

**Forum:** Environment Commission II

**Issue:** Eradicating the illegal trade in animals

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**Position:** Chair of Environment Commission II

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## Introduction

Illegal animal trade is arguably one of the most pressing environmental issues among current events. Nowadays, there are 5000 endangered species of animals alone, and this number is growing in an alarming pace. These illegal trades not only stimulate extinction of endangered species, but also bring imbalance of biodiversity. Illegal trade in animals was partially mentioned in Goal 7, Ensure environmental sustainability, of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Nevertheless, a significant portion of animal trade remains active underground.

One main reason of illegal animal trade is the demand of skin for various products. However, the necessity for measures to eliminate illegal trade has also risen from its affiliation to other strands of crimes, such as drug trafficking.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Illegal animal trade

Illegal trafficking of animals through the means of deforestation, smuggling, or over-fishing,

### Biodiversity

Value of life variety existing in a certain environment, either in regional or global scale

### Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Millennium Development Goals consist of eight international targets that United Nations members and over 23 organizations agreed to achieve by the year of 2015

## General Overview

## The causes for illegal animal trades

As mentioned in the aforementioned paragraphs, illegal trade in animals has been occurring for a lengthy period of time, with much of its portion in regions that lack generally lack controlled inspection and security. Criminals' greed has led people to kill, slaughter, and to sell the most valuable furs, meat, and bones of the animals that are suppressed from further environmental conditions from other problems, such as urban sprawl or disease. Poachers, one of the primary kind of criminals, commit these crimes, since they have lived a life without any other means of earning a living, as they may have come from a family of poachers going back several hundred years.

This ill motivation was caused by the impoverishment of the region. Many of these criminals have also been on a career path that they deemed insufficient for their needs or are in desperation, and turned to poaching in order to fill the gap of money that they so needed to make sure their family had the money for a function, such as an operation, paying off a debt, or paying their way out of jail.

These trades are not limited to few species. Animals such as piranhas, desert lizards, wild cats are sold worldwide for commercial uses.



***Caption #1: Endangered Animals***

## Negative effects of illegal animal trades

### Broken biodiversity

The biodiversity of animals depends on the delicate balance of a food chain. If any part of the chain is missing, the chain will be severed and the food web, which contains all the animals in the biome will be forced to adapt to the loss of that one creature, which may be critical to the sustainability of a region of the world.

### Worldwide efforts

Governments began to demonstrate global cooperation through agreements, such as Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Other UN branches,

such as The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, are in order to eradicate animal and drug trafficking among member nations. Furthermore, non-profit organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1982	South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) inaugurated
December 15, 1998	Convention on Biological Diversity announced
September 8, 2000	United Nations Millennium Declaration announced
December 20, 2006	2010 – International Year of Biodiversity announced

## UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- Convention on Biological Diversity, 15 December 1998 (**A/RES/53/190**)
- United Nations Millennium Declaration, 8 September 2000 (**A/RES/55/2**)
- 2010 – International Year of Biodiversity, 20 December 2006 (**A/RES/61/203**)

## Bibliography

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