



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS)

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Biodiversity / Ecosystems

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally-binding treaty

STATUS:

- Signed by Canada, European Union and Russia December 15, 1997
- Ratified by Canada on May 31, 1999
- In force in Canada since June 1, 1999
- In force internationally

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Global Affairs Canada/Environment and Climate Change Canada

Partners: Provincial/territorial governments and wildlife agencies

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Web Links:

[AIHTS](#), including link to text of the Agreement (Fur Institute of Canada website)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

July 2022

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

The Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS) is important to Canada because the work encourages the sustainable use of wildlife by hunters and trappers, an integral part of Canadian fur trade, and the conservation of species by supporting the humane and safe live capture of wild mammals.

The commitments and partnerships made under the AIHTS have contributed to a number of benefits for animal well-being through the development of humane trapping standards and related research methodologies.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this agreement is to improve animal welfare in the trapping of wildlife, meet the EU regulations on humane trapping of wild species, and thereby maintain access to the European wild fur market.

KEY ELEMENTS

The agreement requires standards for approval and certification of wild animal trapping devices. The requirement for traps to comply with the standards applies to all use traps to capture listed wild species for any purpose (includes traps used for wildlife damage management, human health protection and wildlife disease management, scientific research as well as harvesting for fur and meat). When the testing of traps used for a species is completed, the use of traps not certified in accordance with the standards of the Agreement will be prohibited.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Improved welfare of wild species captured in traps for any reason where traps meet or exceed this recognized international standard, with application and positive improvements in the territories of all signatories. Under this agreement, the signatories agree not to impose trade restrictions on fur products from listed species from other signatory countries. In this way, Canada will maintain access to the European fur market. Parties are Canada, the European Union, and the Russian Federation.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

The Government of Canada:

- Provides funding to the Fur Institute of Canada for trap research and testing to ensure traps used in Canada can be certified in compliance with the AIHTS;
- Acts as head of delegation to the Joint Management Committee of the AIHTS.

This agreement is important to Canada because trappers and communities rely on the exporting of fur to the European market as a means of income and because the application of the standards assures acceptable animal welfare is achieved in the trapping of wild species for any reason in Canada. Canada has a world-leading facility for testing and certification of traps in Vegreville, Alberta. Provinces and territories manage trapping and implementation of agreement provisions at the provincial/territorial level. Global Affairs Canada leads internationally and ECCC contributes financially, supported by the provincial/territorial wildlife agencies.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Testing facility located in Alberta. Support for the Fur Institute of Canada.

Results

Restraining Traps – The use, on land, of conventional steel-jaw leg hold restraining traps is now prohibited for all AIHTS listed species.

A trap certification process has been in place since 2002.

Certified Traps – The list of traps for wild species, which have been certified by Canadian provincial/territorial authorities is maintained on the [Fur Institute of Canada website](#).