



## NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY



Revised  
December 22, 2008

### **Subject: Suspension of Commercial CITES Trade with Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Rwanda**

**Background:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received notice of a CITES Standing Committee (represents the CITES countries between Conferences of the Parties) determination that Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Rwanda again failed to adopt required CITES legislation or submit an adequate CITES legislative plan to satisfactorily implement and enforce CITES upon import, export, and re-export. These countries were previously subject to CITES trade suspensions in 2002. This continued failure poses a serious threat to many endangered and threatened species.

The Endangered Species Act prohibits trade (import, export, re-export) in specimens traded contrary to the CITES Convention. Articles II and VIII of CITES require that countries take appropriate measures to enforce the provisions of the treaty and to prohibit trade in specimens that are in violation. CITES permits and certificates may only be issued and considered valid when it is determined that the specimens have been legally acquired.

As a member of CITES, the United States is committed to carrying out decisions and policies approved by CITES countries that reflect appropriate interpretations of the treaty. Based upon the lack of required implementing legislation in these countries, the United States cannot establish legal origin of wildlife that is exported or re-exported from the affected countries. Any export permits or re-export certificates issued by the countries of concern for commercial shipments are considered invalid, and such shipments may not be imported from Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, or Rwanda to the United States. In addition, the United States cannot allow commercial export or re-export of CITES-listed specimens from the United States to Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia or Rwanda since there are no enforcement provisions in place to ensure that the Convention is being implemented.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service received notice that Guinea-Bissau submitted their required CITES Legislation Plan and Liberia submitted draft legislation. Accordingly, the recommendation to suspend trade with these two Parties is withdrawn effective December 19, 2008.

**Action:** Effective December 14, 2006, the United States suspended commercial import of CITES-listed specimens from Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Rwanda. The United States also suspended the commercial export or re-export of CITES-listed specimens to Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Rwanda until further notice. Effective December 19, 2008, trade in CITES-listed species may resume between the United States and Guinea-Bissau and the United States and Liberia. Trade restrictions remain in place for Djibouti and Rwanda. Any such shipments are subject to seizure and forfeiture.

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