, two polar bear skin rugs were ordered forfeited to the Crown. As a result of this conviction, the company's name will be added to the Environmental Offenders Registry.

## 4 - Ontario man sentenced to jail for illegal importation of endangered reptiles



Cuban Rock Iguana  
Photo: John Miller © Environment and Climate Change Canada

On June 8, 2017 a resident of Thornhill, Ontario, was sentenced in Fredericton Provincial Court to serve two three-month jail terms after pleading guilty to two counts under WAPPRIITA: one count of importing an animal without the necessary permits and one count of exporting an animal from Cuba without the proper authorization.

The offender was intercepted by CBSA officers on September 17, 2016 after failing to declare two iguanas on their CBSA declaration card when re-entering the country. ECCC Wildlife Enforcement Officers identified the animals to be two Cuban rock iguanas (*Cyclura nubila*), a species which is listed in Appendix I of the CITES. The offender obtained the animals in Cuba, but had failed to secure the proper CITES permits from Cuban and Canadian officials.

## 5 - Smuggling protected plants and animals into Canada results in conditional sentence of imprisonment and probation for offenders

Tree Fern roots, Medicine said to contain Musk Deer as one of the ingredients  
Photo: Todd Kish © Environment and Climate Change Canada



In May 2016, ECCC's Enforcement Officers inspected a sea container that arrived at the Port of Vancouver. The shipment was flagged by CBSA as belonging to a Toronto-based company which was previously convicted for import violations under WAPPRIITA. During the inspection, the officers seized 800 kilograms of dried tree-fern roots and 13.6 kg of packaged medicines containing Musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*). Both are regulated species that must be accompanied by a CITES permit.

On August 2, 2017 the company and its owner, pleaded guilty in the Ontario Court of Justice to violations under WAPPRIITA. The owner of the company was sentenced to a conditional sentence, to be served in the community. Both the owner and the company were additionally sentenced to notify ECCC, for a period of 18 months, of all pending imports of products that include any plants or animals, or their parts or derivatives.

The estimated retail value of the seized tree fern roots was \$4,000 and \$28,000 for the medicines.

### 4.2. COLLABORATION WITH PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL PARTNERS

While WAPPRIITA is federal legislation, several provincial and territorial agencies have designated officers to enforce the Act. The collaboration between Canada and its provincial and territorial partners is advantageous because it results in better coordination of efforts and resources in undertaking wildlife enforcement actions, especially large-scale operations. As mentioned in Section 1.3 of this report, agreements and memoranda of understanding exist between ECCC and Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to support the administration and enforcement of WAPPRIITA in accordance with their own legislation.

## 5. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

### 5.1. CITES Conference of the Parties

The CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP) meets once every three years. During the period between meetings of the CoP, the Animals Committee, the Plants Committee and the Standing Committee implement the directives received from the preceding CoP and prepare results for the next CoP.

The 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP18) will be held in 2019 in Sri Lanka. Additional information on the Conference of the Parties is available on ECCC's website ([www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/conference-of-parties.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species/conference-of-parties.html))

## **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, the Plants Committee and the Animals Committee are instrumental in developing international policy for implementation of the Convention. Decisions made by these bodies may affect Canada's obligations under CITES and greatly influence the decisions ultimately adopted by the CoP. It is therefore important that Canadian concerns be heard in these forums.

Members of these committees are elected for each CITES region after every CoP. Carolina Caceres of ECCC was elected Chair of the Standing Committee for the next intersessional period. Dr. Adrienne Sinclair of ECCC was elected Chair of the Plants Committee.

## **5.3. INTERPOL WILDLIFE CRIME WORKING GROUP**

INTERPOL is the world's largest international police organization, with 190 member countries. The INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group, a subgroup of the Environmental Security Sub-Directorate, works and advises on issues related to law enforcement, strategies and ways in which INTERPOL can help to maintain and support an international network of law enforcement experts specializing in wildlife and forestry crimes. The Director General of the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate at ECCC, Sheldon Jordan, is currently chair of the Wildlife Crime Working Group.

ECCC's involvement with the Wildlife Crime Working Group (WCWG) includes building capacity and facilitating the exchange of information in support of coordinated and enhanced enforcement efforts around the world.

In 2017, under the auspices of INTERPOL, Environment and Climate Change Canada, the United Kingdom (UK) Border Force, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) co-led a global operation named Thunderbird 7. The goal of the operation was to tackle illegal trade in wildlife and timber and to contribute to enhancing the capacity of enforcement officers across the world to respond to and combat wildlife crime. It took place from 30 January to 19 February 2017 and involved police, customs, border agencies, environment, wildlife and forestry officials from 45 countries and territories.

Information and intelligence was shared ahead of the operation to assist in identifying specific targets and areas for action. These included wildlife and forest crime hotspots and bottlenecks where checkpoints could be established, in addition to operations at airports and national borders. Operation Thunderbird 7 resulted in 390 investigations, of which there have been 88 completed prosecutions thus far. Countries identified the involvement of at least 898 suspects and reported 1,400 seizures of illegal products worth an estimated USD \$5.1 million. The analysis of the results from the operation will inform future national, regional and international enforcement efforts.

## Examples of International cooperation

International cooperation in two investigations leads to 62 months in prison in the USA and USD \$120,000 Fine

### 1 - “Former Canadian Mountie Sentenced to Money Laundering Charges Stemming From a Conspiracy to Smuggle Ivory Tusks”

On September 20, 2017 a retired RCMP officer was convicted by U.S. District Court for smuggling more than 250 narwhal tusks into the US between 2000 and 2010. The offender was sentenced to 62 months in prison in the US after pleading guilty to 10 charges of money laundering relating to the smuggling. The same individual had been previously convicted in Canada on illegal export charges.

This case is a great example of international cooperation in the fight against wildlife crime.

### 2 - Sale of fake rhino horns results in felony wire fraud conviction in USA



Real Black Rhino Horns Offered For Sale / Fake Rhino Horn Shipped To New York City  
Photo: Todd Kish © Environment and Climate Change Canada

The increasing value of wildlife commodities has also resulted in a rise in other crime such as counterfeiting.

In June 2013, ECCC Enforcement Officers entered into an operation with the USFWS focusing on the illegal sale, import and export of Elephant tusks and Rhinoceros horns. The subject of the operation was a Canadian citizen who owned several companies specializing in completing taxidermy work for hunted trophy animals, from both Africa and Canada. He has been previously investigated and convicted by ECCC for violations relating to the import and export of endangered species.

During the operation the subject offered for sale numerous Rhinoceros horns to an undercover USFWS Special Agent located in the United States. A deal was struck and money in the amount of \$90,000 USD was paid for two horns. The Rhino horns were subsequently shipped to New York City from Canada. Upon unpacking the horns, the covert operator discovered that the horns were not real Rhino horn, but were fakes made from fiberglass.

The sale of a fake Rhino horn constituted the offence of felony wire fraud under the USA law. Although the subject was believed to be in Canada at that time, an arrest warrant was issued in the US to be executed in the event that he ventured back into the US. Two and a half years later, the person was arrested under the above warrant on January 31, 2017, by USFWS special agents.

On July 27, 2017, the individual was sentenced, in the US, to time served in incarceration (1 month) and was ordered to repay \$90,000 USD to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for fraud related to fake Rhino horns, as well as an additional fine of \$30,000 USD.

Although no charges were laid against the subject in Canada for the above offence, ECCC Wildlife Enforcement Officers contributed significantly to his successful prosecution and conviction in the US.

#### **5.4. UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

ECCC is collaborating with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to exchange experiences and best practices in the prevention and combatting of wildlife and forest crime among countries in the Americas; to get a better understanding of the relation between wildlife and forest crime and organized crime in the Americas; and to identify potential joint strategies and activities for cooperation.

### **6. FURTHER INFORMATION**

You can get more information about WAPPRIITA by visiting ECCC's website at [www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/convention-international-trade-endangered-species.html) or by contacting ECCC:

Environment and Climate Change Canada

Ottawa ON K1A 0H3

Telephone: 819-938-4119

Fax: 819-953-6283

Email: [ec.cites.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.cites.ec@canada.ca)