

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



Seventy-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 22 May 2019

Species specific matters

TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES (TESTUDINES SPP.):
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted *inter alia* Decisions 17.297 and 17.298 on *Tortoises and freshwater turtles (Testudines spp.)*, as follows:

Directed to the Parties

17.297 *The Parties shall:*

- a) *take steps to strengthen implementation and enforcement of the Convention for tortoises and freshwater and terrestrial turtles, especially the recommendations of the Standing Committee under Decision 17.298 a) and b); and*
- b) *report to 70th and 71st meetings of the Standing Committee, through the Secretariat, on steps taken to implement the Committee's recommendations, under Decision 17.298 a) and b).*

Directed to the Standing Committee

17.298 *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *at its 69th meeting, consider the findings and recommendations of the Secretariat and the Task Force, under Decisions 17.295 d) and 17.296 c) and recommend actions by the Parties, as it deems appropriate, to strengthen enforcement and implementation of the Convention for these species;*
- b) *at its 70th and 71st meetings, evaluate the reports of the Parties under Decision 17.297 b) and determine whether additional recommendations or measures are needed, including appropriate compliance measures in accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.3 on CITES compliance procedures; and*
- c) *report on actions and progress achieved by the Committee, Task Force and the Parties at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. The reporting of the Standing Committee and the Secretariat on *Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles (Testudines spp.)* to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18, Colombo, 2019) is contained in document [CoP18 Doc.88](#).

4. The present document contains reporting by the Secretariat on issues under the purview of the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee, at its 69th meeting (SC69, Geneva, November 2017), agreed to the recommendations developed by participants to the CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force meeting, including amendments suggested by the Secretariat. The Secretariat consolidated the recommendations relevant to the present reporting in Annex 1 to the present document.

Implementation of Decisions 17.297, 17.298, paragraph b), and CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force meeting recommendations 1. a)-f), 2. a)-c) and 3. a)-d), as agreed by the Standing Committee

5. To facilitate the implementation of Decision 17.297, paragraph b), and Decision 17.298, paragraph b), the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties [No. 2018/030](#) of 26 March 2018, inviting Parties to submit to the Secretariat their reports on the implementation of recommendations 1. a) to f), 2. a) to c), and 3. a) to d), presented in Annex 1 to the present document. In response to the Notification, the Secretariat received replies from China, Thailand and the United States of America. The Secretariat made these replies available for consideration by the Committee at its 70th meeting (SC70, Sochi, October 2018), as Annexes to document [SC70 Doc. 61](#).
6. At SC70, the Committee noted the low response rate from Parties with regards to Decision 17.297, paragraph b), and requested Parties, in particular those affected by illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, to provide reports for consideration by the Committee at the present meeting.¹
7. The Secretariat, subsequently, in Notification to the Parties [No. 2019/005](#) of 15 January 2019, invited Parties, which had not yet reported in accordance with the provisions of Decision 17.297, paragraph b), to submit their reports for consideration by the Committee at the present meeting. In response to the Notification, the Secretariat received replies from Peru and Singapore. The Secretariat would like to thank these Parties for the reports they submitted, which are available as Annexes 2 and 3 to the present document (in the original language).
8. The two Parties report on a range of activities and measures they are implementing to address illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, including species identification, information and intelligence sharing, combating illegal trade on the internet, and raising public awareness. Peru reports, *inter alia*, on the implementation of its 2017 to 2027 National Strategy to Reduce Illegal Wildlife Trafficking and associated 2017 to 2022 Action Plan. Several actions have been carried out since the approval of the Strategy, including the development of maps on wildlife trafficking routes; cooperative activities with Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador; and the implementation of a project on genetic testing to identify breeding centres of the yellow-spotted Amazon river turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*) to improve the traceability of specimens of this species in trade. Peru also reports that it has developed a guide for the identification of tortoises and freshwater turtles,² as well as a manual for the management and identification of species most confiscated in Peru,³ including four turtle species. The Party further reports on the seizure of 27 live and two dead Galapagos tortoises (*Chelonoidis niger*) and the repatriation of these live tortoises to Ecuador. Peru also highlights actions it has taken to combat illegal wildlife trade on the internet and to raise public awareness through a campaign to reduce demand in illegally traded wildlife as pets.
9. Singapore reports *inter alia* that it has put in place a whole-of-government approach to combat illegal trade in wildlife. As part of this approach, Singapore's CITES Management Authority works closely with other domestic law enforcement agencies, international partners, as well as with civil society, zoological institutions and individuals to combat illegal trade in wildlife in a comprehensive, cohesive, multipronged "network" approach. Singapore further highlights in its report the development, use and refinement of risk profiles. The Party highlights the importance of seizure analyses as a component of risk assessment, which the Secretariat fully supports. Regarding species identification, Singapore reports that The Wildlife Reserves Singapore assists the Management Authority in the identification of species seized and in providing housing for confiscated wildlife, including all tortoises and freshwater turtles. Singapore further reports on a roundtable on combatting illegal wildlife trade on the internet, which was held in December 2018 and included online platforms such as Adpost, Facebook and Gumtree. Singapore also reports on regular training sessions with freight-forwarding companies to leverage their support in addressing illegal trade in wildlife, the last of which was held in January 2019. The Party further reports on stricter domestic measures it implemented concerning species that can be traded as pets. Singapore also reports on seizures in six cases

¹ <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/70/exsum/E-SC70-SR.pdf>

² <https://www.serfor.gob.pe/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Guia-Tortugas.pdf>

³ <https://www.serfor.gob.pe/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Guia-de-identificacion-final12ago.pdf>

over the past two years, related to tortoise and freshwater turtle trafficking. In all six cases, offenders were prosecuted and convicted with fines or imprisonment.

10. The Secretariat encourages Parties affected by illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles to draw upon the content of the reports received, to identify measures and activities they could consider deploying at national level to address this illegal trade where such measures are not yet in place. The Secretariat notes again the low response rate to Notifications to the Parties No. 2018/030 and No. 2019/005. Despite the limited number of reports received, the Secretariat suggests that, with regards to Decision 17.298, paragraph b), no additional recommendations or measures are needed. The Secretariat notes that the proposed draft revised version of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles* contained in document [CoP18 Doc.88](#), incorporates, as appropriate, the recommendations developed by the CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force and other relevant matters discussed at Committee meetings. The Secretariat recommends that Parties further pursue these matters through the implementation of the Resolution, and that the Standing Committee's work on tortoises and freshwater turtles continue under the Decisions on *Tortoises and freshwater turtles* (Testudines spp.) to be agreed at CoP18.

Implementation of CITES Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Task Force meeting recommendations 5. a) and 6. a), d) and e), as agreed by the Standing Committee

11. Regarding recommendation 5. a) under *Information and intelligence sharing* in Annex 1 to the present document, the enforcement alert on tortoises and freshwater turtles as reported upon at SC70 is at the time of writing being finalized, and the Secretariat will provide a further oral update on this matter at the present meeting.
12. Regarding recommendation 6. a) under *Targeting illegal trade* in Annex 1 to the present document, further to the reporting provided at SC70, the World Customs Organization (WCO) informed the Secretariat that it has completed the recruitment of two customs risk management experts. These experts will, as part of their work, pursue the development of a set of risk profiles and indicators focusing on illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles. The Secretariat was not able to secure any funding to support this work and takes this opportunity to thank the WCO for agreeing to include it among the activities to be conducted by the WCO risk management experts. The Secretariat will continue to update Parties on progress, as appropriate.
13. Regarding recommendation 6. d) under *Seizures and disposal* in Annex 1 to the present document, at the time of writing the work of the International Union for Conservation of Nature Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Specialist Group to compile a list of tortoise and freshwater turtle rescue facilities, as reported upon at SC70, is ongoing. The Specialist Group recommends that until the list can be provided, authorities reach out to the Specialist Group directly as may be needed. The Secretariat will continue to update Parties on progress as appropriate.
14. Regarding recommendation 6. e) under *Species identification* in Annex 1 to the present document, the Standing Committee at SC70 encouraged Parties and observers to provide feedback to the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Specialist Group on the draft guidance it developed. The *Guide to photographing Live Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles for Identification* has since been finalized taking into consideration the inputs received and is available as Annex 4 to the present document. The Secretariat will also make the guide available in the Closed User Group for the CITES Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Task Force, the enforcement webpage⁴ on the Secretariat website, and the CITES Virtual College.

Final remarks

15. Illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles continues, with a number of seizures and arrests reported since SC70. A particularly significant example is the seizure of 1,529 tortoises and freshwater turtles, including specimens of Indian star tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*), African spurred tortoise (*Centrochelys sulcata*), red-footed tortoise (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*) and Hermann's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*), at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in the Philippines, in March 2019.⁵
16. There is a need for continued vigilance to combat illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles. A number of amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) will be considered at CoP18, and Parties affected by

⁴ <https://cites.org/eng/prog/imp/enf/introduction>

⁵ <https://www.traffic.org/news/philippines-makes-its-largest-tortoise-and-freshwater-turtle-seizure-on-world-wildlife-day/>

illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles are encouraged to review their implementation of the revised Resolution after CoP18, to ensure that all the provisions of the Resolution are effectively implemented.

Recommendations

17. The Standing Committee is invited to note the present document and the additional reports received from Peru and Singapore.

**Recommendations adopted by the Standing Committee at its 69th meeting
(SC69, Geneva, November 2017), relevant for reporting to its 71st meeting (SC71, Colombo, May 2019)**

1. All Parties affected by illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles should:

Targeting illegal trade

- a) Undertake risk profiling and provide capacity-building interventions and detection equipment to enforcement officers at ports to enable them to better target known modes of transport used for trafficking in tortoises and freshwater turtles;
- b) Scale up activities to address illegal trade in tortoise and freshwater turtle specimens being shipped through postal and courier services, and to address illegal trade at identified key locations in domestic markets;

Information and intelligence sharing

- c) Where possible, use platforms such as INTERPOL's Regional Investigative and Analytical Case Management (RIACM) meetings, and the Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) meetings of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for information sharing regarding trafficking in tortoises and freshwater turtles;
- d) Encourage national agencies responsible for wildlife law enforcement to engage with their INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB) to request that access to the INTERPOL I-24/7 global communications system and databases be extended to them;

Species identification

- e) Implement a three-step identification process for tortoises and freshwater turtles as follows:
 - i) Enforcement officers (including customs officers) use available identification materials to identify the most frequently traded tortoise and freshwater turtle species and their parts and products;
 - ii) Where doubt remains about identification after using available identification materials, enforcement officers should share photographs of traded animals with national identification experts, for specific identification or confirmation. National authorities are encouraged to designate a national facilitator for this purpose; and
 - iii) Where doubt continues to remain after consulting national identification experts, enforcement officers should share photographs and other information, through their national designated facilitator, with global identification experts, and draw upon forensic analysis, in particular molecular analysis, as may be needed; and
- f) Develop supplementary identification guidance containing basic information on the characteristics used for tortoise and freshwater turtle identification to support the accurate application of existing identification materials. This guidance should be tailored to the specific needs of each country.

2. All Parties should:

Illegal trade on the internet

- a) Engage online communities, e.g. auction platforms and closed discussion groups, to create awareness about all aspects of illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles;

Cooperation

- b) When possible make use of INTERPOL's National Environmental Security Seminars (NESS)⁶ to promote inter-agency coordination, pursuant to strengthening the implementation of paragraph 1 b) in Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles*; and
- c) As appropriate, cooperate through regional wildlife enforcement networks for the better involvement of their member countries, pursuant to strengthening the implementation of paragraph 1 b) in Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles*.

3. All Parties and organizations should:

Public awareness and empowerment

- a) As appropriate, create and implement awareness tools that can engage target audiences and cultures, in particular young adults, through social and other digital media, pursuant to strengthening the implementation of paragraph 1 f) and g) in Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles*;
- b) As appropriate, highlight the plight of tortoises and freshwater turtles in their campaigns to address wildlife trafficking;
- c) Empower the general public by raising awareness about existing tools available to report illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles and other wildlife crimes, e.g. mobile phone applications, hotline numbers, toll-free phone numbers, social media, etc.; and
- d) Encourage the general public to act as the eyes and ears of law enforcement through awareness raising initiatives and materials targeting for example public transport, roadside stops and restaurants, airports and other transport hubs, with a particular focus on illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles.

[...]

5. Members of the CITES Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Task Force should:

Information and intelligence sharing

- a) Work towards the development of an enforcement alert on tortoises and freshwater turtles, including information on species trafficked, *modus operandi*, trafficking routes, concealment methods, and nationalities of offenders involved, to be updated on a rotational basis in accordance with a timeframe identified by Task Force members; and

[...]

6. The CITES Secretariat should:

Targeting illegal trade

- a) Request the World Customs Organization (WCO) to develop a set of risk profiles and indicators focusing on illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles;

[...]

⁶<https://www.interpol.int/en/Media/Files/Crime-areas/Environmental-crime/Leaflets-brochures/National-Environmental-Security-Seminar-NESS/>.

Seizures and disposal

- d) Post a list of tortoise and freshwater turtle rescue facilities on the CITES website;

Species identification

- e) Request the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Specialist Group to develop guidance on how to photograph tortoise and freshwater turtle specimens for identification.



"Decenio de la Igualdad de Oportunidades para mujeres y hombres"
"Año de la Lucha contra la Corrupción y la Impunidad"

Aplicación de la Decisión 17.297 sobre tortugas terrestres y de agua dulce (Notificación 2019/005)

De acuerdo a la Notificación 2019/005 informamos acerca de la aplicación de la decisión 17.297.

Lucha contra el comercio ilegal

Mediante Decreto Supremo N° 011-2017-MINAGR en el Perú se aprueba la Estrategia Nacional para Reducir el Tráfico Ilegal de Fauna Silvestre en el Perú, período 2017 – 2027 y su Plan de Acción 2017 – 2022 elaborado en forma conjunta con más de 20 instituciones, la estrategia que tiene como fin enfrentar el comercio ilícito de especies.

Desde su aprobación se han llevado a cabo las acciones para la implementación de la estrategia:

- Se han elaborado mapas actualizados de las rutas del tráfico de fauna silvestre, los cuales se han desarrollado con la información que ha sido obtenida de diversos talleres realizados con las Autoridades Regionales Forestales y de Fauna Silvestre (ARFFS) e instituciones de observancia a nivel nacional.
- Implementar alianzas con los países fronterizos y con aquellos que son destino del tráfico ilegal de fauna proveniente del Perú:
 - Se cuenta con un diagnóstico del tráfico de fauna en las zonas de influencia con la Republica del Ecuador – 2017 (Tumbes, Amazonas y Piura), el cual fue la línea base para el cumplimiento de la Estrategia Binacional para Combatir el tráfico de fauna con el Ecuador en cumplimiento del Acuerdo de Macas (2016) suscrito entre ambos gobiernos. Actualmente, como parte del Acuerdo de Trujillo (XI Gabinete Binacional - 2017) se elaboró un acuerdo marco de cooperación entre el SERFOR y el Ministerio del Ambiente del Ecuador para fortalecer la gestión de los productos forestales y de fauna silvestre e implementar acciones conjuntas para la prevención y control del tráfico de estos recursos en zonas de frontera.
 - Con Colombia se adquirió el compromiso para aprobar el Plan de desarrollo de la estrategia forestal y de fauna silvestre sobre prevención, seguimiento, control y vigilancia de comercio en la frontera. Asimismo, se evidenció la importancia de los conocimientos tradicionales de los pueblos indígenas en la gestión y manejo sostenible de los recursos forestales y de fauna silvestre.
 - Con Chile, se logró incluir como compromiso el establecimiento de una red de alerta para la fiscalización del patrimonio forestal y fauna silvestre en la zona de frontera.



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- Con Bolivia, en el año 2017, como parte de la Declaración de Lima, se acordó Implementar la Red de Control Binacional entre el SERFOR y la Autoridad de Fiscalización y Control Social de Bosques y Tierra y el Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Agua para mejorar la comunicación y actuación frente a temas relacionados al control forestal y de fauna silvestre.
- Proyecto para la estandarización de pruebas genéticas que permitan identificación de los planteles reproductivos de los centros de cría de taricaya (*Podocnemis unifilis*), esto permitirá mejorar la trazabilidad de los individuos comercializados legalmente. Este proyecto esta siendo coordinado por el Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre con la participación de la Universidad Mayor de San Marcos y el Servicio Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas a través de los fondos otorgados por el Gobierno Británico.

Intervención

Durante el período en consulta se ha decomisado un envío de 27 especímenes vivos y 02 muertos de tortugas galápagos (*Chelonoidis nigra*), a través de una intervención realizada por la Aduana de Sullana (ciudad cercana a la frontera con la república de Ecuador) a un bus que transportaba los animales en la zona de carga. La Administración Técnica Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre sede Piura del Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre – SERFOR inició el procedimiento administrativo sancionador a los transportistas.

Identificación de especies

Se ha elaborado una guía de reconocimiento de las especies de tortugas terrestres y acuáticas del Perú así como un manual de manejo e identificación de especies mayormente confiscadas entre ellas cuatro especies de tortugas (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, *Chelus fimbriatus*, *Podocnemis unifilis*, *Podocnemis expansa*)

El Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre (SERFOR) con el apoyo de Wildlife Conservation Society - WCS, realizó talleres de capacitación durante el 2017 21 y 22 de junio en la ciudad de Puno, dirigidos a las autoridades encargadas del control de fauna silvestre con el fin de fortalecer sus capacidades para el reconocimiento de especies de fauna silvestre, así como el manejo que se debe hacer en el caso de confiscaciones de animales vivos y cómo proceder administrativamente para sancionar el tráfico ilegal tanto de especímenes vivos, muertos, partes y derivados de ellos.

- Guía de Reconocimiento, herramienta para el control del tráfico ilegal de tortugas terrestres y de agua dulce del Perú.
<https://www.serfor.gob.pe/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Guia-Tortugas.pdf>
- Guía de Identificación y Cuidados Iniciales de Animales Silvestres Decomisados o Hallados en Abandono
<https://www.serfor.gob.pe/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Guia-de-identificacion-final12ago.pdf>

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"Decenio de la Igualdad de Oportunidades para mujeres y hombres"
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Comercio ilegal a través de internet

A través de las redes sociales del Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre, se ha difundido información acerca del comercio ilegal de reptiles

<https://www.facebook.com/SerforPeru/photos/a.1547378512144947/1834171120132350/?type=3&theater>

Cooperación

En concordancia a la Resolución Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13) relacionada a la cooperación entre los organismos de aplicación de la ley, a escala internacional, en relación con el control del comercio de tortugas terrestres y galápagos, y entre los organismos de observancia y las autoridades nacionales CITES.

La Autoridad Administrativa CITES Perú cumplió con lo establecido en la Resolución Conf.17.8, realizando todas las coordinaciones con la Autoridad Administrativa CITES de la República de Ecuador, para la repatriación de 26 especímenes vivos de *Chelonoidis nigra* "Tortuga Gigante de Galápagos" al Ecuador, contando con la opinión favorable de la Autoridad Científica CITES Perú, la autorización de la Superintendencia Nacional de Aduanas y de Administración Tributaria y la certificación del Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Agraria.

Conciencia pública y empoderamiento

Campaña: "Si compras, eres cómplice", ideada por un grupo impulsor liderado por el Servicio Nacional Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre - SERFOR, del cual también forman parte: WCS Perú, el Servicio Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado, el Ministerio de la Producción.

La campaña se concentra en atacar a una parte del problema relacionado al comercio ilegal de fauna silvestre, es decir, la demanda de animales silvestre como mascotas.

<http://sicompraserescomplice.pe/>

(in the original language / dans la langue d'origine / en el idioma original)

Singapore's Report to 71st Meeting of the Standing Committee on Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles (*Testudines* spp.)

Introduction

Singapore has put in place a whole-of-government approach to combat the illegal trade in wildlife. Singapore's comprehensive measures, aimed at supply and demand reduction, are anchored by a robust domestic framework and strong international cooperation.

2 Singapore's CITES Management Authority, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA), works closely with other domestic law enforcement agencies, our international partners, as well as with civil society, zoological institutions and individuals, to combat the illegal trade in wildlife in a comprehensive, cohesive, multi-pronged "network" approach.

3 Singapore has adopted a stricter national policy with regard to the species of pets that can be traded for keeping. In Singapore, the only reptiles that can be kept as pets are the red-eared slider and Malayan box turtle.

Targeting illegal trade

Risk assessment

4 Singapore's National Single Window receives and processes information declared by traders prior to the arrival or departure of the cargo. Using risk profiles and information such as item code, weight, value, next port of call, and the local declarant and consignor/consignee collected via the system, cargo is screened and identified for further inspection, including the verification of any accompanying documentation.

5 New risk profiles and risk indicators are developed and refined regularly based on seizure reports, intelligence reports, cooperation with international enforcement agencies and open source information. Our risk profiles contain a list of risk indicators which include: (i) high risk entities, such as companies, agents or persons flagged as having previously committed offences related to the illegal trade in wildlife, (ii) carriers, (iii) countries of origin, (iv) countries of destination, (v) ports of loading, (vi) ports of discharge, and (vii) Harmonised System (HS) codes commonly used as covers for illegal shipments of wildlife. We recognise that seizure analysis is an important component of risk assessment, as it helps to identify the modus operandi of traffickers such as preferred shipping routes. Information on successful domestic and overseas seizures is synthesized to refine and enrich our risk profiles and targeting criteria.

Enforcement activities at border checkpoints

6 At our border checkpoints, all arriving land and sea travellers will be checked for illegal items, including illegal wildlife, using a combination of non-intrusive methods (i.e. x-ray screening) and physical inspections. Where necessary, specialised equipment will be utilised during secondary inspections. At the land checkpoints, all

arriving cars and motorcycles are forward-checked before they are allowed to proceed for immigration clearance and subsequent assessment for entry into Singapore. At our airports, selective checks are also conducted on the baggage of arriving air travellers. At all checkpoints, officers are trained to look out for travellers exhibiting suspicious behaviour or tell-tale signs that demand greater scrutiny. Such travellers are sieved out for interviews and detailed checks may also be conducted on them and their personal effects. Such efforts had resulted in the successful prosecutions of several cases involving tortoises and turtles. Please refer to paragraphs 14 and 15.

7 At the air cargo and land checkpoints, all inbound cargo is scanned using drive-through vehicle-level radiographic scanners. The scanned images, together with the relevant cargo permits and supporting documentation, are analysed as part of the cargo clearance process. At the sea ports, selected import and export cargo will also be scanned using drive-through vehicle-level radiographic scanners. Should any anomalies be observed during the clearance process, the cargo will be diverted for detailed inspection, such as x-ray screening and physical checks on individual cargo consignments, or physical checks on the vehicle. At all checkpoints, cargo that is targeted by authorities during upstream risk assessment will also be sieved out during immigration clearance to undergo detailed inspection. If discrepancies are found during the detailed inspection, the cargo, subjects and vehicle involved will be referred to the relevant authorities without delay. All referrals will be properly investigated.

8 Enforcement agencies have permanent offices at the air and land checkpoints, and are responsible for conducting inspections of CITES consignments that pass through our borders. The officers also conduct inspections and checks at retail outlets and trade premises (e.g. pet/ aquarium shops, farms, and traditional medicinal stores) for sale of illegal wildlife and wildlife parts/products. We also monitor the Internet wildlife trade and follow up on any suspected cases of wildlife trafficking. In addition to investigating alleged smuggling cases, we also investigate non-compliance with Singapore's legislation.

Species identification

9 Singapore works closely with The Wildlife Reserves Singapore on providing housing for confiscated wildlife including all tortoises and freshwater turtles seized by AVA pending investigations. WRS also supports AVA in wildlife enforcement and assists in the identification of species seized.

Illegal trade on the internet

10 In December 2018, AVA co-hosted a roundtable with a local non-governmental organisation, Animal Concerns Research and Education Society, and invited online platforms such as Facebook, Gumtree and Adpost to discuss on joint efforts to curb online sales of illegal wildlife. AVA shared on its monitoring efforts and presented success stories on investigating online wildlife trade, while other platform administrators highlighted on their efforts to monitor and weed out illegal wildlife trade through publishing advisory messages and allocating resources to filter out offensive advertisements related to sales of illegal wildlife.

Regional enforcement network

11 Singapore is a member of ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (AWG-CITES & WE). Singapore participated in the 14th Meeting (20-22 Mar 2018, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR) of the AWG-CITES & WE. Participants would share updates on national legislations, capacity-building programs, significant wildlife enforcement activities, challenges and future plans.

Public awareness and empowerment

12 To create public awareness and enhance compliance with CITES, AVA has implemented the following outreach programs: -

- (a) Publicized wildlife enforcement cases in the mass media, news reports, newsletters and social media (eg. Facebook).
- (b) Regular circulars, meetings and dialogue sessions with wildlife traders and trade associations about CITES and its requirements.
- (c) Updates on CITES in AVA Homepage.
- (d) Distribution of CITES pamphlets, traveler's brochures, CITES and Traditional Chinese Medicine brochures, posters at ports of entry/exit, fishery ports, checkpoints, cruise centers, travel fairs, pet shops, schools etc.
- (e) Public talks at community centers, libraries, tertiary institutions and Zoo.
- (f) Publicity event eg. responsible pet ownership roadshows.

13 Singapore also publicises all significant seizures and subsequent prosecutions via our mainstream media outlets and social media platforms. This warns would-be criminals of the stiff penalties that await them if they are caught.

Significant enforcement cases

14 In January 2017, a man was caught in possession and selling illegal wildlife including 2 red-footed tortoises. He was charged in Court and served 4 weeks & 3 days' jail term as he could not pay the fine of \$6,600. In February 2017, another individual was prosecuted and fined \$6,000 for possession of illegal wildlife including 1 Asian box turtle, 1 Indian star tortoise and 1 red-bellied short-necked turtle. In March 2017, a man was found in possession and selling 2 Indian star tortoises. The offender was charged and fined \$6,600. In July 2017, an individual was prosecuted and fined \$3,600 for possession and sale of illegal wildlife including 1 snapping turtle and 1 red-footed tortoise.

15 In February 2018, a man was found attempting to import a live Greek Tortoise concealed in a compartment in his vehicle. The offender was prosecuted and fined S\$3,500. In April 2018, an individual was stopped at a checkpoint and a leopard tortoise was found in his vehicle. Follow up investigations uncovered an African spurred tortoise and Mekong snail-eating turtle in his home. The offender was fined S\$7,600.

Capacity-building activities

16 Singapore continues to hold regular training sessions with freight-forwarding companies to train them on how to better spot and recognize tell-tale signs of attempts to smuggle illegal wildlife into or through Singapore. 35 attendees from 29 companies attended the most recent session held on 9 January 2019. This adds to the 364 from 266 logistics companies who had attended 11 sessions between September 2017 and January 2019. Singapore has also held a training session for the Ground Handling Agents at the Singapore Changi Airport.

Guidance To Photographing Live Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles for Identification

Tortoises and freshwater turtles are widely traded but the identification of specimens in trade can be challenging. When there is uncertainty about the species identity of specimens at the point of inspection, it is advisable to seek specialist assistance with identification. Most turtle species can be identified reliably from photographs, provided that the photographs are correctly focused, exposed, and show the critical features for identification. This guide aims to show how a turtle specimen should be pictured with just a few images taken with a cellphone, so that the images can be sent to specialists located elsewhere who can provide or confirm identification.

This guide demonstrates how to take useful pictures of a turtle specimen. For simplicity, and to match real-world conditions, and animal welfare considerations, most of the photos were taken of a plastic toy turtle using a standard cellphone camera.

For the great majority of tortoise and freshwater turtle species,
3 pictures of good quality are sufficient for reliable identification:



View of the whole animal
more or less from the side

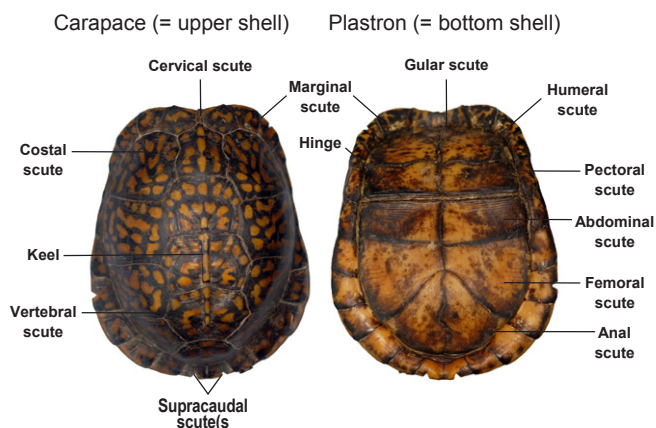


Close-up of the head



View of the plastron
(underside of the shell)

Diagram of the names for parts of a turtle shell:



Helpful hints when photographing turtles:

- Focus on the eye of the animal
- Place a ruler or other scale in the picture for reference
- Use a uniform, medium-brightness background; this reduces the chance that the turtle shows too dark (bright background) or washed-out (dark background) in the pictures
- Fill the picture with the subject

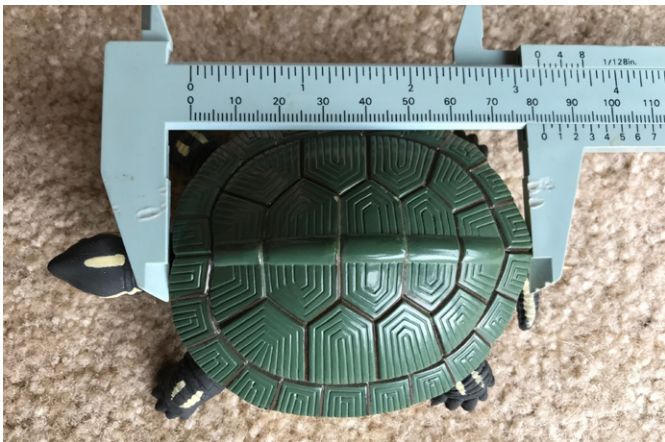
This guidance was prepared for CITES by the IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group (Peter Paul van Dijk, Ernie Cooper, Bruce Weissgold) with support from Global Wildlife Conservation, the Turtle Conservancy, and Cooper Consulting. Please report corrections and suggestions to the CITES Secretariat and/or ppvandijk@globalwildlife.org.



For a few groups of turtles, more photos of **specific details** may be needed:

- **Mud Turtles of the genus *Kinosternon*:** a picture of the marginal scutes above the hind legs, and a picture of the inside of the hind leg (to show presence or absence of rough scale patch in males) is desirable.
- **Tortoises (Family Testudinidae):** a picture of the cervical (or nuchal) scute (or its absence) at the front of the shell above the neck, and a picture of the suprapygals (scute(s) above the tail), are helpful.
- **Soft-shelled Turtles (Family Trionychidae):** A clear picture of the front edge of the shell (where it connects to the soft skin of the neck) is very helpful.
- **Sea turtles (Family Cheloniidae):** include a clear picture of the whole carapace (upper shell) from straight above, to illustrate all carapace scutes, and a picture of the forehead to show the head scales between the eye and nose. A plastron picture is rarely necessary so don't turn the animal over unnecessarily.

How to measure the **size** of a turtle:



Tortoises and freshwater turtles are measured in a straight-line distance, normally the maximum front-to-back length of the carapace parallel to its midline: *Straight Carapace Length, SCL*



Sea Turtles are measured using a flexible tape across the curve of the carapace: *Curved Carapace Length, CCL*

If possible, **avoid** the following common problems when photographing turtles for identification:



Turtle does not show head or legs
Possible solutions: Wait and be patient; gently tickle the back of the animal.



Turtle is badly out of focus
Possible solutions: On a smartphone screen, point at a part of the picture that you want to focus on; use the focus ring of a normal camera; increase the distance between turtle and camera.



Unusual objects used for scale
Possible solutions: find and include a measuring tape or ruler.



Picture under- or over- exposed
Possible solutions: Use the camera's flash; point at a part of the picture that you want the phone to use to determine exposure settings; use a different background.



Distracting reflections or shadows
Possible solutions: Dry the animal; change position relative to the light source; use (or don't use) the camera flash.



NOTE: If a turtle is active, it can be put on a mug, shotglass or other tall smooth stable object to raise its legs far enough off the ground to stop it from running away.