



Questions and Answers on the EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking

Brussels, 10 November 2022

What are the main differences between this Action Plan and the previous one?

Following consultations with the stakeholders involved, the new plan puts more focus on capacity-building along the entire enforcement chain. This includes training, data-sharing, as well as specialisation of police, judges, prosecutors, and other key enforcement actors.

It also includes new legal and policy tools to tighten and better enforce EU legislation related to wildlife trafficking. One key action will be to examine tightening EU regulations governing wildlife trade. Another will be to have stronger health focus to wildlife trade, applying the [One Health](#) approach. The plan also renews the EU's commitment to fight online wildlife trafficking, with the future adoption of the [Digital Services Act](#) expected to give enforcement actors the necessary tools to tackle wildlife crime online.

The new Action Plan will also lead to more transparency and cooperation with stakeholders, calling for stronger partnership of the EU and its Member States with non-governmental organisations, international organisations, and the private sector.

The revised plan was built based on consultations with many parties involved in the previous plan. The Commission collected views from academia, NGOs and individuals via an [open public consultation](#) and workshops, and from Member State experts and enforcement agents via the EU CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) [Expert](#) and [Enforcement](#) Groups. In addition, the European Parliament adopted a [Resolution](#) on wildlife trafficking and international wildlife trade, making a series of requests to strengthen the ambition of the EU action plan against wildlife trafficking.

Is the Action Plan the only EU tool to regulate wildlife trade?

The EU also has important legislation on these issues. Wildlife trade from, into and within the EU is regulated through a set of [Wildlife Trade Regulations](#) that implement the provisions of the [CITES](#) Convention. The EU [Nature Directives](#) prohibit the sale and transport of a number of strictly protected wild species in the EU. Wildlife trafficking is also included in the [revised Environmental Crime Directive](#).

What were the strengths and the weaknesses of the previous action plan?

The evaluation of the [2016 Action Plan](#) found that wildlife trafficking has become a bigger priority among a wide range of policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and stakeholders in the EU and worldwide. The Action Plan was found to be comprehensive and flexible, leading to increased enforcement measures, coordination and cooperation, and altogether supported the EU's fight against wildlife trafficking.

Although good progress has been made on most of the 32 actions in the Action Plan, the evaluation showed that the EU and Member States need to intensify their efforts to address emerging challenges.

These include:

- traded species and trading routes evolve over time
- the impact of wildlife trafficking on local communities,
- the connections between wildlife trade and the spread of zoonotic diseases,
- increasing online trade and related use of small-parcel services, and
- lack of capacity in many of the relevant agencies and authorities, worsened by a recent loss of

revenues from wildlife tourism due to the pandemic and related restrictions.

For More Information

[Press Release on stronger measures against wildlife trafficking](#)

[Communication on the revised EU action plan against wildlife trafficking](#)

[Staff Working Document – evaluation of the 2016 action plan](#)

[Staff Working Document – Executive summary of the evaluation of the 2016 action plan](#)

[The 2016 action plan against wildlife trafficking](#)

[The European Union and Trade in Wilde Fauna and Flora](#)

QANDA/22/6581

Press contacts:

[Adalbert JAHNZ](#) (+ 32 2 295 31 56)

[Daniela STOYCHEVA](#) (+32 2 295 36 64)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)