

Wanted – Dead or Alive

Exposing Online Wildlife Trade



Produced in partnership with



Contents

Executive summary	4	eBay and other online marketplaces	20
Introduction	6	ebay	20
Key results at a glance	8	Other online marketplaces	20
CITES protection	10	Internet usage and trends	21
The investigative framework	11	Policy makers and CITES	22
Methodology	12	Conclusions and recommendations	23
Challenges	13	Recommendations	23
Measuring the scale of the illegal trade	13	Country case studies	26
Identifying which species and websites to investigate	13	Belarus	26
Variations across the globe, the challenges of comparing country data	13	Belgium	28
Scams	14	Canada	30
Identifying species	14	China	32
Legislation variation	14	France	36
Sharing intelligence with enforcers	14	Germany	38
Monetary value	14	The Netherlands	40
Results	16	The Middle East	42
Ivory	16	Kazakhstan	46
Reptiles	17	Poland	48
Birds	17	Russia	50
Mammals	17	Ukraine	54
Animals and products available for sale	18	United Kingdom	56
Country summaries	18	Highlighting other online investigations in 2014	58
		Appendix I	60
		Appendix II	61

More than
100,000 elephants
killed for their ivory in
just three years¹

¹ <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2014/08/14/1403984111.abstract?sid=d9c31413-22ee-4ee2-b520-8740c7eaaaf8>

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Executive summary

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has been investigating wildlife trade over the internet across the globe since 2004. These investigations have assessed the scale and nature of the trade in wildlife and wildlife parts and products which are sold via online marketplaces, while also highlighting questions about the legality of many of the advertisements.

IFAW has shared key results from its reports with national enforcement agencies in order that they might assess whether to investigate if traders have sold items in breach of the law.

It is not possible to measure the scale of illegal online wildlife trade based on IFAW investigations alone. This requires law enforcement agencies to record and publish wildlife cybercrime prosecutions as well as the number of incidents or intelligence logs that relate to this issue.

Sadly IFAW's investigations are taking place at a time when wildlife poaching levels are alarmingly high with reports of more than 100,000 elephants killed for their ivory in just three years¹ and a recent increase in the number of large ivory seizures². The illegal trade in ivory, wildlife and wildlife parts and products is not only a threat to the conservation of species, but also to national and global security as well as to social and economic development in the countries in

which it occurs. The illegal wildlife trade generates an estimated US \$19 billion per year. It ranks fourth on the list of the most lucrative global illegal activities closely behind drugs, counterfeiting and human trafficking.

Meanwhile, cybercrime is a growing area of concern, as was highlighted in the United Kingdom's Home Office Select Committee report of 2013 on e-crime, which states: "We live in a world where terms like 'cybercrime' no longer belong in the realm of science fiction. Modern devices such as smart phones and tablets have brought the internet not only to our fingertips but to our bedsides, our pockets and to our children. And yet there is strong evidence that access to such technology, with all its opportunities and benefits, can put businesses and families at increasing risk of exploitation and internet-based crime (e-crime)."³

It was in this context of high levels of poaching and the increasing threat of cybercrime that IFAW investigated the trade in endangered wildlife taking place on 280 online marketplaces in 16 countries during a six week period in 2014. Investigators found a total of 33,006 endangered wildlife and wildlife parts and products from species listed on the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix I and II available for sale in 9,482 advertisements, estimated to be worth at least US \$10,708,137. Of the advertisements, 54 per cent were for live animals while 46 per cent were for animal parts and products.

Ivory, reptiles and birds were the most widely traded items, with ivory and suspected ivory featuring in almost one-third of all advertisements and reptiles accounting for one-quarter of the items found for sale.

The illegal wildlife trade generates an estimated US \$19 billion per year.

IFAW investigators found a total of 33,006 endangered wildlife and wildlife parts and products from species on CITES Appendix I and II available for sale on 9,482 advertisements, estimated to be worth at least US\$10,708,137.

IFAW investigators submitted 1,192 intelligence files to law enforcers, which equates to almost 13 per cent of the advertisements⁴. While it was not possible to determine the legality of each item provided to law enforcers based on the information available to the investigators, IFAW shared this information with enforcers because it believes that it could inform or be used as the grounds for future police or customs criminal investigations.

At a time when poaching of endangered wildlife has reached unprecedented levels, the widespread availability of the internet has transformed some traditional criminal activity to the extent that lawbreaking takes place on an extraordinary scale. IFAW believes it is essential that governments, policy makers, law enforcers and online marketplaces do not ignore online wildlife crime in their battle for justice.

Rhinoceros carvings and white rhinoceros horn beads were discovered for sale on Chinese websites.

Governments must ensure they have robust laws in place that specifically tackle the unique challenges of wildlife cybercrime supported by sufficient enforcement capacity, while online marketplaces must commit to strong policies that are effectively implemented to prevent their platforms being abused by wildlife criminals. Lastly consumers must be made aware of the devastating cost of wildlife crime.

¹<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2014/08/14/1403984111.abstract?sid=d9c31413-22ee-4ee2-b520-8740c7eaaaf8> ²http://cites.org/eng/elephant_poaching_and_ivory_smuggling_figures_for_2013_released ³<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaff/70/7003.htm>

⁴12.6 per cent of the advertisements were handed to law enforcers

Introduction

The internet has become the world's biggest marketplace, one that is open for business 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is without boundaries, largely unregulated, free and mostly anonymous, and provides easy opportunities for criminal activity.

IFAW has been investigating wildlife trade over the internet since 2004 with past investigations including:

- *Caught in the Web* (2005)
- *Bidding for Extinction* (2007)
- *Killing with Keystrokes: An Investigation of the Illegal Wildlife Trade on the World Wide Web* (2008)
- *Killing with Keystrokes - Portugal and Netherlands* (2010)
- *Killing with Keystrokes 2.0* (2011)
- *Making a Killing* (2012)
- *Click to Delete - Australia* (2014)
- *Click to Delete - New Zealand* (2014)
- *Bidding Against Survival: The Elephant Poaching Crisis and the Role of Auctions in the U.S. Ivory Market* (2014)

Investigations found 54 per cent of the advertisements were for live animals while 46 per cent were for animal parts and products.

These investigations have repeatedly shown that thousands of wildlife and wildlife parts and products are available for sale over the internet across the globe while the nature of the trade, with no access to the item and with little or limited information about the product, means that it can be difficult to ascertain the legality of the sale.

IFAW has shared information gathered through the course of its investigations with law enforcers and website companies and this has been instrumental in achieving both the worldwide eBay ban on ivory sales and the Taobao ban in China on the trade in a wide range of wildlife products. IFAW supported Project WEB, the first ever international enforcement investigation led by INTERPOL. Additionally, intelligence gathered by IFAW investigators has led directly to enforcement action in many countries.

IFAW has brought wildlife trade over the internet to the attention of policy makers at an international level through CITES, ensuring that countries across the world have committed to cracking down on online wildlife crime.

This report documents IFAW's most recent investigation, the largest international investigation carried out by IFAW since its 2008 report *Killing with Keystrokes*. That earlier survey identified 7,122 advertisements offering trade in endangered wildlife over a six week period.

This 2014 report looks at the trade in endangered wildlife taking place on 280 online marketplaces in 16 countries during a six week period in early 2014. IFAW investigators found a total of 33,006 endangered wildlife and wildlife parts and products from species

listed on CITES Appendix I and II available for sale in 9,482 advertisements, estimated to be worth at least US \$10,708,137. Of these, 54 per cent of the advertisements were for live animals while 46 per cent were for animal parts and products.

Ivory, reptiles and birds were the most widely traded items, with ivory and suspected ivory featuring in almost one-third of all advertisements and reptiles accounting for one-quarter of the items found for sale.

IFAW investigators submitted 1,192 intelligence files to law enforcers, which equates to almost 13 per cent of the advertisements, as it believes that this information could inform or be used as the grounds for future police or customs criminal investigations.

Hermann's tortoise - found for sale by investigators on Polish, French, German, Belgian and UK websites.



Ivory, reptiles and birds were the most widely traded items, with ivory and suspected ivory featuring in almost one-third of all advertisements and reptiles accounting for one-quarter of the items found for sale.

Key results at a glance

Investigators found a total of 33,006 endangered wildlife and wildlife parts and products from species listed on CITES Appendix I and II available for sale in 9,482 advertisements, estimated to be worth at least US\$10,708,137.



of all the wildlife parts and products and live animals in this investigation were found on **Chinese websites**



The total number of items found for sale



CITES protection

This investigation focused on endangered wildlife which is afforded a level of protection by CITES. CITES specifically addresses the international trade of endangered species however, in some countries or regions such as the European Union (EU), there are additional measures required for domestic trade in certain species.

Under CITES the highest level of protection is afforded to the more than 800 Appendix I species designated as being in immediate danger of extinction. With a few exceptions, commercial trade in Appendix I species is banned.

Appendix I includes highly vulnerable species like some elephant populations, tigers, gorillas and marine turtles, along with a large number of wild cats, parrots, parakeets, cockatoos and macaws.

Species listed on CITES Appendix II are recognised to require protection from trade, but not to the point of a ban. While trade may be allowed in Appendix II species, any international trade or transfer of such an animal or its derivative products requires an export permit issued by the authorities of the nation where the animal or animal product is located and in some instances an import permit issued by the country where the animal or animal product will be received.

In theory, these restrictions on trade in Appendix II species are designed to regulate trade in order to ensure that these species are not exploited to the point where they require Appendix I protection.

Appendix III species, while not facing specific global threats, are listed by individual countries wishing to enlist assistance in protecting species located within the borders of their countries.

CITES has three levels of protection for threatened species. The Convention along with the appendices should be transposed into national legislation. In some instances the Convention is first written into legislation at a regional level, as is the case with the EU. On occasion species are provided a greater level of protection at the regional or national level.

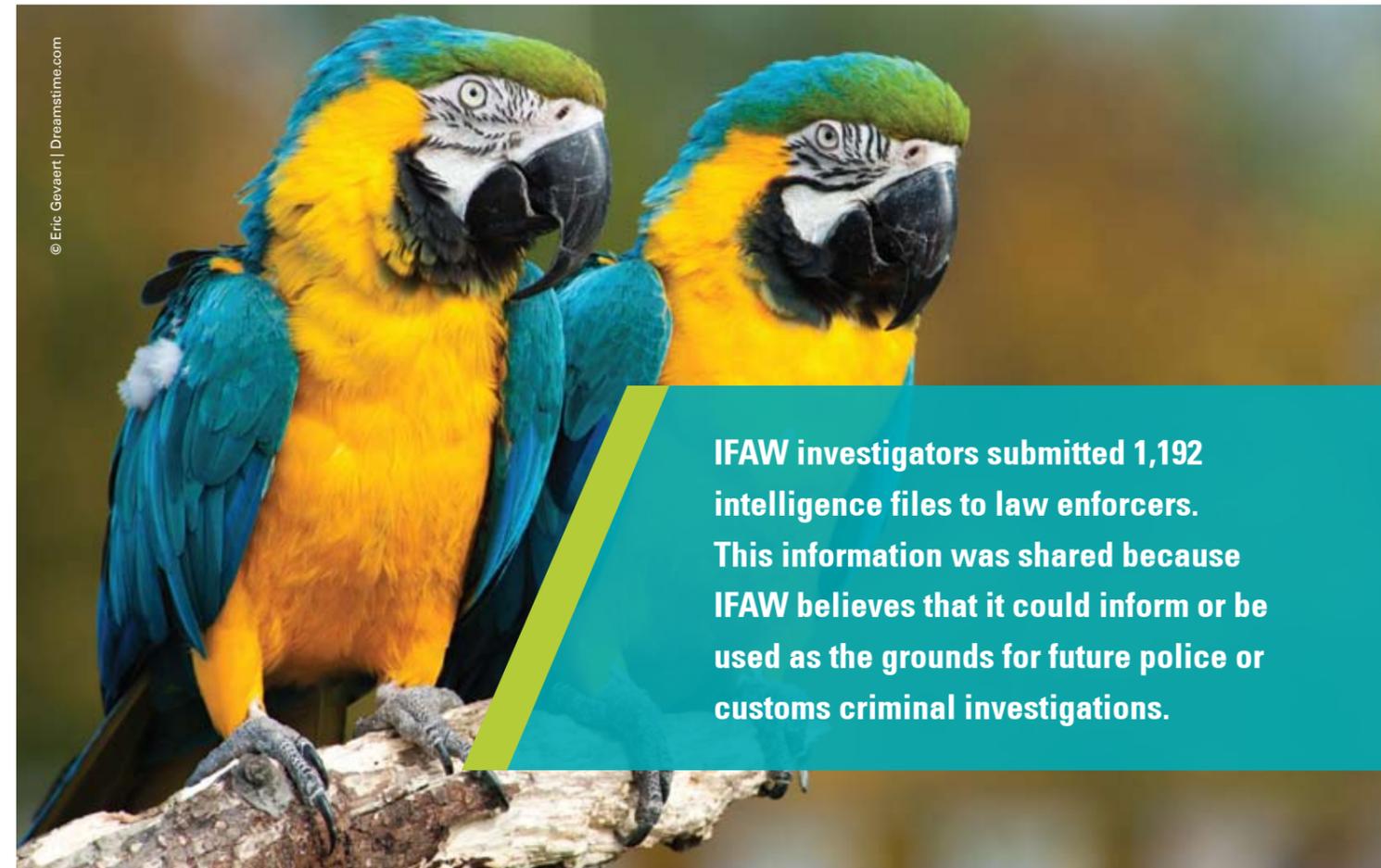
- 1 Appendix I**
(which roughly translates as Annex A of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations⁴) – those species designated as being in immediate danger of extinction.
- 2 Appendix II**
(which roughly translates as Annex B of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations) – those species designated as requiring protection from trade, but not to the point of a ban.
- 3 Appendix III**
(which roughly translates as Annex C of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations) – those species listed by individual countries wishing to enlist protection within their borders.

⁴In the EU CITES is implemented through a set of regulations known as the Wildlife Trade Regulations. Currently these are Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein (the Basic Regulation) and Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 laying down detailed rules concerning the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 (the Implementing Regulation). In addition, a specific Regulation is in place to suspend the introduction into the Community of certain species from certain countries (known as the Suspensions Regulation).

The investigative framework

The purpose of this investigation was to measure the current scale and nature of the trade in protected wildlife for sale over the internet, identify emerging trends since IFAW's 2008 report *Killing with Keystrokes* and gather intelligence to provide to enforcement agencies for potential criminal investigations. This investigation seeks to answer the following questions:

- What is the scale and nature of wildlife trade over online marketplaces?
- Has the scale of the trade changed since IFAW's 2008 investigation *Killing with Keystrokes*?
- What proportion of advertisements should be handed to enforcers as intelligence to inform or be used as the grounds for future police or customs criminal investigations?
- Which species of protected animals are most widely traded over the internet?
- On which online marketplaces is the majority of this trade occurring?
- Are robust policies protecting wildlife on online marketplaces being effectively implemented?
- What is the estimated value of this trade?



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IFAW investigators submitted 1,192 intelligence files to law enforcers. This information was shared because IFAW believes that it could inform or be used as the grounds for future police or customs criminal investigations.

Along with a number of other exotic birds, Blue-and-yellow macaws were discovered for trade on Russian websites

Methodology

IFAW's investigation took place simultaneously in 16 countries over a six week period, recording the trade in protected wildlife over online marketplaces – looking at both live wild animals and their derivative parts and products – of CITES Appendix I species. Where there was evidence or concerns that traders were flouting the law or where the scale of the trade could have a negative impact on the welfare of Appendix II listed species, these were also included.

While a similar approach was applied in IFAW's 2008 investigation, in this survey the scope was expanded as investigators took an intelligence-led approach, focusing on species that were seen as enforcement priorities in their countries, which in some instances meant more species were included in the investigation. In rare instances, where there were reports that a non-CITES species was at risk of being traded over the internet, this was included in the investigation. Advertisements displaying these non-CITES species have not been included in the summary tables or figures, but have been discussed in the narrative of the country chapters.

As in the last investigation, IFAW focused on the "surface web", namely open-source websites, commonly referred to as online marketplaces, where the products are freely available to the public.

IFAW contracted MK Consultancy, which is a company set up by the former Head of London's Metropolitan Wildlife Crime Unit and the former Head of UK Border Force's CITES Unit, who have over 40 years of experience of wildlife crime enforcement, to support investigators by assisting with the identification of species and the compilation of intelligence packages for enforcement agencies to ensure that the quality of the data supplied met the highest policing standards.



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IFAW focused on the "surface web", namely open-source websites, commonly referred to as online marketplaces, where the products are freely available to the public.

Common iguanas were advertised for sale on several Dutch websites.

Challenges

Measuring the scale and nature of the trade in numerous species in 16 countries and many online platforms presented an array of challenges. These are outlined below:

Measuring the scale of the illegal trade

IFAW recognises that *Killing with Keystrokes* (2008) generated much debate about the legality of wildlife trade over the internet. Unfortunately, it is impossible to state categorically which individual sellers whose advertisements were counted in the 2014 investigation were selling wildlife in breach of the law. Further examination would be required including assessing the legality of international sales, obtaining information on whether the animal was captive-bred or evaluating if an item was genuinely antique. This is particularly challenging when an investigator cannot see the wildlife or wildlife part or product first hand. Often there is no mention or evidence of the necessary documentation and the product itself may be disguised as something else, while the trader's identity may not be immediately obvious.

IFAW has been working with enforcers where possible to assess which advertisements would be worthy of further investigation by police, customs or cybercrime units. It has measured the number of individual advertisements which have been submitted to law enforcers for investigation. Investigations may result in arrests, seizures, prosecution and convictions which would provide more robust data with which to estimate the scale of the illegal trade in wildlife and their parts and products. However, given limited enforcement resources it is worth noting this may only be the tip of the iceberg.

Identifying which species and websites to investigate

The number of protected animals and their products available for sale over the internet is enormous. Meanwhile, there are an increasing number of online marketplaces which facilitate a range of trade, including that in endangered wildlife. In order to ensure the most effective use of IFAW investigators' time, investigators prioritised species where there was the best available information that indicated the trade in these species was significant because it posed a threat to their conservation or welfare and/or was of interest to law enforcers. IFAW investigators also prioritised online marketplaces that had frequent or significant trade in protected wildlife or their products, as well as reviewing levels of trade on sites identified in *Killing with Keystrokes* (2008).

Variations across the globe, the challenges of comparing country data

Although IFAW did establish clear guidelines for all investigators aimed at ensuring a common and consistent approach in all 16 countries involved in the investigation, there were variations between countries with regards to the amount and type of information investigators were able to record, based on enforcement intelligence and published reports.

Online marketplaces also vary in quality and format so the information that can be gleaned from different advertisements may not be consistent. This means that country data is not always directly comparable and that it is not possible to rank countries with absolute accuracy with regards to the scale and legality of the online trade in wildlife.

Scams

The proliferation of websites offering live animals for sale or providing opportunities for potential illegal wildlife sales is also facilitating other crimes commonly known as “scams”. Scams are fake advertisements that most commonly offer live birds, primates and cats for sale, particularly on websites that run free classifieds. The aim is to solicit money from an unsuspecting buyer who receives no live animal or part or product in return. Such advertisements waste the effort and limited resources of enforcement officers by distracting them from looking at genuine illegal wildlife trade. Investigators have used their detailed knowledge of scams to exclude these from our data. However, without follow-up investigations it is not entirely certain if all of these have been excluded from the data.

It is worth noting that although these scams will not be offences under CITES as no trade in endangered wildlife will have taken place, they are nonetheless cybercrimes because of the fraudulent content of the advertisement. Indeed, there are examples where such cases have been passed from the CITES authorities to fraud departments for criminal investigation.

Identifying species

In many cases specific species were not identified in the text of the advertisements therefore making it difficult to assess whether they were endangered and therefore protected by the law. IFAW sought expert advice where it was unclear what species was being advertised so it could make an informed judgement as to whether an advertisement should be included in this investigation.

In addition to the 16 countries within the scope of this report, features on recent separate IFAW investigations carried out in Australia, New Zealand and the USA have been included. It is important to note that the methodologies used in those investigations varied slightly from the ones applied to this global investigation.

Legislation variation

CITES is implemented in different ways in different countries. For example, only one population of walrus is on CITES App III but all populations are listed on Annex B of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations (equivalent to CITES Appendix II) so walrus products have been recorded in the summary tables where they were found in Europe. In some instances in the country-specific chapters investigators have also included in the country narratives information about wildlife that is not covered by CITES Appendix I or II but is afforded legal protection at a national level.

Sharing intelligence with enforcers

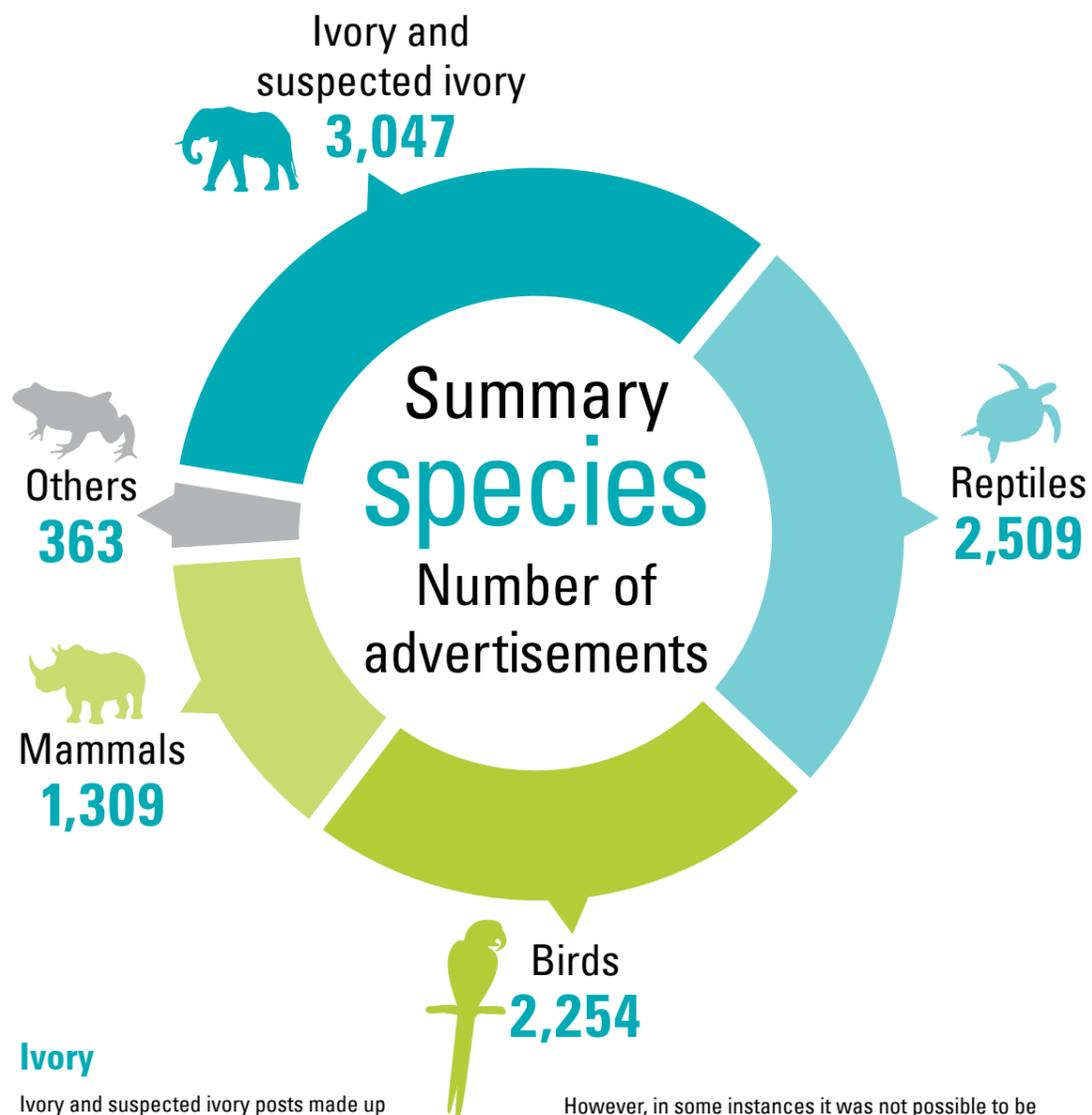
Whereas good relationships have been built up with enforcement agencies in many of the countries where IFAW carried out its investigations, this has not proven possible in some countries and therefore it was not able to easily handover intelligence based on its survey in every country. Even where good relationships existed IFAW needed to take into account enforcement capacity and therefore prioritised the strongest intelligence packages. This means that the number of files handed over to enforcers does not necessarily reflect the true scale of potential illegal trade taking place over online marketplaces.

Monetary value

These figures are based on the best available data, but in reality the value of the trade is likely to be significantly higher. Despite best efforts and vigorous interrogation, investigators were often unable to obtain the final sale price or, in some instances, any price at all. This report only records prices listed in the advertisements.

IFAW sought expert advice where it was unclear what species was being advertised so it could make an informed judgement as to whether an advertisement should be included in this investigation.

Results



Ivory

Ivory and suspected ivory posts made up almost one-third of all advertisements in this report totalling 3,047. Ivory and suspected ivory was the most traded item in China, which represents over half of global ivory trade recorded in this survey. It was also the most traded item in the UK, France and Belgium.

While all other advertisements were logged according to species, it was not possible to do this in the case of ivory as it derives from the teeth and tusks of various animals, including walrus, elephant, hippo, whale and narwhal-species, used in the carving trade.

There were challenges identifying some ivory items as these were apparently sometimes disguised using code words, particularly on sites prohibiting the sale of ivory. IFAW worked with an ivory expert to identify these items down to the species level where possible.

However, in some instances it was not possible to be certain which species was the source of the ivory.

Where it was believed ivory was being disguised as another product, investigators analysed code words, price indicators and inspected pictures provided to determine whether an item was 'suspected ivory'. However, on some online marketplaces, the sellers clearly identified their items as ivory.

A number of "ivory" items recorded on ebay.co.uk were identified as likely to be made of hippo ivory, although such identification could not be made with certainty based on the information available in the advertisements. Hippo populations have declined in recent years as a result of demand for their teeth as an alternative material for carvers, as there are fewer trade restrictions than there are for elephant ivory.

It should be noted that all suspected elephant ivory items were classified as CITES Appendix I items in this survey, based on the fact that most elephant populations remain on Appendix I and it is impossible for investigators to determine what country a particular ivory item originated from. Where it was possible to identify items suspected to be made from hippo teeth, these were classified as Appendix II.

Reptiles

One-quarter of all advertisements recorded by investigators were for reptiles or reptile products. Almost 80 per cent of these were turtles and tortoises, many of which were recorded in the European surveys as Hermann's, Marginated and Greek tortoises and are believed by many enforcers to be commonly and legally captive-bred in large numbers.

A significant number of snakes, lizards, crocodile and alligators were recorded in this category.

Investigators noted many other reptile products for sale which were not included in this survey, as sellers did not provide detailed information on the species of the animal. Without such information, it was a challenge for investigators and enforcers to identify which species were used to make such products and to differentiate legal trade from the potentially illegal trade.

Birds

The greatest proportion - 73 per cent - of the 2,254 bird advertisements recorded were for exotic birds including parrots, hornbills, toucans, passerines and humming birds.

The highest proportion of these was parrots featuring in 1,558 advertisements, representing 69 per cent of all categories of birds. Exotic birds were the top category in Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Ukraine, UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Canada, and were many other countries' second-most common category of animals for sale.

An additional 424 birds of prey, including 273 owls, were found for sale.

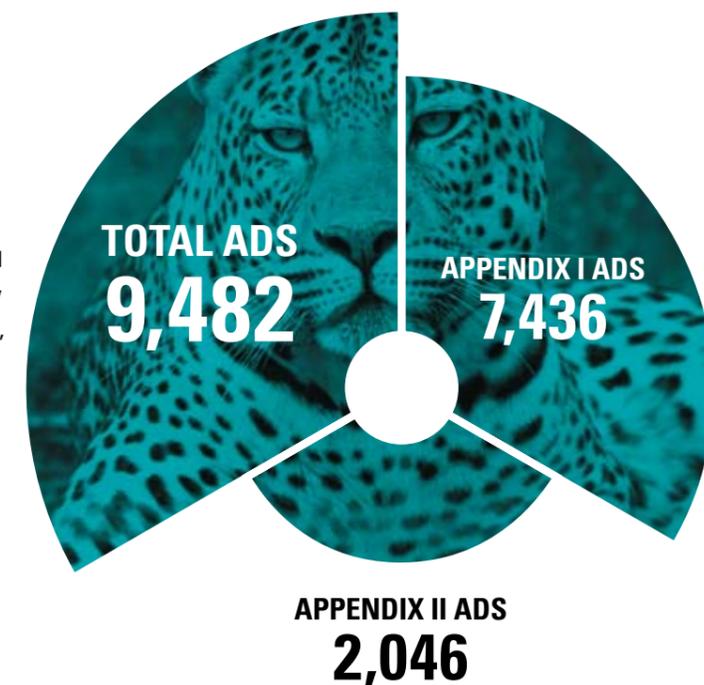
Mammals

Investigators recorded 1,309 advertisements for live mammals or products derived from mammals during this investigation of which one-third (492 advertisements) were for live cats or products made from cats such as tigers, leopards, ocelot and lynx among others. Overall, Russian websites accounted for 40 per cent of cat trade.

In addition, investigators noted 397 primate advertisements; half of these were recorded on Ukrainian websites and one-quarter on Russian sites. Investigators also identified 173 rhinoceros advertisements, 95 per cent of which were for sale on Chinese sites. They also recorded 86 bear advertisements and 47 advertisements for antelope (Saiga and Tibetan antelope), 74 per cent of which were found on Russian sites.

Lastly the investigation found not only elephant ivory but also 27 other elephant items including elephant feet ornaments and elephant hair bracelets.

Number of advertisements found



Results

Animals and products available for sale

Category	Ads	Per cent
Ivory and suspected ivory	3047	32.13%
Reptiles	2509	26.46%
Birds	2254	23.77%
Mammals	1309	13.81%
Amphibians	281	2.96%
Fish	55	0.58%
Molluscs	26	0.27%
Corals	1	0.01%
TOTAL	9482	100.00%

Country summaries

Country	No of ads	Live animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total items offered for sale in all ads*	No of websites	Ads provided to enforcers	Value in US\$
Bahrain	10	10	0	14	1	0	\$14,094.00
Belarus	6	5	1	6	3	0	\$16,531.00
Belgium	348	165	183	481	13	106	\$194,321.00
Canada	158	65	93	187	5	46	\$388,736.00
China	2106	124	1982	18590	21	157	\$2,744,500.00
France	1192	679	513	1653	17	171	\$1,354,900.00
Germany	1666	1551	115	4837	13	93	\$684,033.00
Netherlands	607	388	219	1392	11	0	\$106,112.00
Kazakhstan	55	55	0	66	4	0	\$268,736.00
Kuwait	7	7	0	8	2	0	\$165,833.00
Poland	117	94	23	180	12	15	\$136,470.00
Qatar	5	5	0	28	2	0	\$312,821.00
Russia	925	695	230	2596	120	0	\$1,953,060.00
UAE	122	120	2	195	14	122	\$404,112.00
Ukraine	1071	852	219	1170	29	0	\$1,462,930.00
UK	1087	345	742	1603	13	482	\$500,948.00
TOTALS	9482	5160	4322	33006	280	1192	\$10,708,137

*Total items for sale equates to total number of live animals and parts and products offered on all advertisements recorded (e.g. one advertisement may have offered 10 animals for sale)

Ivory and suspected ivory was the most traded item in China, which represents over half of global ivory trade recorded in this survey.

eBay and other online marketplaces

eBay

The 2014 investigation shows that the ivory ban is working well on eBay sites based in Canada, Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, but is being flouted in the UK. The number of suspected ivory advertisements found on the eBay site in Canada dropped from 134 in 2008 to eight in 2014, and in France from 192 to just seven, while in Germany they decreased from 39 to 17.

However, in the UK, ivory advertisements have increased by 48 per cent from 254 ivory advertisements recorded in 2008 to 376 suspected ivory advertisements recorded in this survey in 2014. IFAW is working with eBay to identify ways in which traders are seeking to disguise their ivory items in a bid to avoid detection and making recommendations as to how to stop this abuse of their policy.

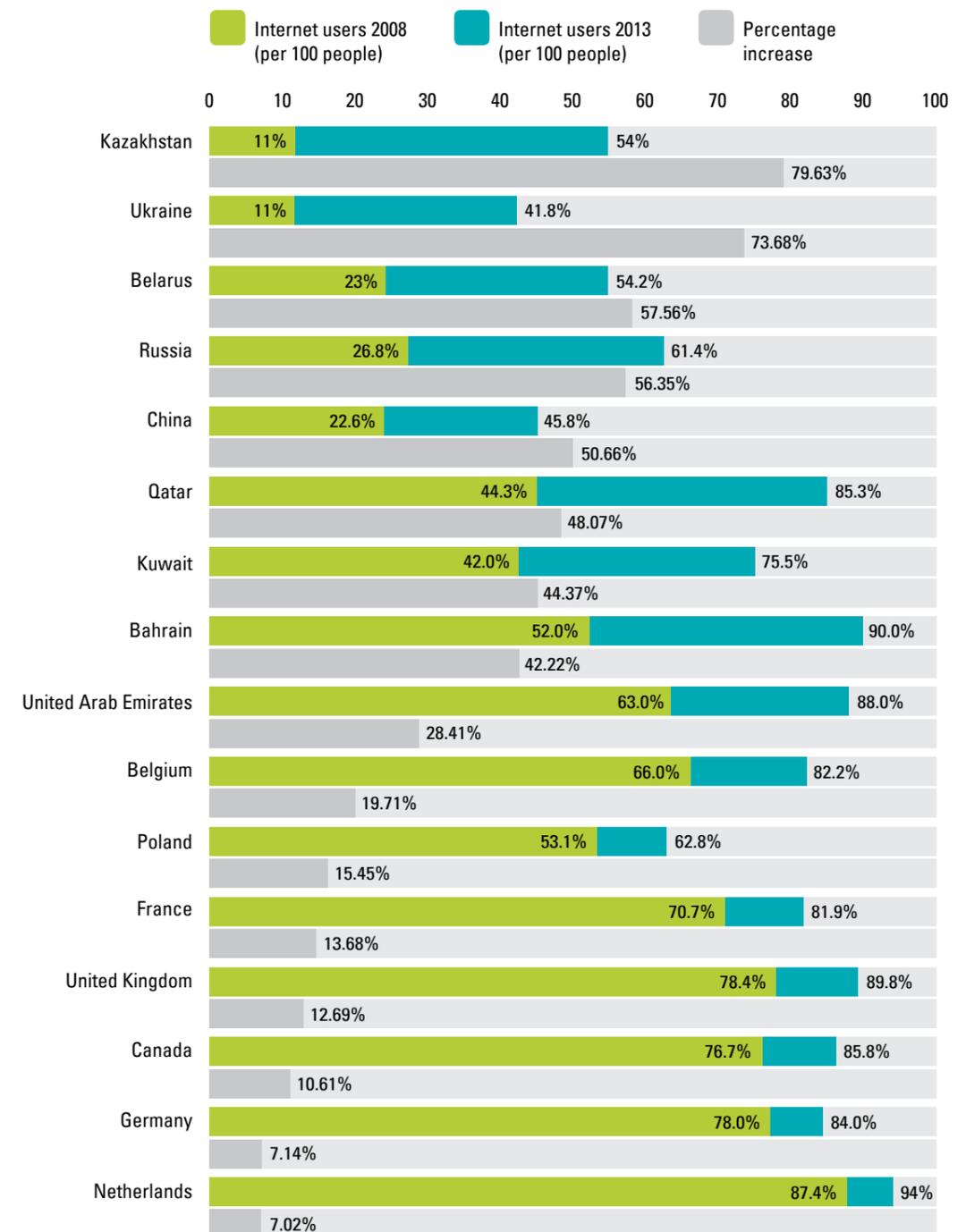
Other online marketplaces

While eBay is the largest international company with different regional sites monitored in this survey, IFAW also identified several other sites that operate across multiple countries. Investigators in France, the UK and the Netherlands recorded 22 advertisements for exotic birds on Parrot4sale.com over the course of the survey. The site, which targets private bird breeders, requests that sellers must have all necessary CITES papers for the birds they are intending to sell. Slando.ua and slando.kz a classifieds company hosted 433 advertisements on its Ukraine and Kazakhstan sites for a wide range of live animals and ivory products.

The 2014 investigation shows the ivory ban is working well on eBay sites based in Canada, Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands, but is being flouted in the UK.

Internet usage and trends

The increase in the number of wildlife and wildlife parts and products available for sale over the internet since IFAW's 2008 investigation *Killing with Keystrokes* could be in part due to an increase in the amount of people using the internet. To help place this report in that context, the table below ranks the countries involved in this investigation according to the percentage increase of internet users, listed in descending order.



<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.P2?page=3>

Policy makers and CITES

Wildlife trade over the internet was widely discussed during the 15th CITES Conference of the Parties in Doha in 2010 where CITES Resolution Conference 11.3 and Decision 15.57 and 15.58 committed countries who are Parties to CITES to ensuring they reviewed their domestic measures and looked to improve their understanding and enforcement of online wildlife crime (See Appendix I for the complete text). Res. Conf. 11.3 and Decision 15.57 remain an on-going commitment for CITES Parties.

In addition, CITES set up the E-commerce and E-permitting Working Groups to explore these issues further. Disappointingly the E-commerce Working Group has not been very active and there is limited evidence that the Parties to CITES are delivering on their commitment to tackle wildlife cybercrime.



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An endangered tomato frog was advertised for sale on a Belgian website.

Conclusion and recommendations

Despite widespread recognition that wildlife cybercrime is a significant threat to endangered animals, this report shows more than 30,000 protected wildlife and their parts and products were available for sale in only six weeks in 16 countries. While it is not possible to measure exactly how many of these items were being traded illegally, investigators submitted more than 1,000 cases to enforcers for further investigation. Shockingly, at a time when roughly one in every 12 African elephants was killed by poachers⁶ IFAW investigators found 3,047 advertisements for ivory or suspected ivory online.

This trade in wildlife and their parts and products is taking place when the poaching of endangered wildlife is reaching unprecedented levels and the existence of the internet is providing an expanding platform that is seeing traditional crimes transforming in scale⁷. It is essential that governments, policy makers, law enforcers and online marketplaces do not turn a blind eye to online wildlife crime. Online marketplaces also provide an opportunity to improve consumer awareness, as some customers may not be aware that trade in endangered wildlife and their parts and products is regulated by law.

Governments must ensure they have robust laws in place that specifically tackle the unique challenges of wildlife cybercrime supported by sufficient enforcement capacity, while online marketplaces must commit to strong policies that are effectively implemented to prevent their platforms being abused by wildlife criminals. Lastly, consumers must be made aware of the devastating cost of wildlife crime.

Recommendations

In order to crack down on the trade in illegal wildlife and their parts and products over the internet it is important to ensure the following measures are taken by governments, policy makers, online marketplaces and enforcers:

Improve enforcement efforts by:

- Increasing capacity and effectiveness by creating or continuing to fund a national internet intelligence officer post; ensuring cybercrime, wildlife crime and other policing and customs units collaborate on this issue; providing specific training for enforcers about online wildlife crime; and raising the profile of this crime amongst enforcers.

- Developing strategies which specifically address online wildlife crime, including a continued assessment of the scale and nature of the trade as well as maintaining records of the number of seizures, arrests, prosecutions and convictions linked to this area of crime.
- Sharing enforcement best practices through the CITES E-commerce Working Group.
- Ensuring enforcement officers are encouraged and consulted in the development of more robust legislation.
- Working in partnership with IFAW and other NGOs which can provide intelligence in support of criminal investigations.

⁶ <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2014/08/14/1403984111.abstract?sid=d9c31413-22ee-4ee2-b520-8740c7eaaaf8>

⁷ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmhaaff/70/7004.htm>

Conclusion and recommendations

Online marketplaces should ensure they are not a platform for the trade in endangered species by:

- Pro-actively raising awareness of the threat posed to the survival of endangered wildlife by providing easy to find information on the illegal trade in elephants, rhinoceros, tigers and other protected animals.

Introducing and implementing clearly communicated and easy to find effective website policies including:

- Banning the trade in protected species which are being widely traded on online marketplaces; most importantly ensuring that these bans are effectively implemented to avoid traders disguising their items using code terms.
- Implementing compulsory “pop up” notices or similar advisory methods to traders at the point of posting items for sale or seeking to purchase items to warn them they may be breaking the law by buying or selling wildlife products and requiring traders to confirm they have read and understood their responsibilities under relevant national legislation before proceeding to buy or sell CITES-listed species.
- Reviewing the format of the sales of advertisements to incorporate a requirement for the inclusion of permitting information in all advertisements for CITES-listed species.

- Identifying suspicious trading behaviour that may relate to breaches of CITES-related laws, and reporting these promptly to national law enforcement authorities.
- Where a breach of a CITES-related law is suspected, promptly providing full identification details of sellers to national law enforcement authorities.
- Ensuring that traders must identify which species are being traded, i.e. through a species category in the advertisement.

Governments improve legislation by:

Ensuring national legislation protecting endangered wildlife specifically addresses the unique threat posed by online wildlife crime through:

- Placing the legal burden of proof on the seller to provide the necessary supporting documentation and incorporating a requirement for the inclusion of permitting information in all advertisements for CITES-listed species.
- Implementing compulsory “pop up” notices or similar advisory methods to traders at the point of posting items for sale or seeking to purchase items to warn them that they may be breaking the law by buying or selling wildlife products and requiring traders to confirm they have read and understood their responsibilities under the relevant national legislation before proceeding to buy or sell CITES listed species.

Despite widespread recognition that wildlife cybercrime is a significant threat to endangered animals, this report shows more than 30,000 protected wildlife and their parts and products were available for sale in only six weeks in 16 countries.



Belarus



Six advertisements were recorded on Belarus websites, five of which were for live animals, all exotic birds.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **6**

VALUE IN BELARUSIAN RUBLES BYR **163,820,600**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$16,531**



Polar bear skins were found for sale on Russian websites.



© Randy McKown | Dreamstime.com

© Outdoorsman | Dreamstime.com

Scarlet macaw

The main category of items for sale in Belarus was live birds including five parrot advertisements (mainly Amazon parrots and macaws).

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	3
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	3
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	6
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	N/A

Investigators only monitored Russian language sections of the websites. The main category of items for sale in Belarus was live birds, including five parrot advertisements (mainly Amazon parrots and macaws). Four of the bird advertisements were posted by one company which was also prolific on Russian sites. The only wildlife product found for sale was a Canadian polar bear skin, one of many for sale on Russian language websites. Three advertisements were found on the olx.by, despite a policy on the site prohibiting the sale of "rare" animals.

Website	Ads	Per cent
http://olx.by	3	50.00%
http://zooclub.by	2	33.33%
http://second.by	1	16.67%
TOTAL	6	100.00%

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	5		5	83.33%
Bears		1	1	16.67%
TOTAL	5	1	6	100.00%

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

At this stage, no listings have been submitted to Belarus enforcement agencies.

Belgium



Investigators found 348 advertisements on 13 websites in Belgium, almost half of them offering ivory or suspected ivory items for sale.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **348**

VALUE IN EUROS **€141,141**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$194,321**



Madagascar tomato frog

Of all the advertisements found in Belgium 85 per cent were for CITES Appendix I (Annex A) species. The 348 advertisements recorded were broadly split between live animals and wildlife products, offering a total of 481 items for sale.

In all, 119 (34 per cent of the total) of the advertisements suggested that their items were offered legally for sale, although no sellers provided any supporting documentation.

Ivory and suspected ivory represent half of all trade

Ivory and suspected ivory were the most commonly offered items for sale in 162 advertisements representing 47 per cent of advertisements recorded in this survey. The majority were found on the 2ememain.be and 2dehands.be sites.

One seller posted 11 advertisements on 2ememain.be and 2dehands.be during the period of the survey for suspected ivory bracelets, carvings and vases.



Military Macaws

© Hakoar | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Ivory and suspected ivory		162	162	46.55%
Exotic birds	72	1	73	20.98%
Owls	29	2	31	8.91%
Turtles and tortoises	24	1	25	7.18%
Snakes	17	1	18	5.17%
Cats		11	11	3.16%
Frogs	10		10	2.87%
Birds of prey	9	1	10	2.87%
Crocodiles and alligators	2	2	4	1.15%
Rheas	2		2	0.57%
Sharks		1	1	0.29%
Whales		1	1	0.29%
TOTAL	165	183	348	100.00%

Live animal sales in Belgium

After ivory, the next three largest categories of advertisements all featured live animals with parrots, owls and turtles/tortoises making up an additional 35 per cent of advertisements recorded in this survey. Investigators recorded 67 live exotic bird advertisements including numerous scarlet, blue-wing, blue-throated and military macaws.

Investigators also noted a number of other live bird species including birds of prey, passerines (five red skins), rheas as well as a stuffed hummingbird.

Just two sites dominate trade in Belgium

Despite both sites having a policy restricting the sale of protected animals, two websites represent a large majority of trade in this investigation: 2ememain.be with 174 advertisements (50 per cent of the total) and 2dehands.be (31 per cent), both with a wide range of live animals and wildlife products. Both websites are managed by the same private Dutch company Marktplaats B.V. but are actually subsidiaries of eBay Inc - one, 2ememain.be, targeting French speaking buyers and the other, 2dehands.be, targeting Flemish speakers.

Four suspected ivory advertisements were found on kapaza.be, despite a policy on the site banning ivory sales.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

106 listings were shared with Belgian enforcement agencies for further investigation.

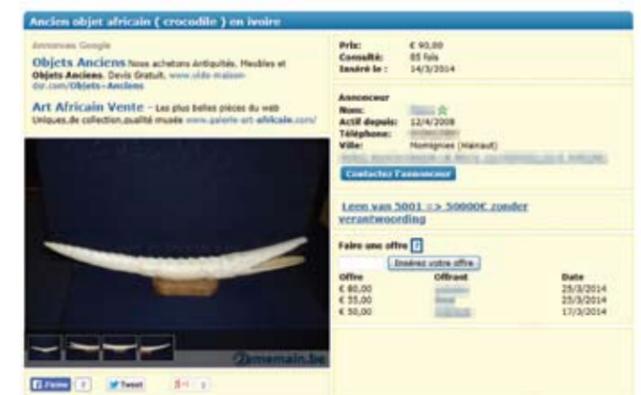
© Hitman111 | Dreamstime.com



Eurasian eagle owl

Ivory and suspected ivory was the most commonly offered item for sale in 162 advertisements representing 47 per cent of those recorded in this survey.

The screen grab below, taken from a Belgian website, shows a worked tusk for sale, one of 162 ivory or suspected ivory items recorded by investigators.



Canada



Canadian investigators recorded 158 advertisements offering Appendix I - and Appendix II - listed species for sale on five main Canadian websites.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **158**

VALUE IN CANADIAN DOLLARS **CAD 430,770**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$388,736**



Grizzly bear

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	118
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	40
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	187
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	244

Almost 60 per cent of advertisements on Canadian websites were for wildlife products rather than for live animals, and Appendix I - listed species accounted for 75 per cent of advertisements recorded.

Parrots were the most common items offered for sale in 50 advertisements for live animals.

Of the 93 wildlife products advertisements, the most common items for sale were ivory or suspected ivory, in 39 advertisements, followed by bears in 25 advertisements. Bear products for sale included polar bear and grizzly bear skins and rugs.

Of the advertisements recorded 48 per cent had some claim to legality, but only one showed any supporting documentation.

Canadian marketplaces

Representing 56 per cent of total sales recorded, the main online marketplace for sales was kijiji.ca on its Ontario and British Columbian sites, with 89 advertisements in total for both live animal and wildlife parts and products sales.

Kijiji Canada's "pet policy" is difficult to find on the site. It advises users to "not post for sale any animals that are on the endangered species list, Environment Canada CITES website, are wild animals, or animals that are not permitted to be owned or sold in any city in which the ad is being posted or could be considered dangerous to others."

The website craigslist.ca was the second-largest marketplace for sales, hosting 32 advertisements on its Vancouver and Toronto sites. Although it is also difficult to find on the site, a policy states that pet sales and animals parts are not permitted for sale on the site.

The website adpost.com - which has no policy on wildlife trading - was the third largest site, hosting 19 advertisements. Despite a site policy banning ivory and skins and parts from endangered animals, ebay.ca hosted a further 17 advertisements.

© Glenn Nagel | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	50	1	51	32.28%
Ivory and suspected ivory		39	39	24.68%
Bears		25	25	15.82%
Cats	2	11	13	8.23%
Snakes	12		12	7.59%
Crocodiles and alligators	1	7	8	5.06%
Whales		7	7	4.43%
Elephants (not ivory)		3	3	1.90%
TOTAL	65	93	158	100.00%

A total of 118 Appendix I advertisements were found over the course of this investigation. During the 2008 *Killing with Keystrokes* survey investigators noted 244 Appendix I advertisements. Notably, there was a reduction in the number of advertisements on eBay.ca from 134 ivory items in 2008 to eight suspected ivory items in 2014. This decrease may be as a result of eBay's policy banning ivory sales as well as increased monitoring. However, there is some evidence that some eBay users are circumventing the policy. In particular one seller who was advertising "ox bone" on ebay.ca posted the same items on another website labeled as ivory, thereby illustrating that the seller may have been trying to elude eBay's ivory ban. Three other items on ebay.ca referenced "faux" ivory with the word faux in quotation marks. These items have been independently confirmed as suspected elephant/hippo ivory.

© Jeanninebryan | Dreamstime.com



Polar bear

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

46 advertisements have been shared with a Canadian enforcement agency for further investigation

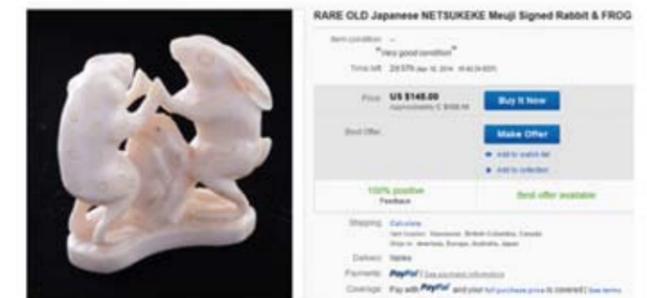
© IFAW/J. Hrusa



African elephant

Of the advertisements recorded 48 per cent had some claim to legality, but only one showed any supporting documentation.

The screen grab below, taken from a Canadian website, shows an advertisement for a suspected ivory sculpture which the seller states is ox-bone.



China

China was the largest country for sales in this investigation with a staggering 18,590 items offered on 2,106 online advertisements over 21 websites:

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **2106**

VALUE IN CHINESE YUAN RENMINBI CNY **16,915,667**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$2,744,500**



African elephant

Website	Ads	Per cent
http://tieba.baidu.com	1154	54.80%
www.cang.com	257	12.20%
www.paipai.com	185	8.78%
www.gucn.com	95	4.51%
http://shop.sssc.cn/	79	3.75%
www.58.com	76	3.61%
http://bbs.wxwx.cn	60	2.85%
www.taobao.com	42	1.99%
http://bbs.hl365.net	40	1.90%
http://bbs.reptilesworld.com	24	1.14%
www.baixing.com	21	1.00%
http://bbs.ngui.com	20	0.95%
www.gui888.com	12	0.57%
http://go.oncity.cc	9	0.43%
www.feiqu.com	8	0.38%
http://bbs.pxtx.com	8	0.38%
www.1688.com	5	0.24%
www.ganji.com	4	0.19%
http://bbs.e5sj.com	3	0.14%
http://bj.ohqly.com	3	0.14%
www.beihai365.com	1	0.05%
TOTAL	2106	100.00%

Clamping down on online wildlife trade in China

IFAW has been working in China since 2005 to curb online wildlife crime including maintaining constant monitoring of 20 key trading websites since 2012. This has led to robust enforcement action as a result of these investigations, as well as the introduction of strong, effectively implemented website policies for online market places including Alibaba (1688.com) and Taobao (taobao.com).

Online trade in 2014

The 2014 survey reveals a huge increase from 544 CITES Appendix I advertisements identified in 2008's *Killing with Keystrokes* survey to 2,061 in 2014. However, the 2014 investigation represents a much broader and more comprehensive scope than the earlier survey, increasing the number of websites where items were found from five to 21. Most of the websites monitored in 2008 have seen a significant decrease in trade with a much smaller number of advertisements recorded and one site no longer hosts wildlife advertisements. An additional site monitored, artebuy.com, not included in the table above had no products for sale and a strong site policy which is having very successful results.

Some sites, however, had numerous advertisements for Appendix I and II species for sale, including Baidu Tieba (Bar) (tieba.baidu.com), an online forum, which had 1,154 listings recorded during the survey. The Huaxia Collection website (cang.com) had 257 items for sale, and paipai.com had 185 items. The latter two websites have policies banning the posting of endangered wildlife products, but those policies are apparently not being effectively implemented.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

157 advertisements were shared with Chinese enforcement agencies for further investigation, with the priority focused on large-scale traders selling hundreds of items.

© IFAW-ATEV, Fishlock

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Ivory and suspected ivory		1662	1662	78.92%
Rhinoceros		164	164	7.79%
Turtles and tortoises	99	11	110	5.22%
Exotic birds	16	83	99	4.70%
Cats		33	33	1.57%
Bears		11	11	0.52%
Antelopes		8	8	0.38%
Crocodiles and alligators	2	2	4	0.19%
Lizards	3		3	0.14%
Sharks		3	3	0.14%
Pangolins		3	3	0.14%
Snakes	2		2	0.09%
Primates	2		2	0.09%
Whales		1	1	0.05%
Hippopotamuses		1	1	0.05%
TOTAL	124	1982	2106	100.00%

Ivory trade dominates all sales

Wildlife products, rather than live animals, were responsible for the majority of listings recorded – 94 per cent of the total. As in 2008, ivory and now suspected ivory remains the most common item for sale in this investigation making up 79 per cent of all items recorded.

Ivory and suspected ivory sellers represent a large proportion of the 317 sellers with more than one item for sale, many offering to supply large quantities of products; one seller posted 175 advertisements during the course of the survey. Others offered large quantities of items in one single advert, with examples including advertisements for 300 bracelets, 200 necklaces and 50 Buddha ivory carvings. Only 328 of the 1,662 ivory and suspected ivory listings suggested any claim to legality.

Despite the fact that government-approved suppliers of legal stockpiles of ivory in China are banned from selling ivory online, traders in this investigation seem to hint at large quantities of ivory for sale through phrases such as “factory direct” and “lots of wholesale ivory items” and of a regular supply through “new arrivals” and offering to “provide ivory in the long-term”. One advert claimed that the seller bought ivory through “a purchasing agency in Africa”. Sellers also used phrases such as “white materials”, “schreger lines” and “white plastic” in advertisements, apparently to avoid website policies and wildlife regulations on selling ivory.

Such large quantities of ivory and suspected ivory for sale is a major concern, given the record number of large-scale seizures of ivory in recent years, and also that China has been identified as the major destination for illegal ivory in Asia.

IFAW/D. Willets



White rhinoceros

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	2061
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	45
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	18590
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	544

The 2014 survey reveals a huge increase from 544 CITES Appendix I advertisements identified in 2008's *Killing with Keystrokes* survey to 2,061 in 2014.

China continued



Bengal tiger

Wildlife products, rather than live animals, were the majority of listings recorded – 94 per cent of the total.

Despite a domestic ban on trade in rhinoceros horn, rhinoceros products (including medicinals) were the second most common item for sale, with 164 advertisements for rhinoceros carvings and white rhinoceros horn beads.

Turtles and tortoises were the third most common items for sale and the main species of live animals for sale, including 31 live sea turtles. Sixteen live parrots, 11 bear products and eight antelope products (Saiga and Tibetan antelope) were also recorded.

Thirty-three “cat” advertisements were identified in the survey including cat bone bracelets; clouded and snow leopard teeth for sale; tiger bone carvings, teeth and claws. In addition, four advertisements for tiger bone wine were recorded on a forum on Baidu Tieba (Bar) that has been reopened after being shut down by the company, following previous IFAW investigations. Tiger product sales in general, however, remain low due to increased law enforcement. Ongoing and effective enforcement on new sites such as Baidu Tieba (Bar) is needed to ensure such “bars” remain closed.

© IFAW

New platforms and methods of communication enable wildlife trade

This investigation reveals a new trend in China which demonstrates a shift away from selling wildlife products via online marketplaces to more private online forums and social media platforms, such as Baidu Tieba (Bar), WeChat and QQ Group. This suggests that enforcement has positively impacted the open market while also exposing the significant challenges for future regulation.

IFAW has been monitoring Baidu Tieba (Bar), an online public forum provided by the Chinese search engine company Baidu Tieba (Bar), for several years. In March 2012, after lobbying by IFAW highlighting potential violations of wildlife-related trade laws and regulations, the platform shut down 13 “bars” or forums on the site and removed advertisements from another 11. However, our 2014 investigation reveals that Baidu Tieba (Bar) is now responsible for 55 per cent of trade in this survey and that three “bars” that had been shut down are once again in operation, attracting sellers with items of dubious legality, including an ivory carving “bar”, a rhinoceros horn “bar” and a tiger-bone wine “bar”.

Wildlife “bars”

Baidu Tieba (Bar) has a facility that enables registered online shoppers and traders to customise the site and create their own “bar” which highlights items that are being sold under a category. IFAW investigators looked at “bars” that were set up to trade in wildlife parts and products.

In addition to the ones monitored by IFAW during this survey, investigators identified more than 20 other “bars” offering the sale of endangered wildlife. In addition, most of the recorded advertisements offered more than one item under a single posting. IFAW found that almost 90 per cent of advertisements that contained more than 10 or more separate products in the posting were listed on Baidu Tieba (Bar).

The rise in sales on Baidu Tieba (Bar) corresponds with a reduction in trade over online marketplaces in China, following the concerted campaign to implement online marketplace policies banning the trade in wildlife coupled with effective enforcement.

Social media

A further significant development in this Chinese investigation is the use of social media as a main contact method between sellers and buyers. Of the 2,106 total sales, 1,355 of buyers left “QQ” or “WeChat” handles, similar to twitter handles, as the main way to make contact. WeChat (often referred to as the Chinese Twitter) and QQ are instant messaging software services that allow users to share text, photos and videos, with millions of users worldwide. Only 22 per cent of sellers in this survey provided phone numbers as a contact method.

Applications such as WeChat enable convenient and efficient private communication for sellers. Such new communication channels make monitoring and tracking sales of wildlife items more challenging and it is important that Chinese enforcement agencies and social media platforms keep one step ahead of this emerging trend to prevent criminals avoiding detection.

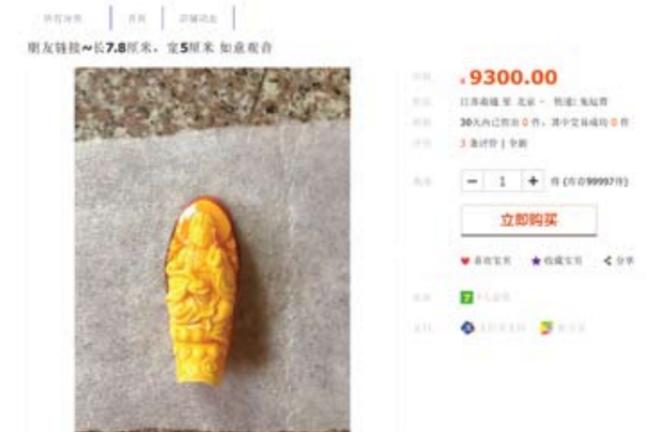
© David Hughes | Dreamstime.com



Snow leopard

A further significant development in this Chinese investigation is the use of social media as a main contact method between sellers and buyers.

The screen grab below, taken from a Chinese website, is an example of a rising trend for decorative carvings and polished skulls of the helmeted hornbill, evident in the 83 items recorded of this endangered bird.



France



French investigators recorded 1,192 online advertisements on 17 websites, of which over one-third offered ivory or suspected ivory for sale.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **1192**

VALUE IN EUROS **€984,100**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$1,354,900**



African elephant

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	783
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	409
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	1653
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	380

French websites offered 1,653 items for sale, of which 57 per cent were for live animals and 43 per cent for wildlife products.

Of live specimens, exotic birds were the most common animals for sale including macaws and Amazon parrots. Live tortoises were the third most common animals for sale with 270 advertisements for live tortoises recorded – mainly Hermann's, Greek and Marginated species – the tortoises most commonly captive-bred in Europe.

Three sites dominate the trade in France that was recorded in this investigation: leboncoin.fr with 346 advertisements, naturabuy.fr with 336 advertisements and marche.fr with 185. Sales of protected or endangered animal and plant species are banned by leboncoin.fr, yet such species are sold on this site. The site naturabuy.fr also bans the sale of species whose import, export, sale or possession are banned or controlled on French territory. However, in practice numerous such species are sold on the naturabuy.fr website. Five other sites hosted over 30 wildlife advertisements during the course of the survey. Supporting documentation asserting the legality of the advertisements was only recorded in five cases.

Naturabuy.fr – a leading site for ivory traders

As in 2008's *Killing with Keystrokes* investigation, ivory and now suspected ivory represents a large proportion of wildlife products for sale as well as the largest overall category of advertisements.

The ban on ivory sales by ebay.fr has had a clear impact in France. While ebay.fr was the main site for ivory advertisements (with 192 listings) in the 2008 survey in France, in 2014 investigators only found seven advertisements for suspected ivory jewellery and statues from just two sellers on the site, although both used code words.

© IFAW/C. Cullen

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Ivory and suspected ivory		446	446	37.42%
Exotic birds	319	1	320	26.85%
Turtles and tortoises	270	9	279	23.41%
Cats		44	44	3.69%
Snakes	85		85	7.13%
Birds of prey	1	2	3	0.25%
Wolves		3	3	0.25%
Owls	1	2	3	0.25%
Whales		2	2	0.17%
Sharks		1	1	0.08%
Sturgeons		1	1	0.08%
Amphibians	1		1	0.08%
Primates	1		1	0.08%
Crocodiles and alligators	1		1	0.08%
Rhinoceros		1	1	0.08%
Elephants (not ivory)		1	1	0.08%
TOTAL	679	513	1192	100.00%

In 2014, naturabuy.fr, a site specialising in hunting and fishing accessories is now the leading site for sales of ivory and suspected ivory, with 296 advertisements (two-thirds of total ivory sales) posted during of the survey. In the earlier survey, 2008 investigators recorded only 12 CITES Appendix I (Annex A) advertisements on the site. It is clear that a consistent approach needs to be taken to closing down ivory trade in order to stop the displacement of the traders who seek to profit from ivory sales.

A new site, liveneg.com, monitored by IFAW since 2011, also hosted 10 advertisements for ivory statues, five of which were offered to worldwide buyers from a seller in China.

Five ivory sellers each posted more than 10 advertisements during the course of the survey, with one naturabuy.fr seller posting 46 for ivory tusks, statues and jewellery.

Unworked ivory tusks are frequently sold online on French websites and are very rarely accompanied by the necessary CITES documentation to ensure their legal sale.

An advertisement for an ancient rhinoceros horn was recorded on vivastreet.com with a price tag of €5,000,000. The wording of the advertisement was vague but suggested that the seller may want to buy ancient rhinoceros horn; the willingness to attach such a huge price tag to this offer is worrying. Given the exorbitant price, this advertisement was excluded from the total monetary value found in France.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

171 advertisements have been shared with French enforcement agencies for further investigation.

© Nuwat Chanthachanthuek | Dreamstime.com



Red-tailed African grey parrot

The screen grab below, taken from a French website, shows an advertisement for two unworked ivory tusks originating from the Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of Congo).



Germany



Investigators in Germany recorded 1,666 online advertisements on 13 websites with almost 5,000 wildlife specimens for sale.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **1666**

VALUE IN EUROS **€496,832**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$684,033**



Greek tortoise

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	1448
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	218
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	4837
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	151

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.quoka.de	397	23.83%
www.kleinanzeigen.ebay.de	286	17.17%
www.dhd24.com	234	14.05%
www.terrarium.com	144	8.64%
www.markt.de	138	8.28%
www.deine-tierwelt.de	137	8.22%
www.kalaydo.de	125	7.50%
www.vogelboerse.org	78	4.68%
www.ebay.de	60	3.60%
www.tiere.de	60	3.60%
www.exoticanimal.de	5	0.30%
www.hood.de	1	0.06%
www.auvito.de	1	0.06%
TOTAL	1666	100.00%

A large proportion of advertisements (1,448) were for Appendix I (Annex A) listed species.

Three sites had a significant amount of wildlife specimens for sale: quoka.de with 397 advertisements, kleinanzeigen.ebay.de with 286 and dhd24.com with 234. The latter two have strict policies banning the sale of protected animal species.

Two other websites studied in this survey - haustieranzeigen.de and auxion.de - were not included in the summary table because no relevant wildlife advertisements were found.

The figures would suggest a dramatic increase in trade since IFAW's 2008 investigation *Killing with Keystrokes*. However, it is important to note that IFAW's expertise and its engagement with enforcers has grown since 2008 and that 2014's investigation had a broader scope in terms of the number of species monitored. These figures are therefore likely to reflect our increased ability to identify trade over the internet.

Live animal trade in Germany

Turtles and tortoises represent 70 per cent of trade and are responsible for the high percentage of live animals (93 per cent) found in this survey, as opposed to wildlife products. However, of these, 1,090 advertisements recorded are for Hermann's, Greek and Marginated tortoises - species commonly captive-bred throughout Europe and offered legally in large numbers to German buyers. Online offers for adults of the species often included a scan of a CITES certificate, whilst advertisements for younger animals often referenced that they were captive-bred.

Much less common species included in this category, however, included five advertisements for the critically endangered Egyptian tortoise with no reference to legality.

Of the remaining 576 advertisements recorded, live exotic birds were the most common item for sale, followed by snakes (including an emerald tree boa that the seller stated had been wild-caught) and a large number of poison dart frogs.

© Samuel Brown | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total	Per cent
Turtles and tortoises	1171	8	1179	70.77%
Exotic birds	124	1	125	7.50%
Snakes	112		112	6.72%
Frogs	103		103	6.18%
Cats		32	32	1.92%
Ivory and suspected ivory		27	27	1.62%
Owls	11	11	22	1.32%
Birds of prey	2	19	21	1.26%
Lizards	14		14	0.84%
Giant clams	8	3	11	0.66%
Wolves		8	8	0.48%
Crocodiles and alligators	2	2	4	0.24%
Bears		3	3	0.18%
Newts	1		1	0.06%
Elephants (non-ivory)		1	1	0.06%
Primates	1		1	0.06%
Stony corals	1		1	0.06%
Seahorses	1		1	0.06%
TOTAL	1551	115	1666	100.00%

Excluding the commonly-bred tortoise species, 307 advertisements out of 576 noted that their items were "antique" or that "documentation was available", thereby implying that their items were legally for sale; however, only 21 sellers provided any evidence or documentation of that legality.

The success of ivory sale bans in Germany

The success of eBay's global ivory sales ban in Germany, as well as similar bans implemented on other German websites after liaison between IFAW and site providers, is evident in the low numbers of ivory found on those sites. Previous "snapshot" surveys and the 2014 investigation show that bans on eBay.de, markt.de, hood.de and quoka.de are being well enforced.

New species at threat from the German market

Two other non CITES-listed species were recorded in advertisements in this survey, but not included in the main data.

The turquoise dwarf gecko is endemic to just a 20 square kilometre terrain in Tanzania but its distinct features means populations are coming under huge pressure, with specimens taken from the wild for the pet trade. Reports that live specimens are being traded on the German market are supported by the 32 advertisements with 68 animals for sale found in this survey.

The common snapping turtle was another species found in five advertisements offering 36 animals for sale despite German legislation making it illegal to own, buy, sell or breed these animals due to the risk of released animals disturbing the ecosystems. The snapping turtle is already an invasive species in parts of Europe.



The screen grab above, taken from a German website, shows two blue-winged macaws for sale. Live birds were the second most commonly recorded item for sale in Germany.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

93 advertisements were shared with German enforcement agencies for further investigation.



Turquoise dwarf gecko

© Fischer0182 | Dreamstime.com

The Netherlands



During the course of this survey, Dutch investigators recorded 607 advertisements offering 1,392 wildlife specimens for sale, with live frogs making up one-quarter of advertisements recorded in this survey.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **607**

VALUE IN EUROS **€72,072**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$106,112**



Phantasmal poison frog

Investigators recorded a higher number of CITES Appendix II (Annex B) species for sale (61 per cent of advertisements) than Appendix I (Annex A) species for sale (39 per cent) on 11 websites.

Live exotic frogs, lizards and birds for sale

Live animals made up 64 per cent of sales with frogs featuring in 162 advertisements. The most common species for sale were dyeing dart frogs, green and black poison dart frogs, phantasmal poison frogs and strawberry poison dart frogs. One seller offered 50 each of Anthony's poison arrow and Ranitomeya amazonica poison dart frogs in just two advertisements, with no reference made to the origin or legality of the animals.

Lizards were the second most common live animals for sale with 108 advertisements including multiple offerings for sale of Madagascar giant day geckos, panther chameleons, veiled chameleons, spiny-tailed monitor lizards and common iguanas.

Exotic birds including parrots, hornbills and toucans were the third most frequently recorded species for sale in 66 advertisements.

Amphibian sales were responsible for the large numbers of multiple sellers noted - those with more than one item for sale. Four sellers offered more than 30 animals in total during the course of the survey.

Only 16 advertisements in the survey made any reference to the legality of their items and none of these provided supporting documentation. Two advertisements selling red-footed tortoises stated that they had been wild caught.

Dutch online marketplaces

The largest website for the trade in the Netherlands that was recorded in this investigation was marktplaats.nl, an eBay subsidiary, with 387 advertisements recorded for a wide range of CITES I and II specimens (both live animals and parts and products), as well as protected native bird species despite a strict site policy prohibiting offers to sell or buy protected species.

© Egon Zitter | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Frogs	162		162	26.69%
Lizards	107	1	108	17.79%
Exotic birds	66	3	69	11.37%
Birds of prey	2	63	65	10.71%
Turtles and tortoises	32	18	50	8.24%
Ivory and suspected ivory		27	27	4.45%
Owls	3	21	24	3.95%
Cats		14	14	2.31%
Seahorses		14	14	2.31%
Sharks		14	14	2.31%
Snakes	10	3	13	2.14%
Crocodiles and alligators		11	11	1.81%
Wolves		8	8	1.32%
Bears		6	6	0.99%
Rheas	3	3	6	0.99%
Hippopotamus		4	4	0.66%
Finches	3		3	0.49%
Giant clams		3	3	0.49%
Whales		3	3	0.49%
Primates		2	2	0.33%
Walrus		1	1	0.16%
Total	388	219	607	100.00%

The websites vogelarena.com, which hosted 46 advertisements and tweedehands.net with 30 advertisements during the survey have no policies at all for wildlife trade on their site.

IFAW monitored eBay.nl during this survey, and no relevant advertisements were found.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

No official intelligence logs were submitted to law enforcement agencies, however topline results were passed on to enforcers for information purposes.

Songbird trade in the Netherlands

Numerous criminal and NGO investigations (e.g. the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds) have shown a persistent illegal trade in wild-caught native birds in the Netherlands. These include songbird species which are not listed in the CITES appendices. With this in mind, in addition to recording CITES-listed species IFAW investigators also looked at a number of native songbird species for sale.

Although it was not possible to ascertain the legality of any birds in these advertisements, IFAW recorded 64 non-CITES birds, mainly for sale on vogelmarkt.net and marktplaats.nl, including species such as the black-headed siskin, common redpolls, Eurasian bullfinches, goldfinches, song thrushes and yellow-fronted canaries.

© Amardaols | Dreamstime.com



Madagascar giant day gecko

Live animals made up 64 per cent of sales with frogs featuring in 162 advertisements.

The screen grab below, taken from a Dutch website, shows an advertisement for a pair of Fiji iguanas from Austria.

Koppeltje fiji leguanen

Home > Dieren en Toebehoren > Reptielen en Amfibieën > Advertentie

N.o.t.k.

2 jaar actief op Marktplaats
Melsele, Buitenland

Kenmerken

Soort: Hagedis
Eigenschappen: Tam

Beschrijving

Beste
Ik bied hier mijn prachtig koppel fiji leguanen aan omdat ik er jammer genoeg niet genoeg tijd voor heb. Ze komen van Oostenrijk, hebben reeds meerdere malen bevruchte eieren gelegd, zijn volledig in orde en zijn altijd goed verzorgd geweest.

Voor het koppelje: 2800 euro.

Middle East



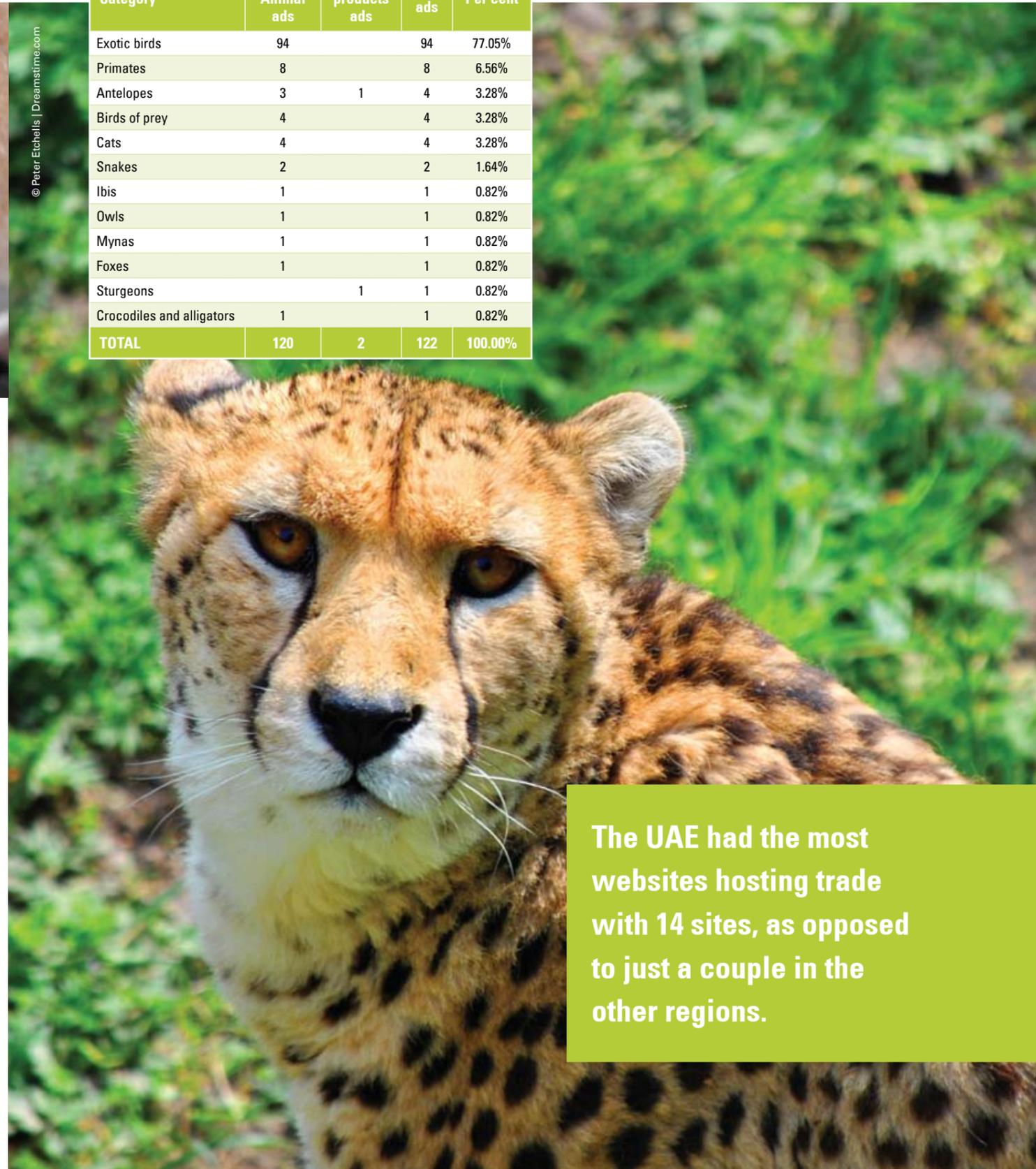
TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS			144
VALUE IN:	LOCAL CURRENCY	US DOLLARS	
UAE	AED 1,484,600	\$ 404,112	
BAHRAIN	BD 5,340	\$ 14,094	
KUWAIT	KWD 46,770	\$ 165,833	
QATAR	QAR 1,140,000	\$ 312,821	
TOTAL			\$896,860



Sunda slow loris

United Arab Emirates

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	94		94	77.05%
Primates	8		8	6.56%
Antelopes	3	1	4	3.28%
Birds of prey	4		4	3.28%
Cats	4		4	3.28%
Snakes	2		2	1.64%
Ibis	1		1	0.82%
Owls	1		1	0.82%
Mynas	1		1	0.82%
Foxes	1		1	0.82%
Sturgeons		1	1	0.82%
Crocodiles and alligators	1		1	0.82%
TOTAL	120	2	122	100.00%



The UAE had the most websites hosting trade with 14 sites, as opposed to just a couple in the other regions.

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© Jurie Maree | Dreamstime.com



Scarlet ibis

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	46
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	98
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	245
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	N/A

Four countries were surveyed in the Middle East with a total of 144 advertisements offering 245 wildlife specimens of which the majority were recorded in the United Arab Emirates.

The UAE had the most websites hosting trade with 14 sites, as opposed to just a couple in the other regions.

The site hosting the largest amount of advertisements was souq.dubaimoon.com, with 85 advertisements representing 70 per cent of trade in the UAE that was recorded in this investigation. Additionally, halaluae.com in the UAE and mbahrain.net in Bahrain had 10 advertisements each for sale.

None of the advertisements recorded in the region made any reference to the legality of the items for sale and none of the websites surveyed had any policies on wildlife trade on their sites.

United Arab Emirates

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.souq.dubaimoon.com	85	69.67%
www.halaluae.com	10	8.20%
www.dubaiclassified.com	4	3.28%
www.soukanimal.com	3	2.46%
www.uaepetsad.com	3	2.46%
ww.ewbas.com	3	2.46%
www.foxuae.com	3	2.46%
www.ae.sogarab.com	2	1.64%
www.altowayya.com	2	1.64%
www.class4uae.com	2	1.64%
www.expatads.com	2	1.64%
www.uaefreesouq.com	1	0.82%
http://ae.gosellonline.com	1	0.82%
www.uaeshops.com	1	0.82%
TOTAL	122	100.00%

Middle East continued



Peregrine falcon

Bahrain

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.mbahrain.net	10	100.00%
TOTAL	10	100.00%

Kuwait

Website	Ads	Per cent
http://kw.opensooq.com	4	57.14%
www.soukanimal.com	3	42.86%
TOTAL	7	100.00%

Qatar

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.souqaldoha.com	4	80%
www.qatarcl.com	1	20%
TOTAL	5	100.00%

Live animals represent almost all trade in the region

Similar to previous IFAW surveys in the region, almost all advertisements were for live animals, a large percentage of which were for exotic birds (75 per cent of the total).

Cats and primates, featured in nine advertisements, were the second most common animal groups found for sale. Cats offered were mainly cheetahs and caracals, although one advert also offered leopards and tigers.

Primate advertisements offered a number of hamadryas baboons as well as chimpanzees and a slow loris.

More unusual species in trade recorded in the region included live antelope including Arabian oryx, rhinoceros and slender-horned gazelles. Such animals may be bought as pets, as investments or as breeding animals.

Almost 70 per cent of the advertisements recorded in this survey in the Middle East were for CITES Appendix II species.

© Peregrine | Dreamstime.com

Bahrain

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	9		9	90%
Primates	1		1	10%
TOTAL	10		10	100.00%

Kuwait

Category	Live Animals	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	3		3	42.86%
Birds of prey	2		2	28.57%
Cats	2		2	28.57%
TOTAL	7		7	100.00%

Qatar

Category	Live Animals	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Cats	3		3	60%
Exotic birds	2		2	40%
TOTAL	5		5	100.00%

One common occurrence across all regions studied was the number of “scam” advertisements posted for live animals appearing on local classified websites. Noted suspected scams or fraudulent advertisements, which attempt to dupe buyers into ordering items that do not actually exist, were consistent in offering large numbers of animals and/or species for low prices with contact details provided on different websites around the world all claiming to be based in different countries. These advertisements may well be of interest to police investigating online fraud.

Investigators recorded an additional 704 advertisements for endangered wildlife specimens on Middle East websites which, upon further investigation, appeared likely to be fraudulent advertisements and were excluded from the results.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

122 advertisements from the United Arab Emirates have been shared with the UAE Ministry of Environment.

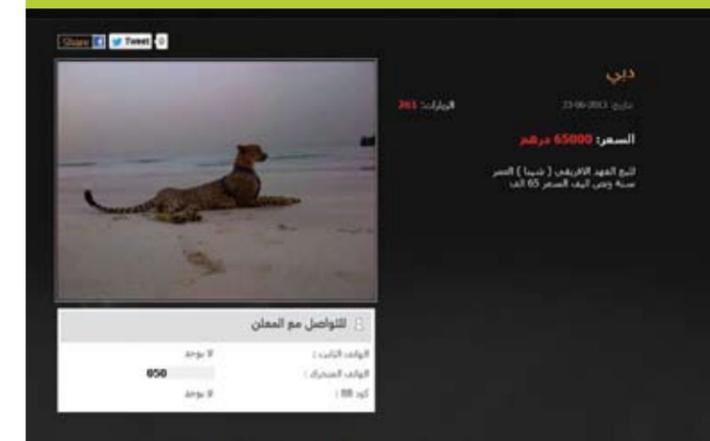
© Vincentstomas | Dreamstime.com



Hamadryas baboon

Almost all advertisements were for live animals, a large percentage of which were for exotic birds (75 per cent of the total).

The screen grab below, taken from an UAE website shows a live cheetah for sale by a Dubai seller for almost US\$18,000.



Kazakhstan



Similar to Russia, Kazakhstan websites were dominated by the live animal trade, a large proportion of which were for CITES Appendix II listed-species.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **55**

VALUE IN KAZAKHSTANI TENGE KZT **49,532,614**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$268,736**



Quince monitor

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	51		51	92.73%
Lizards	2		2	3.64%
Turtles and tortoises	2		2	3.64%
Total	55	0	55	100.00%



© Photosaurus | Dreamstime.com

© Ivanka Blazkova | Dreamstime.com

Red-tailed African grey parrot

All identified advertisements were for live animals, 92 per cent of which were exotic birds.

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	12
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	43
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	66
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	N/A

Investigators only monitored Russian language sections of websites studied.

All identified advertisements were for live animals, 92 per cent of which were exotic birds, with a wide range of Amazon parrots, macaws and cockatoos for sale.

Two advertisements for Bengal and Quince monitor lizards provided advance warning that the seller would be shipping batches of animals from Indonesia and that animals ordered in advance and without quarantine would be cheaper, suggesting that the animals were not coming in to the country through legal means.

The main site for sales in Kazakhstan - hosting 58 per cent of advertisements recorded in this survey - was slando.kz, a situation similar to that in Ukraine, where slando.ua was also the most dominant site for trade recorded in this survey. An additional 19 advertisements were found on 38popugaev.net. All advertisements on both sites were for exotic birds.

The site slando.kz bans the sale of wildlife on Kazakhstan's "Red Book" of endangered species, many of which are also CITES-listed, while 38pougaev.net has no on-site policy on trade.

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.slando.kz	32	58.18%
www.38popugaev.net	19	34.55%
www.olx.kz	2	3.64%
http://wondersofnature.forum.com.kz	2	3.64%
TOTAL	55	100.00%

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

At this stage no listings have been submitted to Kazakhstan enforcement agencies.

Poland



Polish websites hosted 117 advertisements offering 180 wildlife specimens for sale during the course of this survey, with live animals making up 80 per cent of trade recorded.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **117**

VALUE IN POLISH ZLOTY **PLN 414,265**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$136,470**



Hermann's tortoise

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	86
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	31
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	180
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	N/A

Website	Ads	Per cent
http://alegratka.pl	39	33.33%
http://ptakiegzotyczne.net	20	17.09%
www.olx.pl	15	12.82%
www.terrarium.pl	9	7.69%
www.oglaszamy24.pl	9	7.69%
www.sprzedajemy.pl	6	5.13%
www.hiperogloszenia.pl	6	5.13%
www.polskastrefa.pl	4	3.42%
www.poluje.pl	3	2.56%
www.aukcjezwierzat.pl	2	1.71%
www.twojafauna.pl	2	1.71%
www.allegro.pl	2	1.71%
TOTAL	117	100.00%

The investigation in Poland counted Appendix I (Annex A) species with the addition of primates and sturgeon from Appendix II (Annex B) species. Appendix I listed species accounted for 73 per cent of advertisements recorded.

The investigation in Poland was carried out by CEEweb for Biodiversity which has been monitoring ecommerce in wildlife in Poland and other Central Eastern European countries since 2006, looking at trade in all annexes of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations.

CEEweb for Biodiversity's previous investigations revealed a rapidly growing online trade in the region. Based on those investigations, CEEweb for Biodiversity concluded that around one-quarter of offerings found on the internet in Central Eastern Europe are likely to be illegal⁸. Poland, in particular, was found to be a leading country in terms of volume of trade⁹. Although numbers of advertisements recorded in this survey may appear low compared to other European countries, it should be noted that this investigation focused on CITES Appendix I species (apart from primates) whereas previous CEEweb investigations found that the overwhelming majority of offers on Polish website were for specimens of Appendix II species.

Advertisements in 2014 were recorded on 12 websites, a clear majority of which had no or vague policies on the sale of wildlife on their sites. It is clear that one site – oxl.pl (which changed its name from tablica.pl halfway through the investigation) – which bans the sale of animal specimens of the species on the annexes of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and which hosted 15 advertisements during the course of the survey, could better enforce its policy.

In contrast to olx.pl, both the biggest Polish auction service allegro.pl and the site aukcjezwierzat.pl, which also bans the trade in specimens of EU Annexes species appear to more strictly implement their policies, with only two advertisements recorded on each during this survey.

Of the 77 advertisements claiming to be trading their items legally, only one seller offered supporting proof.

© Muhanikoletta | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Turtles and tortoises	36		36	30.77%
Primates	27		27	23.08%
Exotic birds	17		17	14.53%
Wolves	1	12	13	11.11%
Fish	9		9	7.69%
Birds of prey		4	4	3.42%
Ivory and suspected ivory		3	3	2.56%
Owls	2		2	1.71%
Bears		2	2	1.71%
Cats	1	1	2	1.71%
Sturgeons	1	1	2	1.71%
Total	94	23	117	100.00%

Live animals for sale

The main category of species for sale was tortoises and turtles (mainly Hermann's tortoises), followed by primates and then parrots – all of which were for live animals. Most of the many offers for live primates were for CITES Appendix II (Annex B) species common in the pet trade. As well as offers for common marmosets, investigators also noted more unusual species such as Barbary apes, savanna and patas monkeys for sale.

Among offers for sale of live exotic birds, investigators recorded examples of species highly-prized by collectors including yellow-head parrots, lilac-crowned Amazons, red-fronted macaw, horned parakeets and a Bali starling. All are birds uncommon in trade in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe.

Wildlife products on offer

Online sellers appear to be addressing a market for wolf fur coats in the country, with eight coats noted for sale out of a total of 12 grey wolf product advertisements recorded in this survey. Other examples were excluded due to their low price and appearance, indicating that they were not genuine wolf fur.

Other wildlife products offered for sale were four birds of prey, three ivory or suspected ivory items and two bear products including a brown bear rug. The birds identified, wolves and brown bears are strictly protected under Polish national legislation.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

15 advertisements were shared with Polish enforcement agencies for further investigation.

⁸ <http://www.ceeweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/e-CEETES.pdf>

⁹ http://www.ceeweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/E-commerce_2013_brochure.pdf

© Kjerst Joergensen | Dreamstime.com



Common marmoset

The main category of live animal species for sale was tortoises and turtles – mainly Hermann's tortoises.

The screen grab below, taken from a Polish website, shows for sale the unusual pancake tortoise at PLN 890 (US\$293).



Witam posiadam na sprzedaż żółwia szaczelinowego jest to bardzo ładny gatunek jest bardzo ładny ,zdrowy i posiada wszystkie dokumenty do rejestracji

Russia



Russian websites hosted 925 online advertisements offering 2,596 wildlife specimens for sale with 75 per cent of these being for live animals.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **925**

VALUE IN RUSSIAN ROUBLES RUB **69,521,841**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS \$ **1,953,060**



Snow leopard

Live animal advertisements in this investigation included species on the edge of extinction such as tigers, orangutans, gorillas, cloud and snow leopards as well as polar bears and birds of prey.

A doubling in ivory sales since 2008

Over a third of species identified were CITES Appendix I – listed. This represents more than double the 144 Appendix I advertisements identified on Russian websites in 2008's *Killing with Keystrokes* compared to 358 in 2014.

This can be partly explained through the broader scope of species monitored in this survey as well as an increasing number of internet users in the country. However, the figures also reveal twice the number of ivory and suspected ivory advertisements identified in this survey than the amount found in 2008. In addition, investigators noted the domination of avito.ru in this survey as an online sales platform, compared with very few advertisements found on the site in 2008.

© Fosna13 | Dreamstime.com



Bornean orangutan

© Seread | Dreamstime.com

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	293		293	31.68%
Cats	159	38	197	21.30%
Primates	117		117	12.65%
Ivory and suspected ivory		81	81	8.76%
Crocodiles and alligators	5	46	51	5.51%
Antelopes		35	35	3.78%
Turtles and tortoises	30	2	32	3.46%
Owls	31		31	3.35%
Bears	2	19	21	2.27%
Snakes	19		19	2.05%
Birds of prey	15		15	1.62%
Lizards	10		10	1.08%
Conches		7	7	0.76%
Red panda	6		6	0.65%
Frogs	2		2	0.22%
Newts	2		2	0.22%
Rhinoceros		1	1	0.11%
Giant clams		1	1	0.11%
Other	4		4	0.43%
TOTAL	695	230	925	100.00%

Live exotic birds, cats and primates for sale

Live exotic birds were the most commonly offered species for sale in Russia, representing almost one-third of advertisements recorded in this survey, with a large number of orange-winged Amazons, blue-and-yellow macaws and sulphur-crested cockatoos featuring in advertisements.

The second most common live species found in advertisements were cats with 159 live animals offered for sale, including 54 advertisements for live tigers.

Many advertisements offered a wide range of live cats for sale in each posting including tigers, panthers, pumas, jaguars, ocelots and other species available to order. Another advertisement offered "large predatory felines for zoos, private nurseries and circus artists". Live primates were the third most common category of animals for sale, featuring in multiple advertisements offering a whole range of species.

Primates were the third most common species of live animals found for sale in this survey including marmosets, mangabeys, chimpanzees and most shockingly, 13 advertisements for live orangutans.

Live snakes, turtles, birds of prey (mainly peregrine and saker falcons) and two advertisements for Asian black bears were also found in the survey.

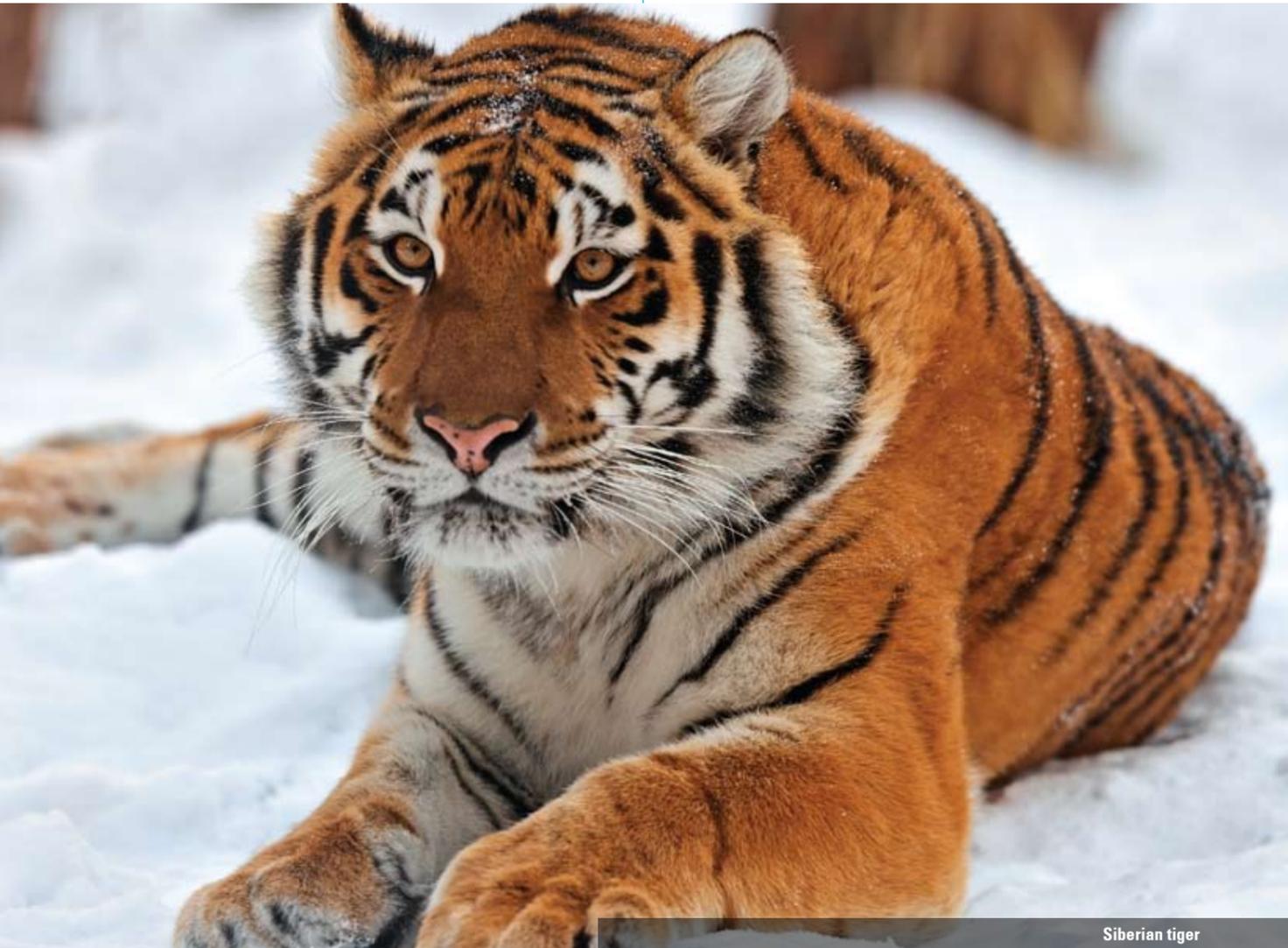
© Eric Gevaert | Dreamstime.com



Blue-and-yellow macaws

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	358
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	567
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	2569
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	144

Live exotic birds were the most commonly offered species for sale in Russia, representing almost one-third of advertisements recorded in this survey.

Russia continued

Siberian tiger

Many advertisements offered a wide range of live cats for sale in each posting including tigers, panthers, pumas, jaguars, ocelots and other species.

Ivory, suspected ivory and other products for sale

Ivory and suspected ivory was the most common item found in online sales of wildlife parts and products, featuring in 81 advertisements for ornaments, jewellery and antique pieces. One seller posted 23 advertisements during the six week period.

Investigators recorded 38 cat parts and products (meaning body parts or products made from dead animals) including 11 ocelot coats and skins, eight leopard skins, seven tiger products (including tiger teeth, claws, skins and two traditional Chinese medicine tiger bone items) and two snow leopard skins.

Investigators also noted 19 bear products for sale, all polar bears. Only two of the advertisements specified that the bears originated outside of Russia.

Thirty-five Saiga antelope products were identified, mainly horns for sale as trophies.

© Eduard Kyslynsky | Dreamstime.com

Russian marketplaces and sellers

Similar to the 2008 survey, investigators found wildlife advertisements spread out across a huge number of Russia sites, making the job of monitoring wildlife trade online in the country even more difficult. However, in 2014 one site dominates trade: avito.ru, with 445 advertisements posted over the six-week investigation, and is responsible for almost 50 per cent of trade in this survey.

None of the sites monitored had policies restricting CITES - listed species on their sites, although several - including avito.ru - prohibit sale of "Russian Red Book" (or Red-listed) endangered species that exist within the region including tigers, polar bears and falcons amongst others. Many are species found on the CITES appendices. Enforcement of these policies is clearly very weak.

Several websites and sellers claimed to represent "nurseries" breeding their own animals, a claim impossible to verify if genuine. Others referenced the import of animals from Europe, the US and Australia offering a host of endangered species.

A noticeable trend in Russia was the posting of multiple advertisements across many websites by the same repeat seller companies, generally focusing on one range of species but highlighting different animals in the title of each advertisement.

One company posted a large number of advertisements on Russian websites offering chimpanzees, orangutans, tigers, leopards, jaguars and pumas for sale. While some of these advertisements were posted under the company name, others were posted by two separate individuals, but all provided the same telephone and email details. The website of the company makes reference to being the only legal breeding centre in Russia, a claim cast in doubt by no reference on the site to CITES permissions or other documentation for the animals offered for sale.

© Panurangjan | Dreamstime.com



Sulphur-crested cockatoo

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

Given the lack of wildlife trade legislation in Russia, no listings have been provided to Russian enforcement agencies.

The screen grab below, taken from a Russian website, shows an advertisement for saiga antelope horns, one of 35 antelope products recorded in the country.



A noticeable trend in Russia was the posting of multiple advertisements across many websites by the same repeat seller companies.

Ukraine



Ukraine investigators recorded 1,071 advertisements in both the Russian and Ukrainian languages, 80 per cent of which were for live animals including parrots, primates and endangered pheasants.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **1071**

VALUE IN UKRAINIAN HRYVNIA UAH **16,668,130**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$1,462,930**



Cotton-top tamarin

A thriving market for live birds, primates and cats

One-third of advertisements recorded in Ukraine were for exotic birds including 39 CITES Appendix I scarlet macaws as well as a large number of salmon-crested and yellow-crested cockatoos.

A further 20 per cent of advertisements were for live primates including 41 greater slow lorises, 34 cotton-top tamarins, 33 pygmy slow lorises and six chimpanzees.

Investigators also recorded advertisements for 52 live cats, including 24 caracal, 17 ocelots and two tigers as well as advertisements for 14 live Nile crocodiles and two for Asian black bears.

The most dominant website for sales was slando.ua, with 401 advertisements posted during the course of the survey for a wide range of live animals and ivory products. The slando.ua website bans the sale of wildlife on Ukraine's "Red Book" of endangered species.



Mikado pheasant

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Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Exotic birds	366		366	34.17%
Primates	219		219	20.45%
Ivory and suspected ivory		190	190	17.74%
Pheasants	128	1	129	12.04%
Cats	52	3	55	5.14%
Cranes	23		23	2.15%
Birds of prey	16		16	1.49%
Crocodiles and alligators	18		18	1.68%
Otters		13	13	1.21%
Snakes	8		8	0.75%
Bears	2	6	8	0.75%
Turtles and tortoises	7		7	0.65%
Pelicans	5		5	0.47%
Conches		4	4	0.37%
Geese	3		3	0.28%
Whales		2	2	0.19%
Bustards	2		2	0.19%
Wallabies	1		1	0.09%
Penguin	1		1	0.09%
Wolves	1		2	0.09%
Total	852	219	1071	100.00%

Two other significant sites were zoorinok.com.ua and zoozoo.com.ua, both with over 100 advertisements each. Like the majority of online marketplaces monitored in this survey, neither has a policy regarding wildlife trade on their sites. An additional six websites hosted over 30 advertisements each over the course of the survey.

Ivory and suspected ivory dominates wildlife products for sale

The great majority of wildlife parts and products advertisements – 190 in all – recorded in Ukraine offered worked ivory and suspected ivory for sale in the form of sculptures, jewellery and beads.

In addition 13 stuffed European otter and otter fur products were also identified.

Large-scale traders

Approximately 76 sellers had more than one item for sale with 15 sellers posting more than 10 advertisements during the six-week investigation. This included one seller who posted 112 advertisements for live primates, birds and reptiles. Another posted 42 advertisements for CITES Appendix I live primates and one-third posted 24 advertisements for ivory beads and jewellery.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

No advertisements have been shared with Ukrainian enforcement agencies, given policing priorities in the current political climate in Ukraine.

Investigators recorded a number of CITES Appendix I live birds in Ukraine that were not found for sale in any other country in this survey.

These included 23 cranes (including Japanese, Siberian, White-naped and Whooping cranes), five Dalmatian pelicans, three Hawaiian geese, a Great Indian and a Houbara bustard, and one Humboldt penguin.

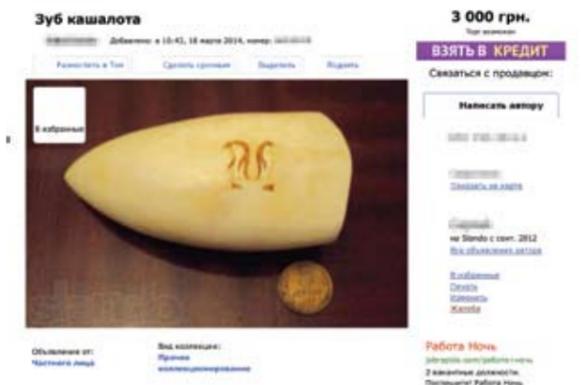
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Scarlet macaw

One-third of advertisements recorded in Ukraine were for exotic birds, including scarlet macaws.

The screen grab below, taken from a Ukrainian website, shows for sale a sperm whale tooth.



United Kingdom



UK websites hosted 1,087 online advertisements during the 2014 survey, offering a total of 1,603 items for sale. Over two-thirds of these were for wildlife parts and products rather than live animals.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS **1087**

VALUE IN BRITISH POUNDS **£301,823**

VALUE IN US DOLLARS **\$500,948**



Asian elephant

Total CITES Appendix I online ads	1011
Total CITES Appendix II online ads	76
Total animals/products for sale in all ads	1603
Total CITES Appendix I listings in 2008's <i>Killing with Keystrokes</i> report	551

Website	Ads	Per cent
www.ebay.co.uk	674	62.01%
www.preloved.co.uk	147	13.52%
www.gumtree.com	109	10.03%
www.birdtrader.co.uk	71	6.53%
www.reptileforums.co.uk	24	2.21%
www.freeads.co.uk	15	1.38%
http://uk.ebid.net	15	1.38%
www.ukclassifieds.co.uk	8	0.74%
http://pets-classifieds.co.uk	8	0.74%
www.vivastreet.co.uk	6	0.55%
www.parrrot4sale.com	5	0.46%
www.ukfalcons.com	3	0.28%
www.cqout.com	2	0.18%
TOTAL	1087	100.00%

The majority of advertisements surveyed on the 13 websites monitored were for CITES Appendix I (Annex A) specimens (1,011 advertisements).

The number of Appendix I items recorded in this investigation has increased dramatically compared with IFAW's 2008 survey *Killing with Keystrokes*, although this can be partly explained by a broadening in the scope of live animals recorded. However, ivory and suspected ivory listings have increased from 279 advertisements in 2008 to 409 advertisements across all websites in 2014.

Out of the total advertisements, 855 or 79 per cent suggested some claim to legality - the highest percentage of any country in this survey, with most ivory sellers stating that their items for sale were antiques. However, only six advertisements found in the survey offered any supporting proof of origin/legality of a proposed sale.

The most dominant site for sales in the UK as recorded in this investigation is ebay.co.uk, although preloved.co.uk and gumtree.com (a subsidiary of eBay Inc.) also had significant amounts of trade, with 147 and 109 advertisements respectively. A new feature on preloved.co.uk since the 2008 investigation requires those selling live animals to state whether they have the correct permit to sell their items.

The UK was distinct for the number of sellers based overseas - out of the total - investigators identified 62 sellers located outside the EU who offered to ship items, mainly from the USA and China.

Ivory and suspected ivory makes up over a third of all advertisements investigated

Perhaps due to a historic demand for ivory in the UK, the UK investigation found ivory and suspected ivory advertisements represented 38 per cent of all advertisements recorded in this survey. Suspected ivory examples were identified by IFAW's expert investigator, who has over 20 years of experience of wildlife crime enforcement and is highly skilled at ivory identification.

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Other wildlife for sale in the UK

The second most common items for sale in this survey were turtles and tortoises, including 193 live animals, principally Hermann's, Greek and Marginated tortoises. Although there are many captive-bred specimens of Appendix I (Annex A) tortoises commonly found in the UK, many advertisements made no reference to necessary "Article 10" CITES permits required for a sale. Owls were the third most common items for sale in 159 advertisements.

The fourth most common items for sale were products from cat species, including leopard skin clothing and rugs, and tiger heads and claw brooches.

Category	Live Animal ads	Parts and products ads	Total ads	Per cent
Ivory and suspected ivory		409	409	37.63%
Turtles and tortoises	193	54	247	22.72%
Owls	61	98	159	14.63%
Cats	1	81	82	7.54%
Exotic birds	77		77	7.08%
Crocodiles and alligators		29	29	2.67%
Elephants (non-ivory)		23	23	2.12%
Primates	3	16	19	1.75%
Birds of prey	7	4	11	1.01%
Bears		9	9	0.83%
Sharks		8	8	0.74%
Rhinoceros		7	7	0.64%
Whales		3	3	0.28%
Lizards	2		2	0.18%
Snakes	1		1	0.09%
Otters		1	1	0.09%
Total	345	742	1087	100.00%

Although similar in size to the eBay German marketplace where few suspected ivory items were recorded in this survey, ebay.co.uk hosted 376 out of the total 409 suspected ivory items found on UK websites. Most examples on ebay.co.uk used code words which would appear to be a deliberate attempt by sellers to disguise the true nature of their sales and to circumvent eBay's ivory ban. This is likely due to the fact that ebay.co.uk has invested significant efforts in preventing ivory sales, such as restricting the use of certain keywords and euphemisms for ivory, making it more difficult for potential buyers to find these listings. While the number of potential ivory listings has increased since 2009, ebay.co.uk's measures have resulted in a lower number of successful transactions and overall bids on those items.

Other ivory and suspected ivory advertisements were found on uk.ebid.net, with 13 carvings and jewellery for sale, despite a more explicit site policy banning animal ivory having been put in place since the 2008 survey. None of the sellers on uk.ebid.net disguised the fact that they were selling ivory. Investigators found 12 other ivory advertisements on preloved.co.uk.

An additional 173 advertisements were identified as possible ivory on ebay.co.uk, but this was inconclusive so these were not included in the summary tables and charts.

A number of sellers on eBay had multiple items for sale, with one seller posting 58 ivory and suspected ivory items on the site over the six week investigation.

Advertisements provided to enforcement agencies

482 advertisements have been shared with UK enforcement agencies as intelligence.

Since 2008, ivory and suspected ivory listings on UK websites have risen by 47 per cent from 279 to 409.

The screen grab below, taken from a UK website, shows for sale a pair of elephant sculptures made from suspected ivory.



Highlighting other online investigations in 2014

In addition to this investigation, IFAW produced three reports in 2014 that highlighted the internet's role in facilitating trade in endangered wildlife in both Australia and New Zealand and how it supports the online sale of ivory in US auction houses.

Spotlight on the US

Bidding Against Survival; the Elephant Poaching Crisis and the Role of Auctions in the U.S. Ivory Market

Despite its strong commitment to international wildlife conservation, the United States remains near the top of the list of ivory consuming nations. Much of that trade is comprised of legal antiques, but each year smugglers also bring in a large amount of illicit ivory. With domestic markets that are largely ignored and unregulated, traffickers are able to "launder" recently-poached ivory by selling to unsuspecting retailers and consumers. IFAW wanted to see what rules govern real-world sales of these grisly totems. The resulting report, *Bidding Against Survival*, which required months of undercover investigation, internet data mining, and scrutiny of the US auction industry, shows that the current system does not include sensible precautions.

IFAW monitored online ivory auctions during the nine-week period from February 25 to April 29, 2014. Only a few auctioneers and galleries offering ivory for sale online posted information about shipping policies or existing ivory regulations. The two aggregator websites investigated, LiveAuctioneers.com and AuctionZip.com, had no educational materials or guidelines posted for selling or shipping ivory. Even in cases where websites included ivory notices, these were frequently tucked away on difficult to find pages. Data was gathered from 340 online auctions, posted by 223 auctioneers and galleries with online catalogues registered on LiveAuctioneers.com or AuctionZip.com. In total, there were 4,186 ivory and suspected ivory items offered for sale. Despite the large volume of ivory available, almost none of the businesses surveyed were able to provide any documentation on the provenance of their products.

Auction houses can meaningfully promote elephant conservation by reversing their course on sales. IFAW is now working with LiveAuctioneers.com to ensure that its platform plays a positive role in elephant protection.

Spotlight on Australia and New Zealand

Click to Delete

IFAW investigated the online trade in wildlife and wildlife parts and products in Australia and New Zealand in 2013. The methodology was similar but not identical to this investigation. The research focused on species found on CITES Appendix I and II.

In Australia the research uncovered a 266 per cent increase in the number of advertisements for endangered wildlife products when compared with similar research conducted in 2008. Most prohibited items were found on eBay Australia with further significant amounts on its subsidiary Gumtree Australia.

Both companies have policies banning the listing of endangered and protected species but some traders were apparently ignoring these bans or circumventing them by disguising their ivory items using words such as "faux ivory" or "ox bone".

The total value of advertisements recorded was AUS\$637,387 which is over 23 times higher than recorded in 2008.

The investigation found 282 advertisements for endangered species products which were prohibited from international sale. In total there were 165 likely ivory advertisements of which 145 were found on eBay Australia. After ivory, the second most common listing was for live birds (45 listings).

Acting on intelligence provided by IFAW in relation to this report the Department of the Environment executed two search warrants at the properties of a Sydney-based online trading company.

The department seized a number of carved ivory ornaments and jewellery with an estimated value of up to AUS\$80,000, along with vials containing other protected species.

In New Zealand the investigation recorded endangered species worth a total of NZ\$22,621 for sale.

The popular trademe.co.nz platform hosted all 20 wildlife advertisements found during the course of this investigation, including 17 suspected ivory figures and jewellery, one tiger claw and two marine turtle shells. Since the release of the report in New Zealand, trademe.co.nz has banned the sale of all ivory.

Despite its strong commitment to international wildlife conservation, the United States remains near the top of the list of ivory consuming nations.

Appendix I

CITES Resolution Conference 11.3 and Decisions 15.57 and 15.58

The Conference of the Parties, at its 15th meeting (Doha, 2010) amended Resolution 11.3 (Rev CoP15) to:

RECOMMEND that Parties:

- a) evaluate or develop their domestic measures to ensure that they are sufficient to address the challenges of controlling legal wildlife trade, investigating illegal wildlife trade and punishing the perpetrators, giving high priority to the offer for sale of specimens of species listed in Appendix I;
- b) establish, at the national level, a unit dedicated to investigating wildlife crime linked to the internet or incorporate wildlife trade issues into existing units that investigate or monitor computer or cyber-crime; and
- c) establish at the national level a mechanism to coordinate the monitoring of internet related wildlife trade and to provide for the timely sharing between designated contact points in CITES Management and Enforcement Authorities of information that results from these activities;

RECOMMEND further that Parties and INTERPOL:

- a) Submit information to the Secretariat on methodologies used by other agencies that may assist in the evaluation of mechanisms to regulate legal commerce of CITES-listed species via the internet;
- b) Ensure that sufficient resources are directed to the investigation and targeting of illegal internet-related trade in specimens of CITES-listed species;
- c) Use the data acquired during monitoring activities to establish strategies regarding enforcement, capacity building and public awareness; and
- d) consider ways in which funding may be provided for the establishment of a full-time position, dedicated to e-commerce aspects of wildlife crime, within the General Secretariat of INTERPOL. The responsibilities of such a position should include ensuring that all information or intelligence regarding e-commerce is consistently collected and disseminated to the relevant Enforcement Authorities designated by Parties

Decision 15.57

- a) Submit information to the CITES Secretariat on best practices and on websites adhering to codes of conduct for posting on the CITES website;
- b) Publish results of scientific research on correlations between use of the internet and the rate of wildlife crime, and share these results with the CITES Secretariat;
- c) Assess the extent of and trends in commerce of CITES-listed species via the internet and submit such information to the Secretariat for analysis; and
- d) submit information to the CITES Secretariat for analysis on any changes in trade routes and methods of shipment that have been observed as a result of increased use of the internet to promote trade in wildlife.

Decision 15.58 instructs the Secretariat to:

- a) Develop an internet portal on the CITES website to compile, publish and disseminate information submitted by Parties and stakeholders related to e-commerce of CITES-listed species; and
- b) Write to INTERPOL encouraging it to establish a secure interactive website or electronic forum containing information and intelligence regarding internet-related wildlife crime, capable of being updated in a "real-time" manner by authorised contributors.

Appendix II

Quantity of animal advertisements recorded in the course of the investigation.

IVORY	
Ivory and suspected ivory	3047
AMPHIBIANS	
Frogs	278
Newts	3
MAMMALS	
Cats	492
Primates	397
Rhinoceros	173
Bears	86
Antelopes	47
Wolves and foxes	38
Elephants (non-ivory)	27
Whales	19
Otters	14
Red pandas	6
Hippopotamuses	5
Pangolins	3
Walrus	1
Wallabies	1
BIRDS	
Parrots	1558
Owls	273
Birds of prey	151
Pheasants	129
Hornbills	86
Cranes	23
Finches and mynas	10
Rheas	8
Pelicans	5
Toucans	3
Geese	3
Bustards	2
Penguins	1
Hummingbirds	1
Ibises	1
MOLLUSCS	
Giant clams	15
Conches	11
CORAL	
Stony coral	1
REPTILES	
Turtles and tortoises	1967
Snakes	272
Lizards	139
Crocodiles and alligators	131
FISH	
Sharks	27
Seahorse	15
Asian arowana	9
Sturgeon	4
TOTAL	9482

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Picture list

Inside front cover

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page five

White rhinoceros
(*Ceratotherium simum*)

Page seven

Hermann's tortoise
(*Testudo hermanni*)

Page 11

Blue-and-yellow macaw
(*Ara ararauna*)

Page 12

Common iguana
(*Iguana iguana*)

Page 15

Hippopotamus
(*Hippopotamus amphibius*)

Page 19

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page 22

Tomato frog
(*Dyscophus antongilii*)

Page 25

Siberian tiger
(*Panthera tigris*)

Page 26

Polar bear
(*Ursus maritimus*)

Page 27

Scarlet macaw
(*Ara macao*)

Page 28 (top)

Madagascar tomato frog
(*Dyscophus antongilii*)

Page 28 (bottom)

Military macaws
(*Ara militaris*)

Page 29

Eurasian eagle owl
(*Bubo bubo*)

Page 30

Grizzly bear
(*Ursus arctos horribilis*)

Page 31 (top)

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page 31 (bottom)

Polar bear
(*Ursus maritimus*)

Page 32

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page 33

Black rhinoceros
(*Diceros bicornis*)

Page 34

Bengal tiger
(*Panthera tigris*)

Page 35

Snow leopard
(*Panthera uncia*)

Page 36

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page 37

Red-tailed African grey parrot
(*Psittacus erithacus erithacus*)

Page 38

Greek tortoise
(*Testudo graeca*)

Page 39

Turquoise dwarf gecko
(*Lygodactylus williamsi*)

Page 40

Phantasmal poison frog
(*Epipedobates tricolor*)

Page 41

Madagascar giant day gecko
(*Phelsuma grandis*)

Page 42 (top)

Sunda slow loris
(*Nycticebus coucang*)

Page 42 (bottom)

Scarlet ibis
(*Eudocimus ruber*)

Page 43

Cheetah
(*Acinonyx jubatus*)

Page 44

Peregrine falcon
(*Falco peregrinus*)

Page 45

Hamadryas baboon
(*Papio hamadryas*)

Page 46

Quince monitor
(*Varanus melinus*)

Page 47

Red-tailed African grey parrot
(*Psittacus erithacus erithacus*)

Page 48

Hermann's tortoise
(*Testudo hermanni*)

Page 49

Common marmoset
(*Callithrix jacchus*)

Page 50 (top)

Snow leopard
(*Panthera uncia*)

Page 50 (bottom)

Bornean orangutan
(*Pongo pygmaeus*)

Page 51

Blue-and-yellow macaw
(*Ara ararauna*)

Page 52

Siberian tiger
(*Panthera tigris*)

Page 53

Sulphur-crested cockatoo
(*Cacatua galerita*)

Page 54 (top)

Cotton-top tamarin
(*Saguinus oedipus*)

Page 54 (bottom)

Mikado pheasant
(*Syrnaticus mikado*)

Page 55

Scarlet macaw
(*Ara macao*)

Page 56

African elephant
(*Loxodonta africana*)

Page 61

Bornean orangutan
(*Pongo pygmaeus*)

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Founded in 1969, IFAW saves animals in crisis around the world. With projects in more than 40 countries, IFAW rescues individual animals, works to prevent cruelty to animals and advocates for the protection of wildlife and habitats.

For more information, visit [www ifaw.org](http://www.ifaw.org)

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