

A close-up, artistic photograph of a tiger's face, focusing on its eyes and the texture of its fur. The image is heavily stylized with a blue and cyan color palette, giving it a digital or high-tech appearance. The tiger's eyes are partially visible on the right side, and the fur's texture is rendered with sharp, directional lines.

**EUTWIX**

TRADE IN WILDLIFE INFORMATION EXCHANGE

**AN INTERNET TOOL TO ASSIST THE EUROPEAN  
ENFORCEMENT AND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES IN THE  
FIGHT AGAINST WILDLIFE TRADE CRIME**



Elephant ivory seized from a suitcase. Photo: USFWS / TRAFFIC

# WHAT IS EU-TWIX?

## WHY IS IT NEEDED?

THE EUROPE TRADE IN WILDLIFE INFORMATION eXCHANGE IS AN ONLINE TOOL DEVELOPED TO FACILITATE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND PROMOTE CO-OPERATION

**The tool is aimed at law enforcement and management authorities responsible for combating illegal wildlife trade and implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Europe.**

Europe is one of the largest and most diverse markets for wildlife and wildlife products, whose international trade is controlled by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). The removal of internal border controls in the EU's single market in the early 1990s provided new avenues for transboundary wildlife trade crime. New smuggling methods and routes are actively sought out by offenders to avoid detection, making countries with weak border controls ideal targets. International co-operation between all EU Member States and neighbouring countries is therefore vital.



**2005**

year the tool was established



**39**

European countries currently benefitting from the system



**1 400+**

officials are connected to the system



**91 000+**

seizure records are held in the database

## THE TOOLS OF EU-TWIX

The EU-TWIX system provides users with a mailing list which facilitates the rapid exchange of information, expertise and experience on wildlife trade enforcement within participating countries. Enabling users to share information on emerging trends or specific illegal activities quickly and easily can be the difference between a successful or failed investigation.

EU-TWIX also includes access to a dedicated website containing useful resources to support enforcement efforts as well as a database of wildlife seizures. Individual law enforcement agencies maintain ownership rights to their data and any use thereof requires approval by an agency representative.



## EU-TWIX - the only centralised illegal wildlife trade database in Europe

wide array of search criteria helps target queries

monitoring helps analyse trends and flows as they develop

enforcement collaboration facilitates co-operation on wildlife crime cases

### the EU-TWIX mailing list

#### CRIME/SEIZURE ALERTS

enforcement officials can communicate on the latest events

#### CONNECTIVITY

over 400 enforcement-related messages exchanged per year

#### IDENTIFICATION

officials can seek advice on identifying specimens

## EU-TWIX MEMBERSHIP

Due to the confidential nature of the information collected, EU-TWIX is accessible only to European enforcement and management officials responsible for implementation of EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (EUWTR) and CITES.

Agencies who are eligible to participate include, among others, Customs, CITES Management Authorities (MA), police, environmental inspection services, veterinary and phytosanitary services and the judiciary. Several international/regional organisations working on illegal wildlife trade issues are also connected.

**If you meet these criteria and wish to gain access, contact:**  
[contact@eu-twix.org](mailto:contact@eu-twix.org)

## THE OTHER TWIX PLATFORMS

EU-TWIX is first of four TWIX platforms currently in operation around the world. Each platform functions independently and covers a specific region, including, Central Africa (AFRICA-TWIX), SADC region (SADC-TWIX) and Eastern Africa (Eastern Africa-TWIX).

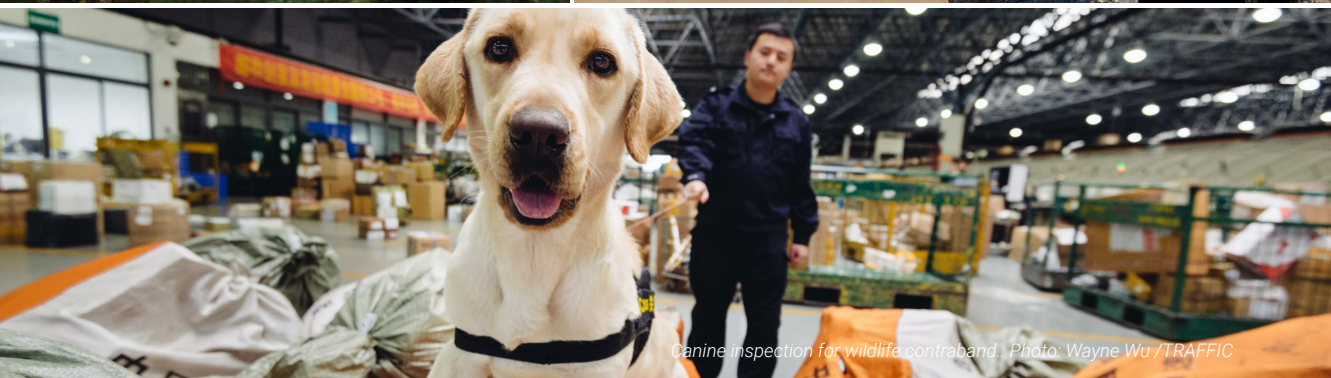
*Officials inspect a shipment of dried shark fins at Brussels airport. Photo: Pol Meuleneire, GAD Zaventem*



Stripped tree bark in Cameroon



African elephant *Loxodonta africana*. Photo: Richard Barrett / WWF-UK



Canine inspection for wildlife contraband. Photo: Wayne Wu / TRAFFIC

“ EU-TWIX is the first (and in some cases, the only) tool for identification of specimens, which is the basis for our enforcement actions

*Croatian Nature Protection Inspection*



The EU-TWIX website allows users to:

- ✓ Extract and analyse seizure information
- ✓ Create charts online and generate maps with trading routes
- ✓ Find rescue centres to re-home live specimens
- ✓ Find European laboratories for forensic analysis
- ✓ Contact experts in fauna and flora
- ✓ Access training materials and wildlife ID guides
- ✓ Find links to other websites related to wildlife trade
- ✓ Access archived messages from the mailing list

“

The ability for enforcement officers to receive accurate, trusted information quickly often makes the difference in detecting wildlife crime and stopping the criminals in their tracks

*Pol Meuleneire, GAD, Belgian Customs*



Chameleon, Andapa, Madagascar © WWF / Martina Lippuner

# EU-TWIX IN ACTION

## SUPPORTING CITES IMPLEMENTATION

As EU membership has expanded, the magnitude of the EU market for wildlife products has also increased. Estimated to be worth over €100 billion, the trade includes live animals, ornamental plants, tropical woods, food, leather, ivory, curios and wildlife-based medicines.

A significant proportion of the wildlife trade is illegal and threatens the survival of species in the wild. CITES is implemented in the EU through a common legal framework, the EUWTR, which are applicable in all Member States. Each Member State is responsible for enacting national legislation, appointing CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, enabling seizure and confiscation of illegal specimens and laying down the penalties for illegal wildlife trade.

More information about the European Wildlife Trade Regulations and the application of CITES in the EU can be found at [www.ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/index\\_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/index_en.htm).

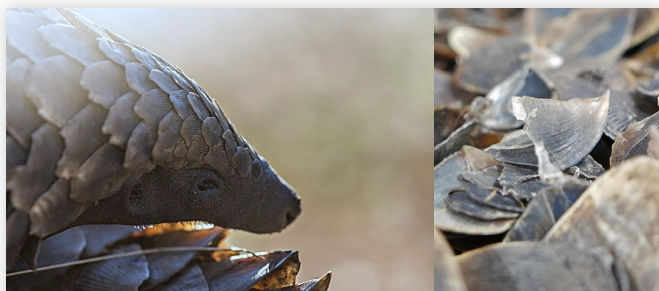
Over the years, the geographical coverage of EU-TWIX has expanded well beyond the EU and participating countries now also include a total of twelve neighbouring European countries which are responsible for implementing CITES through their national legislation.

## SUPPORTING LAW ENFORCEMENT THROUGH COLLABORATION

With over 400 enforcement-related messages exchanged every year, the EU-TWIX mailing list is used daily by enforcement officials to communicate quickly and efficiently with their colleagues across Europe.

Types of information exchanged are numerous and varied: sharing seizure news, seeking/providing help with identification of specimens/products or advice with the implementation of EUWTR/CITES legislation, sharing of 'stolen specimen alerts' (used to warn the network about live specimens or valuable goods stolen from animal parks, museums or private collections), amongst others.

# EU-TWIX SUCCESSSES



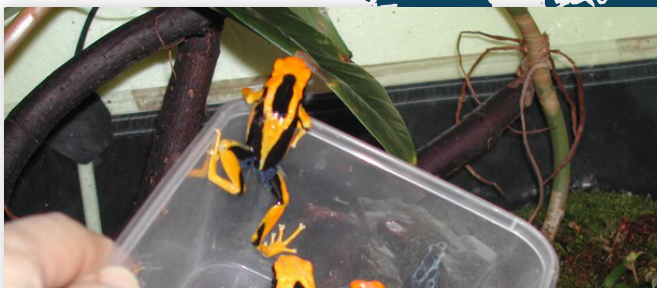
## BELGIUM

### IDENTIFICATION OF NEW COMMODITIES

Belgian Customs became aware of illegal trade of pangolin scales in 2012 thanks to photos of seizures involving this product exchanged via the EU-TWIX mailing list. As a result, a over 30 seizures involving pangolin scales have taken place at Brussels airport since, equivalent to close to one tonne of products.

Photo © Keith Connelly

Photo © TRAFFIC / A. Walmsley

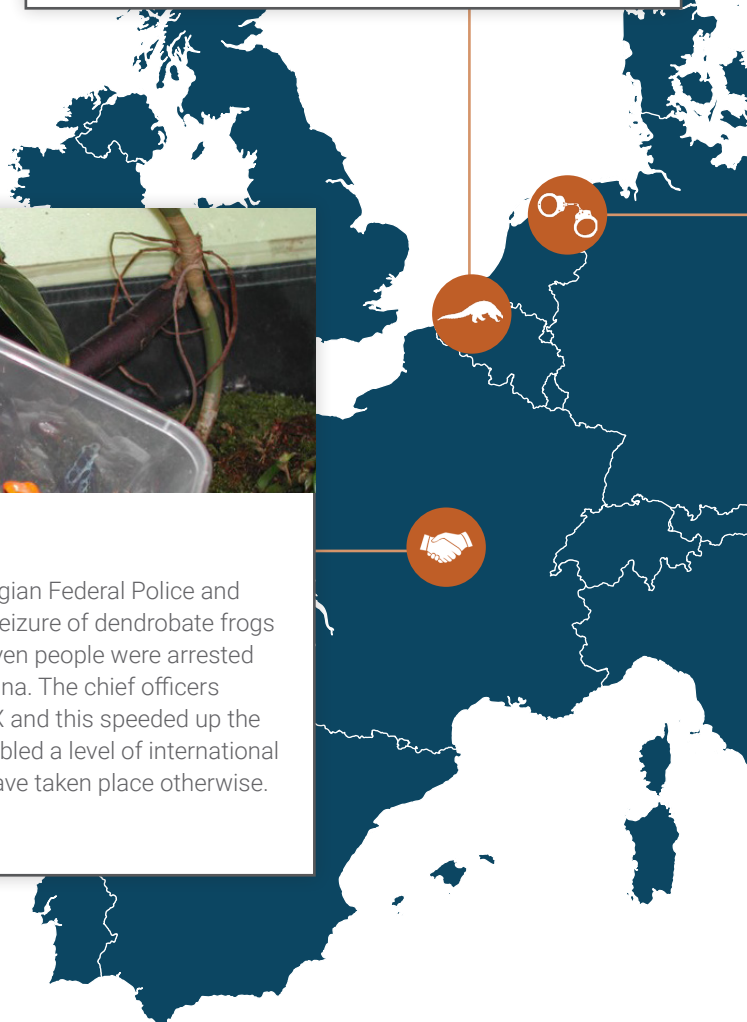


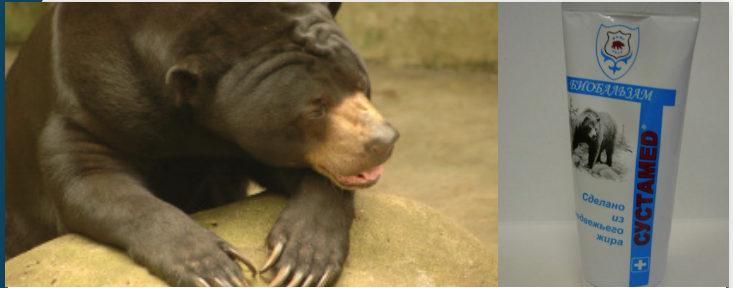
## FRANCE

### INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

A joint investigation by the Belgian Federal Police and French Gendarmerie led to a seizure of dendrobate frogs at Paris-Orly airport, where seven people were arrested upon arrival from French Guyana. The chief officers involved met through EU-TWIX and this speeded up the collaboration process and enabled a level of international co-operation that would not have taken place otherwise.

Photo © Gendarmerie / OCLAESP





## LATVIA

### SHARING RESOURCES AND EXPERTISE

The Latvian CITES MA discovered a trade in cosmetics claiming to contain Brown Bear extracts in Latvia and warned other EU Member States about it via the mailing list. Documents seized along with the products suggested bear extracts were present, but no laboratory analysis could be carried out due to a lack of resources. UK Customs has offered to carry out forensic tests on the products for the Latvian CITES MA.

Photos © WWF-Indonesia/ Saipul Siagian, © Latvian CITES MA



## THE NETHERLANDS

### INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION LEADING TO A SEIZURE

A large-scale investigation into the illegal bird trade in the Netherlands, which has connections to several other European and non-European countries, was triggered by a seizure alert shared by the Hungarian authorities via the EU-TWIX mailing list. Important seizures have been made of approx. 500 of specimens of birds, as well as of money and properties. Four defendants were sentenced to prison for illegal trade in exotic birds and involvement in a criminal organisation.



## CROATIA

### SPECIES IDENTIFICATION AND REHOMING

In 2016, Croatian Customs officers seized close to 700 tortoises (189 Testudo hermanni, 414 T. marginata and 79 Mauremys rivulata) concealed in a truck travelling from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia. As the distribution of these species is wide-ranging, Croatian authorities could not identify the countries of origin to return the tortoises to the wild. As a result, rescue centres were urgently needed to rehome these specimens, and the EU-TWIX Directory of Rescue Centres helped Croatian authorities identify suitable facilities

Photo © stanze / CC Generic 2.0



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All photos A. Walmsley / TRAFFIC unless otherwise stated

# TRAFFIC



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