

Overview of important seizures in the European Union

January to December 2016

Compiled by TRAFFIC
July 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

This briefing aims to provide an overview of the most important CITES-related seizures reported by Member States of the European Union¹ (EU) for the twelve-month period January to December 2016 inclusive so that these can be shared with key trade partners of the EU and selected third countries, as deemed necessary by EU Member States. The main focus of this briefing is on seizures having taken place at EU external borders (airports, maritime ports, land boundaries and postal centres), with a brief overview of seizures having taken place inside the EU (i.e. not at the external borders).

The quantitative analysis of seizures (in **Section 2**) is based on reports of significant seizures taking place at EU borders submitted by EU Member States to the European Commission (EC) for 2016. In 2016, a total of 24 EU Member States submitted these reports². A total of 18 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom) reported significant seizures at EU borders. These data were included in the quantitative analysis in **Section 2**. Some of the 18 reporting EU Member States provided information for only a part of the reporting period.

In addition, a total of 16 EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Slovakia and the United Kingdom) reported seizures made inside the EU. A brief overview of these seizures is provided in **Section 5**. Again, some of the 16 reporting EU Member States provided information for only a part of the reporting period.

In addition to the significant seizures reported by EU Member States, this briefing also includes examples of seizures shared by EU Member States via restricted channels for information exchange in the EU (see **Section 3**).

2. OVERVIEW OF REPORTED INTERNATIONAL SEIZURES INVOLVING THE EU

A total of 2268 seizure records were reported by 22 EU Member States in 2016³. Of these, **1430 seizure** records could be classified as “**international**”, i.e. relating to shipments involving external or third countries and so took place at EU external borders (i.e. excluding seizures made internally, such as following investigations or inspections at shops/markets). The Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain and France⁴ together reported ca. 94% of the international seizure records in 2016.

The main types of commodity seized at EU borders in 2016 were, in order of number of reported seizure records (see **Figure 1**):

¹ The Member States of the EU in 2016: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

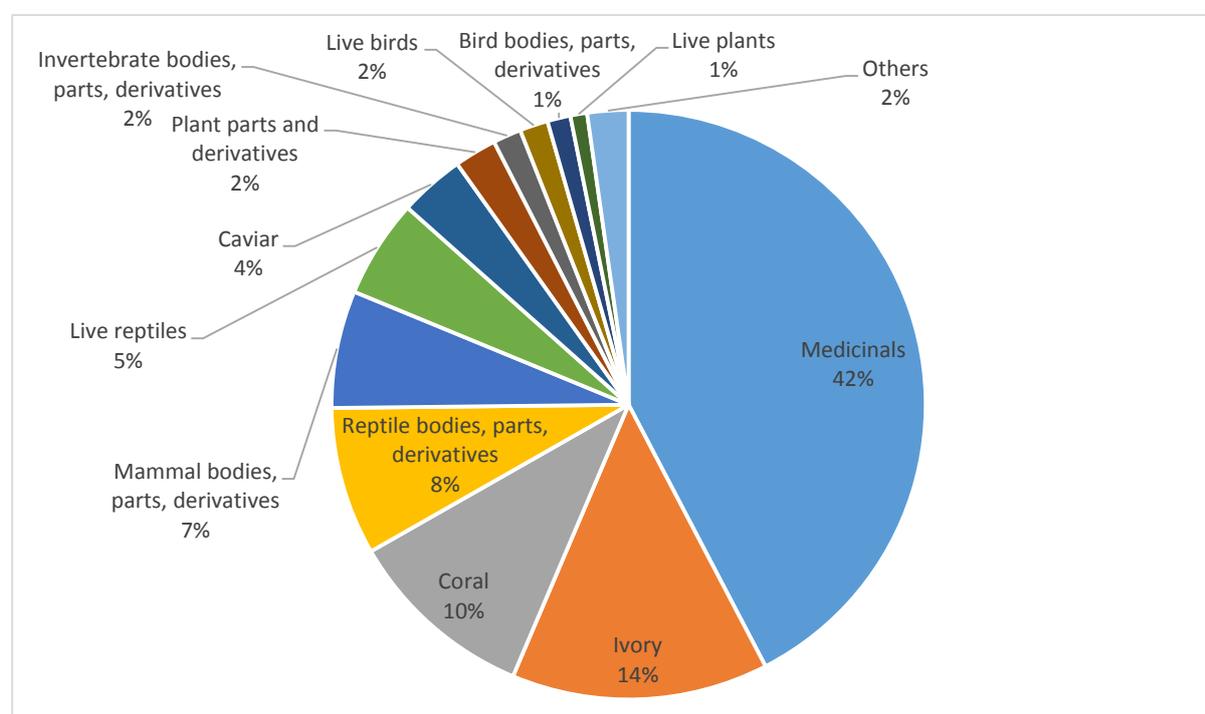
² Of these 24 Member States, Denmark and Finland did not specifically report significant seizures in 2016 and were therefore excluded from the analysis. Four of these Member States (Estonia, Italy, Sweden and Slovakia) only reported seizures taking place inside the EU in 2016, and the remaining 18 Member States reported seizures at EU external borders.

³ The 18 Member States reporting seizures at borders in 2016 (international), plus Estonia, Italy, Sweden and Slovakia who only reported seizures inside the EU.

⁴ Member States listed here in order of decreasing number of seizure records in 2016.

- (i) **medicinals**⁵, including both medicinal products (medicinal products are also understood to include herbal health/food supplements) and parts/derivatives for medicinal use⁶ (over 109 878 items (e.g. pills, packets, etc.) and an additional 2010 kg). This included 102 131 plant-derived medicinal items (and an additional 1944 kg) and 7747 animal-derived medicinal items (and an additional 66 kg);
- (ii) **ivory** (1440 specimens and an additional ca. 1080 kg);
- (iii) **corals** (1568 specimens and an additional ca.137 kg);
- (iv) **reptile bodies, parts and derivatives** (2536 specimens and an additional ca. 1063 kg);
- (v) **mammal bodies, parts and derivatives** (350 specimens and an additional ca. 26 kg);
- (vi) **live reptiles** (1513 specimens);
- (vii) **caviar** (109 072 specimens [mainly cosmetic products containing sturgeon *Acipenseriformes* spp. caviar [App. I/II, Annex A/B]] and an additional ca. 43 kg); and
- (viii) **plant parts and derivatives** (22 585 specimens and an additional ca. 87 kg).

Figure 1: Distribution of international seizure records reported by 18 EU Member States across commodity groups, 2016



Source: seizure reports by 18 EU Member States.

Important individual seizures reported by Member States across key commodity groups are set out in **Section 3**.

Figure 2 depicts the main countries/territories of export or of departure of illegal trade as reported by the 18 EU Member States, based on number of seizure records.

- **Mainland China** was the reported exporter for 237 seizure records: similar to 2015, the majority of these records involved **medicinals** (182 records involving 9397 specimens and an additional ca. 485 kg) mainly containing parts and derivatives of taxa such as Costus Root *Saussurea costus* (App. I/Annex A), Orchids *Orchidaceae* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B), American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius* (App. II/Annex B), big cats (Leopard *Panthera pardus* and Tiger *Panthera tigris*, App. I/Annex A) and musk deer *Moschus* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B).

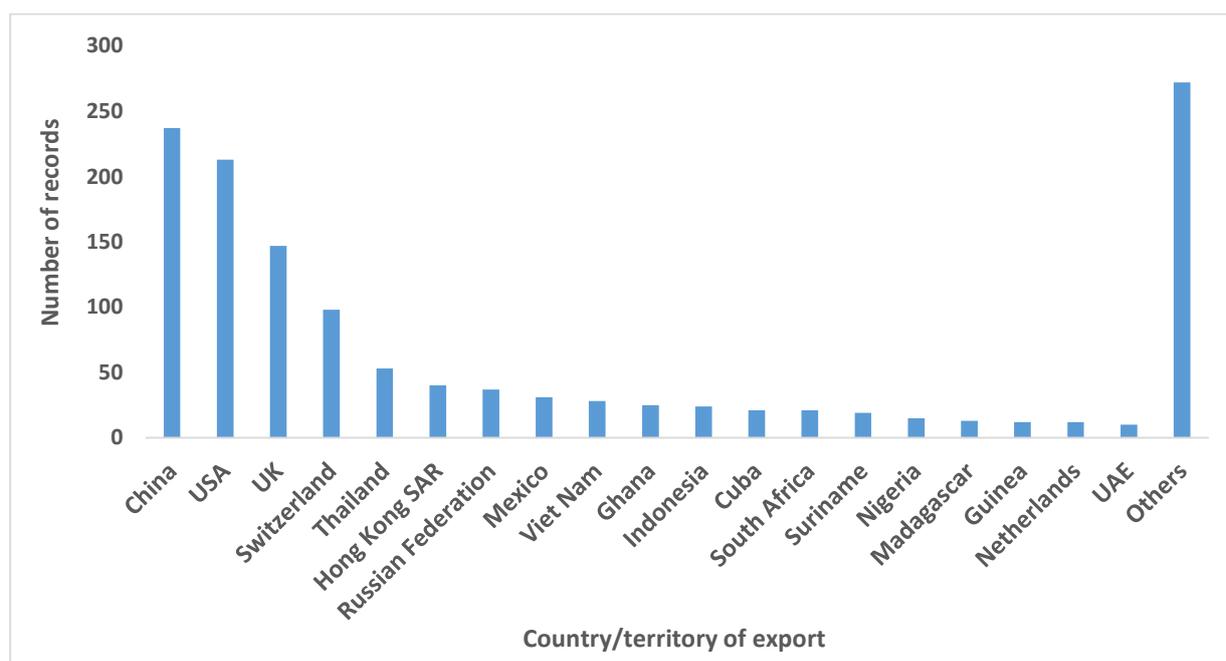
⁵ Units used to report medicinals are not consistent across EU Member States: some reported units as packs of tablets others as individual tablets; sometimes no unit was specified.

⁶ Including animal parts/derivatives, e.g. bear, seahorse, big cats, and crocodile.

- The **USA** was the reported exporter for 213 seizure records: ca. 85% of these records involved **plant-derived medicinals** (180 records involving 21 601 specimens and an additional ca. 44 kg) mainly containing derivatives of *Aloe Aloe* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and African Cherry *Prunus africana* (App. II/Annex B).
- **Switzerland** was the reported exporter for 98 seizure records: a total of ca. 87% of these records involved **plant-derived medicinals** (85 records comprising 24 740 specimens) mainly containing derivatives of *Aloe Aloe* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and **Costus Root** *Saussurea costus* (App. I/Annex A). A total of ca. 98% of these medicinal products were intercepted at mail centres.
- **Thailand** was the reported exporter of 53 seizure records: ca. 47% of records involved medicinals comprising of 1686 specimens mainly consisting of parts and derivatives of taxa including Seahorse *Hippocampus* spp. (App. II/Annex B), *Aloe Aloe* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and Hoodia *Hoodia gordonii* (App. II/Annex B).

In 2016, the **United Kingdom** reported 147 seizures on export: similarly to 2015, ca. 88% of these seizures (130 seizure records) involved **African Elephant** *Loxodonta africana* (App. I/II, Annex A/B) **ivory carvings** (comprising 164 specimens and an additional ca. 66 kg). The majority of these specimens were detected in **postal parcels** at **mail centres** because of **targeted inspections based on risk assessment**. Of the ivory seizure records with reported destinations (ca. 35%), all were destined for mainland China.

Figure 2: Main countries/territories of export or departure of illegal trade as reported by 18 EU Member States, according to number of seizure records, 2016



Source: seizure reports by 18 EU Member States.

Abbreviations: USA – United States of America, UK – United Kingdom, Hong Kong SAR - Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, UAE – United Arab Emirates

A total of 833 seizure records reported countries/territories of destination⁷; 663 seizure records were *en route* to EU Member States and 170 seizure records were destined for non-EU countries. **Mainland China** was the leading destination for commodities seized upon re-export from the EU/while in transit in the EU (**Figure 3**).

Of the 170 seizure records destined for non-EU countries, **mainland China, Hong Kong SAR**⁸ and **Taiwan** were together the destination for 120 seizure records. A total of ca. 54% of these records

⁷ A total of 597 seizure records reported no country/territory of destination (either left blank or reported as 'unknown').

⁸ Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China

involved **elephant ivory** which were mainly seized from EU Member States (the United Kingdom [45 records] and Germany), or in transit within the EU from Africa (Nigeria, Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and South Africa – in decreasing order of records). Mainland China and Hong Kong SAR were also important destination countries/territories for dried cacti Cactaceae spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) (mainly exported from Mexico) and seahorses *Hippocampus* spp. (App. II/Annex B) (mainly exported from Africa [Guinea, Equatorial Guinea and Mozambique]).

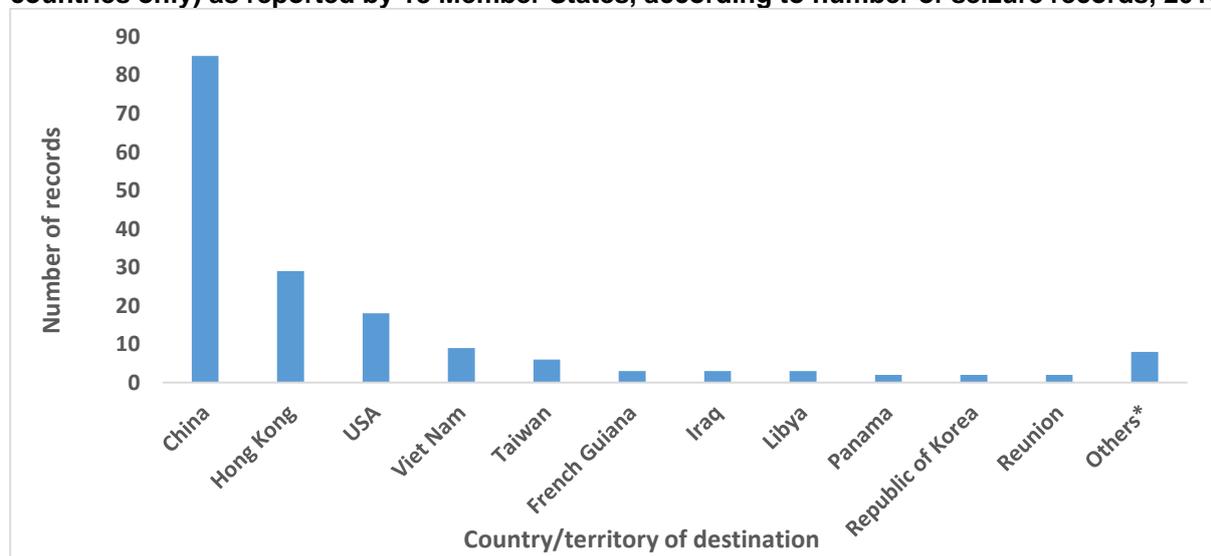
As in 2015, **Taiwan** was an important destination in 2016 for **live parrots**, such as Yellow-fronted Amazon *Amazona ochrocephala* (App. II/Annex B) and Yellow-headed Amazon *Amazona oratrix* (App. I/Annex A). In total, 75 live parrots were seized in 2016, all of which were (re-)exported from **the Netherlands**.

In addition, **the USA** and **Viet Nam** were important destinations for the following commodities:

- The USA for shipments of:
 - **live reptiles and amphibians** (9 records involving frogs, such as Tomato Frog *Dyscophus antongilii* [App. I/Annex A], and geckos, such as Peacock Day Gecko *Phelsuma quadriocellata* [App. II/Annex B] exported from **Madagascar**),
 - **mammal bodies, parts and derivatives** (4 records) such as skulls (**primates** Primate spp. [App. I/II, Annex A/B]) and garments (Ocelot *Leopardus pardalis* [App. I/Annex A] and Bobcat *Lynx rufus* [App. II/Annex B]).

- Viet Nam for shipments of:
 - raw and worked **African Elephant ivory** (App. I/II, Annex A/B). For example, ivory pieces and elephant tusks seized **in transit** in France from the luggage of a Vietnamese national, exported from Angola, and ivory carvings and ivory pieces seized on **export** from France (intercepted at airports). Furthermore, Germany reported a seizure on export *en route* to Viet Nam involving 625 kg of elephant ivory.

Figure 3: Main countries/territories of destination of illegal trade from the EU (to non-EU countries only) as reported by 18 Member States, according to number of seizure records, 2016



Source: seizure reports by 18 EU Member States. Abbreviations: Hong Kong SAR - Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, USA – United States of America. *Others include the following countries/territories (one seizure record reported by each country): Dominican Republic, Israel, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Martinique, Saint Martin, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

3. DETAILS OF KEY INDIVIDUAL INTERNATIONAL SEIZURES REPORTED BY EU MEMBER STATES IN 2016

Table 1 contains details of key individual seizures reported by EU Member States for the period January to December 2016. Again the focus is on international as opposed to intra-EU trade. Seizures were selected on the basis of the following criteria: (i) seizures involving particularly large quantities of a commodity type; and (ii) seizures highlighting important illegal trade trends involving the EU (e.g. in terms of countries or species involved).

Table 1: Details of selected seizures reported by EU Member States for 2016 arranged by commodity type (reporting country in bold)

TRADE ROUTE			Species and quantity seized	Details
Export	Transit	Destination		
MEDICINALS				
Thailand	⇒	UK ⁹	160 packets of a medicinal product containing seahorse <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in personal luggage. One of several seizures including the medicinal product called "Black Ant" reported in the UK in 2016 (which were also exported from the Philippines).	Detected at an airport during random control (Jan 2016)
Sierra Leone ⇒	Belgium ⇒	Myanmar	2500 dried seahorses <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in two registered parcels. ¹⁰	Detected in a mail centre (Oct 2016)
China	⇒	Belgium	372 medicinal pills containing seahorse <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) derivatives detected in a postal parcel.	Detected in a mail centre (Date not reported)
Guinea ⇒	France ⇒	Viet Nam	Two seizures of a total of 2007 whole dead specimens of seahorse <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in postal parcels. ¹¹	Detected at a mail centre as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (July, Aug 2016)
China	⇒	UK	290 packets containing Saiga Antelope <i>Saiga tatarica</i> (App. II/Annex B) parts, detected in personal luggage.	Detected at an airport during random control (March 2016)
China	⇒	Germany	60 medicinal products containing Leopard <i>Panthera pardus</i> , Tiger <i>Panthera tigris</i> (both App. I/Annex A) and musk deer <i>Moschus</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in a postal parcel.	Detected at an airport during random control (March 2016)
China	⇒	Austria	Three seizures of a total of 58 medicinal products containing Tiger <i>Panthera tigris</i> (App. I/Annex A) parts.	Detected at an airport (March, May 2016)
China	⇒	UK	Two seizures involving a total of 40 pills and 20 packets containing derivatives of Leopard <i>Panthera pardus</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in personal luggage.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (July 2016)
Nigeria ⇒	Netherlands ⇒	Hong Kong	Multiple seizures of a total of ca. 302 kg of pangolin scales <i>Manis</i> spp. (App. I/Annex A) detected in postal parcels. ¹²	Detected at a mail centre as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (April – August 2016)

⁹ United Kingdom

¹⁰ BE CITES Alert 13/2016, shared via EU-TWIX

¹¹ FR CITES Alert 092/2016, shared via EU-TWIX

¹² Four seizures shared via EU-TWIX: NL CITES Alert 07/2016, NL CITES Alert 08/2016, NL CITES Alert 09/2016, NL CITES Alert 11/2016

China	⇒	Germany	84 packets of a medicinal product containing musk deer <i>Moschus</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) seized in personal luggage. One of several such seizures in Germany in 2016.	Detected at an airport during random control (May 2016)		
Spain	⇒	Hong Kong	Two rhinoceros horns <i>Ceratotherium simum</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in a postal parcel.	Detected at an airport (Date not reported)		
China	⇒	UK	2000 packets of Costus Root <i>Saussurea costus</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in personal luggage. One of several such seizures in the UK in 2016, also exported from Hong Kong.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (April 2016)		
Switzerland	⇒	Germany	1620 pills containing Costus Root <i>Saussurea costus</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in postal parcel. One of several such seizures in Germany in 2016 representing a total of 11 419 pills.	Detected at a mail centre during random control (Jan 2016)		
Hong Kong	⇒	UK	9000 pills containing Costus Root <i>Saussurea costus</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in cargo. One of five such seizures in the UK in 2016 representing a total of 33 000 pills.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Sep 2016)		
USA	⇒	Germany	Nine seizures of a total of 1170 pills containing extracts of African Cherry <i>Prunus africana</i> (App. II, Annex B) detected in postal parcels.	Detected at a mail centre during random control (Jan 2016)		
Ghana	⇒	UK	100 bottles and containing Cape Aloe <i>Aloe ferox</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in cargo. One of several such seizures in the UK in 2016.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (July 2016)		
Ghana	⇒	Belgium	⇒	Germany	250 bottles of traditional African medicine, each containing 45% Cape Aloe <i>Aloe ferox</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in cargo. ¹³	Detected at an airport (Oct 2016)
China	⇒	UK	278 plasters containing fern <i>Cyathea</i> spp. (reported by UK) (App. II/Annex B) detected in cargo.	Detected at a maritime port as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Sep 2016)		
India	⇒	UK	4000 packets of orchid <i>Orchidaceae</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in a container.	Detected at a maritime port as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (April 2016)		
India	⇒	UK	6131 jars of “Chyawan Pura Herbal Jam” containing the orchid <i>Dendrobium macraei</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in a container. ¹⁴	Detected at a maritime port (May 2016)		
USA	⇒	Austria	300 medicinal products containing aloe <i>Aloe</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in postal parcel. One of 135 such seizures in Austria in 2016.	Detected at a mail centre (May 2016)		
IVORY						
Democratic Republic of Congo	⇒	Belgium	56 ivory carvings of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in postal parcel. The ivory carvings were concealed in wooden statues.	Detected at a mail centre during random control (Feb 2016)		
Nigeria	⇒	Netherlands	⇒	China	86 pieces of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Detected at a mail

¹³ BE CITES Alert 12/2016, shared via EU-TWIX

¹⁴ UK CITES Alert 07/16, shared via EU-TWIX

			(App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory detected in postal parcels. One of several such seizures that took place between March and June 2016 in the Netherlands.	centre as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (March 2016)		
Germany	⇒	Viet Nam	625 kg of worked and raw African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory detected in freight (this seizure then led to a larger investigation which resulted in an internal seizure involving an additional 570 kg of ivory carvings and tusks of various sizes ¹⁵)	Detected at an airport (May 2016)		
UK	⇒	China	34 ivory carvings of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in postal parcels. Specimens were mainly sold through the internet via an auction platform. One of ca. 50 such seizures that took place in the UK in 2016 accounting for ca. 45 kg of ivory.	Detected at a mail centre as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (June 2016)		
France	⇒	Viet Nam	50 ivory pieces and carvings of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) weighing a total of 125.5 kg detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Date not reported)		
Nigeria	⇒	France	⇒	Hong Kong	Two seizures of a total of 805 ivory carvings of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Date not reported)
CORAL						
Viet Nam	⇒	Malta	A total of 56 live specimens of various stony coral species <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in freight. The specimens were intended for the aquarium trade.	Detected at an airport during CITES document check (Jan 2016)		
Tonga	⇒	Netherlands	322 wild specimens of stony coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport due to an investigation (May 2016)		
Australia	⇒	UK	32 live specimens of coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in air cargo.	Detected at a mail centre as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (July 2016)		
China	⇒	Netherlands	A total of 577 specimens of stony coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. and five specimens of Blue Coral <i>Heliopora coerulea</i> (all App. II/Annex B) seized.	Detected in a maritime port (Sept 2016)		
French Polynesia	⇒	France	41 specimens of stony coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in postal parcel.	Detected at a mail centre during random control (Date not reported)		
REPTILE BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES						
Indonesia	⇒	Netherlands	73 small leather products made of python <i>Pythonidae</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) seized.	Detected at an airport (Aug 2016)		
Cameroon	⇒	Belgium	⇒	Russian Federation	More than 300 handbags, wallets, belts and skins derived from crocodile <i>Crocodylidae</i> spp., python	Detected at an airport (Aug 2016)

¹⁵ The information regarding these seizures of ivory in Germany was obtained from open sources; German Customs Administration, ZOLL (https://www.zoll.de/SharedDocs/Pressemitteilungen/DE/Artenschutz/2016/z89_elfenbein.html?nn=20202) and RBB 24 (seizure of 570 kg of ivory) (<http://www.rbb-online.de/panorama/beitrag/2016/09/elfenbeinfund-presentation.html>)

			Pythonidae spp. and monitor lizard <i>Varanus varius</i> (all App. I/II, Annex A/B) weighing a total of 80 kg detected in cargo.	
Indonesia	⇒	UK	300 skins of Reticulated Python <i>Python reticulatus</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in cargo.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Nov 2016)
China	⇒	Netherlands	A total of 190 specimens including 85 skulls of crocodile <i>Crocodylia</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B), 74 skins of monitor lizard <i>Varanus</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B), 12 small leather products made of Reticulated Python <i>Python reticulatus</i> (App. II/Annex B), seven skins of cobra <i>Naja</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B), six skulls of Green Anaconda <i>Eunectes murinus</i> (App. II/Annex B), four carapaces of sea turtles <i>Cheloniidae</i> spp. (App. I/Annex A) and two skins of Monocled Cobra <i>Naja kaouthia</i> (App. II/Annex B) seized in one seizure.	Detected at a maritime port (Sep 2016)
Viet Nam	⇒	France	Four stuffed Siamese Crocodile <i>Crocodylus siamensis</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in a postal parcel.	Detected at a mail centre during random control (Date not reported)
Switzerland	⇒	France	50 small leather products made of American Alligator <i>Alligator mississippiensis</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in freight.	Detected on a road at a border post during random control (Date not reported)
Dominican Republic	⇒ France ⇒	Lao PDR	1511 scales of Hawksbill Turtle <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> (App. I/Annex A) weighing a total of ca. 85 kg painted different colours and labelled as plastic samples detected in express freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Date not reported)
Dominican Republic	⇒ France ⇒	Hong Kong	116 scales of Hawksbill Turtle <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Date not reported)
China	⇒	UK	910 kg of Reeves' Turtle <i>Mauremys reevesii</i> (App. III/Annex C) jelly detected in cargo.	Detected at a maritime port (October 2016)
MAMMAL BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
USA	⇒	UK	13 carvings of Walrus <i>Odobenus rosmarus</i> (App. III/Annex B) teeth made into antique weapon parts detected in freight.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Mar 2016)
UK	⇒	Unknown	27 claws of Tiger <i>Panthera tigris</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (May 2016)
South Africa	⇒	Austria	56 Crested Porcupine quills <i>Hystrix cristata</i> (Annex A) seized.	Detected at an airport (Aug 2016)
Suriname	⇒	Netherlands	11 teeth of Cougar <i>Puma concolor</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) seized.	Detected at an airport (Aug 2016)
China	⇒	Netherlands	A total of 62 bones of Cetaceans <i>Cetacea</i> spp., 14 skulls of primates <i>Primate</i> spp., flying-fox <i>Pteropus</i>	Detected at a maritime port

			spp., and Babirusa <i>Babyrousa babyrussa</i> and one big cat skin Felidae spp. (all App. I/II, Annex A/B) seized in one seizure.	(Sep 2016)
Egypt	⇒	Greece	Two whole bodies of Savanna Monkey <i>Chlorocebus aethiops</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in personal luggage.	Detected at an airport during random control (Sep 2016)
Hong Kong	⇒	UK ⇒ Unknown	30 carvings of Hippopotamus <i>Hippopotamus amphibious</i> (App. II/Annex B) teeth detected in a postal parcel.	Detected at a mail centre at an airport as a result of targeting based on risk assessment (Nov 2016)
Guinea	⇒	France ⇒ China	Six teeth of Lion <i>Panthera leo</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport during random control (Date not reported)
LIVE REPTILES				
Uganda	⇒	Netherlands ⇒ Hong Kong	60 specimens of wild Leopard Tortoise <i>Stigmochelys pardalis</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in freight. Seized due to breach of IATA (International Air Transport Association) Regulations.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on intelligence. (April 2016)
South Africa	⇒	Netherlands ⇒ Spain	A total of two live wild-caught tortoises : Karoo Cape Tortoise <i>Homopus femoralis</i> and African Tent Tortoise <i>Psammobates tentorius</i> , (both App. II/Annex B) and 27 live wild-caught lizards : Armadillo Girdled Lizard <i>Ouroborus cataphractus</i> and Giant Girdled Lizard <i>Smaug giganteus</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in personal luggage.	Detected at an airport during random control (Aug 2016)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	⇒	Croatia	A total of 422 live Margined Tortoise <i>Testudo marginata</i> and 211 Hermann's Tortoise <i>Testudo hermanni</i> (both App. II/Annex A) hidden in jute bags amongst other goods.	Detected at a road/highway during random control (Nov 2016)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	⇒	Croatia	A total of 715 turtles, including 635 Hermann's Tortoise <i>Testudo hermanni</i> (App. II/Annex A) detected inside a vehicle. ¹⁶	Detected at a border post during a customs document check (Nov 2016)
Uzbekistan	⇒	France	200 specimens of Horsfield's Tortoise <i>Testudo horsfieldii</i> (App. II/Annex B) detected in freight. Incorrect permits accompanied the specimens, however the correct permits were issued after import.	Detected at an airport random control (Date not reported)
Madagascar	France	Czech Republic	A total of 211 live chameleons : <i>Calumma</i> spp. (App. II/Annex), <i>Furcifer</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B), <i>Brookesia</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and 11 geckos : <i>Uroplatus</i> spp., (App. II/Annex B), <i>Phelsuma</i> spp. (App. II/Annex A/B) detected in personal luggage. ¹⁷	Detected at an airport (June 2016)
Madagascar	⇒	France ⇒ USA	115 live geckos (10 Southern Flat-tailed Gecko <i>Uroplatus sikorae</i> , 14 Nosy Bé Flat-tailed Gecko <i>Uroplatus ebenau</i> , 6 Baweng Satanic Leaf Gecko, <i>Uroplatus phantasticus</i> , 10 Common Flat-tailed Gecko <i>Uroplatus fimbriatus</i> , 20 Striped Day Gecko <i>Phelsuma lineata</i> , 55 Peacock Day Gecko <i>Phelsuma quadriocellata</i> (all App. II/Annex B) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Date not reported)
CAVIAR/PRODUCTS CONTAINING CAVIAR				

¹⁶ HR CITES Alert 01/2016, shared via EU-TWIX

¹⁷ CZ CITES Alert 118/2016 shared via EU-TWIX

Israel	⇒	Latvia	64 packets of cosmetics containing sturgeon <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) caviar detected in freight.	Detected at a road/highway during random control (Jan 2016)
Russian Federation	⇒	Latvia	Ca. 10 kg of caviar of Great Siberian Sturgeon <i>Huso dauricus</i> and Amur Sturgeon <i>Acipenser schrenckii</i> (both App. II/Annex B) detected in personal luggage.	Detected in a train due to an investigation (Feb 2016)
Ukraine	⇒	UK	A total of 6 kg of sturgeon <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) caviar detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Feb 2016)
United Arab Emirates	⇒	Malta	60 bottles, each 100 ml in size, of cosmetic products containing Atlantic Sturgeon <i>Acipenser sturio</i> (App. I/Annex A) detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during CITES document check (May 2016)
Ukraine	⇒	Romania	A total of 4.3 kg of sturgeon <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) caviar detected inside a vehicle.	Detected at a road/highway during random control (June 2016)
Brazil ⇒	France ⇒	United Arab Emirates	1200 cosmetic products containing sturgeon <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) caviar detected in freight.	Detected at an airport during random control (Dec 2016)
PLANT PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
Japan	⇒	Netherlands	20 000 artificially propagated roots of orchids <i>Orchidaceae</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) intended for propagation detected in freight.	Detected at an airport due to an investigation. (Feb 2016)
Madagascar ⇒	France ⇒	USA	Two seizures involving a total of 347 specimens and an additional 8.3 kg of orchid flowers <i>Monadenia</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) concealed amongst other goods in a freight.	Detected at an airport (Date not reported)
Mexico ⇒	France ⇒	Hong Kong	396 specimens of dried cacti of various species including Hatchet Cactus <i>Pelecypora aselliformis</i> , Aztec Cactus <i>Aztekium ritteri</i> and Chautle Living-rock Cactus <i>Ariocarpus fissuratus</i> (all App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in freight ¹⁸	Detected at an airport (Aug 2016)
EELS				
Spain ⇒	France ⇒	China	Ca. 36 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> (App. II, Annex B) detected in personal luggage.	Detected at an airport (Feb 2016)
Spain ⇒	Netherlands ⇒	China	Two seizures of a total of 86 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> (App. II, Annex B) detected in personal luggage	Detected at an airport (Feb – March 2016)
Spain	⇒	Hong Kong	40 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> (App. II, Annex B) detected in personal luggage. One of four such seizures of a total of 111 kg.	Detected at an airport (March 2016)

4. BRIEF COMPARISON TO 2015

A comprehensive and quantitative comparison of “international” seizures reported in 2015 and 2016 is not possible due to, among other things, the difference in the number of EU Member States reporting seizures in these two years (in 2015 a total of 20 EU Member States reported 2497 seizure records, whereas in 2016 a total of 18 EU Member States reported 1430 seizure records). However, some observations can be made when comparing these two years.

¹⁸ FR CITES Alert 10/2016, shared via EU-TWIX

The commodity groups involved in the seizures, and their order of importance (in terms of number of reported seizure records), were similar in 2015 and 2016, with the commodity groups medicinals, ivory and coral included in the top commodity groups in both years.

The year 2016 saw a significant increase in the number of **reptile bodies, parts and derivatives** seized in comparison to 2015, from 288 specimens and approximately 92 kg in 2015, to 2536 specimens and approximately ca. 1063 kg in 2016. This significant increase was mainly owing to two seizure records; France seized a total of 1411 scales of Hawksbill Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* (App. I/Annex A) in transit from Dominican Republic to Lao People's Democratic Republic, and the United Kingdom seized a total of 910 kg of Reeves' Turtle *Mauremys reevesii* (App. III/Annex C) jelly exported from mainland China.

There was also a significant increase in the number of **items containing caviar** seized in 2016, mainly due to France reporting the seizure of a total of 107 625 cosmetic products containing sturgeon caviar *Acipenseriformes* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B). The 2016 data also highlighted a significant increase in the number of plant parts and derivatives reportedly seized, from 330 specimens and approximately 566 kg in 2015, to 22 585 specimens and approximately 87 kg in 2016. The Netherlands reported the most significant seizures; one seizure of 20 000 artificially propagated Orchid *Orchidaceae* spp. roots exported from Japan, and another seizure involving a total of 1605 dried cacti *Cactaceae* spp. exported from Chile.

Several important continuing/emerging trends in illegal trade were also noticeable in 2016, in particular:

- EU Member States' involvement in **seizures of ivory**; either being utilized as **transit locations** for the smuggling of elephant ivory from Africa, notably West and Central Africa, to Asia (mainland China, Hong Kong SAR and Viet Nam), or as **re-exporters** of elephant ivory *en route* to Asia (mainland China, Hong Kong SAR and Viet Nam) (for example, the United Kingdom ran operations targeting postal parcels in mail centres *en route* to mainland China; between January and June 2016 a total of 50 seizure records involving a total of 153 specimens and an additional 39 kg of African Elephant carvings were detected);
- The importance of **mainland China, Switzerland and the USA** as exporters of illegal wildlife to the EU, particularly of medicinal products.
- Continued importance of the EU as a destination for **illegal trade in live reptiles**, particularly tortoises and specimens of live *Testudo* spp. (App. II/Annex A/B) exported from North Africa; mainly Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.
- The continued shipment of specimens, derivatives and products of illegal wildlife through the **postal system** (subsequently detected in mail centres).
- Export of live birds, mainly parrots, from EU Member States to Taiwan and the Middle East.
- The continued illegal export of European Eel *Anguilla anguilla* (App. II/Annex B) destined for Asia, specifically mainland China and Hong Kong. In 2016, Spain reported seven seizure records involving ca. 234 kg of live European Eel seized at Madrid airport. Specimens were smuggled in plastic bags and being transport in suitcases.

The main countries/territories of export reported for 2015 and 2016 (based on number of seizure records) were broadly similar, with mainland China, the USA and Switzerland included in the top countries of export across both years, mainly of medicinal products.

5. SEIZURES MADE INSIDE THE EU

A total of **838 internal seizure records** were reported by 16 EU Member States in 2016, with France, Spain and the Netherlands¹⁹ together reporting ca. 85% of these records. The main commodity types seized within the EU in 2016 (in order of number of reported seizure records) were **live reptiles, plants and birds**, followed by **mammal bodies, parts and derivatives**.

A total of **906 live reptiles** were seized in 2016, 710 of which were **turtles/tortoises** (such as Spur-thighed Tortoise *Testudo graeca* and Hermann's Tortoise *Testudo hermanni* [both App. II/Annex A]) with France and Spain reporting ca. 85% of these seizures. Belgium was however responsible for one significant seizure involving a total of 334 live wild-caught Spur-thighed Tortoise *Testudo graeca* (App. II/Annex A) (originating from Morocco) that were seized from a private house.

The United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands reported seizures involving a total of **5349 live plants** in 2016 involving snowdrops *Galanthus* spp. (App. II/Annex B), orchids Orchidaceae spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and the flowering plant *Drimys maritima* (App. II/Annex B). The United Kingdom reported one significant internal seizure of **5000 wild-caught snowdrop Galanthus spp. bulbs**, and France reported 136 seizure records involving 248 live orchids. The majority of these specimens were seized from fairs, exhibitions or shows.

Of the **345 live birds** seized internally within the EU in 2016, a total of ca. 72% were **parrots**, such as Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* (App. I/Annex A) and Blue-and-gold Macaw *Ara ararauna* (App. II/Annex B). Spain, France and the Netherlands were responsible for the majority of the internal seizure records (ca. 91%). However, between March and June 2016, Austria reported three seizures involving a total of 83 live parrots (including **Military Macaw *Ara militaris*** and **Golden Parakeet *Guaruba guarouba*** [App. I/Annex A]). In these cases, parrot eggs were initially smuggled from Brazil to Portugal where they hatched. The live parrots were then transported with falsified documents and rings to Austria and detected during a house search.

A total of **182 mammal bodies, parts and derivatives** were reported in 2016, mainly teeth (Common Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* [App. II/Annex B] and felids), skulls (primates Primate spp. [App. I/II, Annex A/B]), bodies (canids) and carvings (Common Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* [App. II/Annex B]). France, Spain and the United Kingdom together seized ca. 95% of these specimens. Furthermore, seizures of European Eel *Anguilla anguilla* (App. II/Annex B) continue to occur in EU Member States, particularly in France and Spain. For example, in 2016, France reported four seizure records involving a total of 190 kg of live specimens.

It is noteworthy to highlight two cases of significant **ivory seizures in 2016**. In November 2016, an individual in Austria was found offering three elephant tusks for sale on the streets of Vienna. As a result, the offender's properties were searched and a total of 90 tusks (weighing a total of 564 kg) of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* (App. I/II, Annex A/B) were seized. Furthermore, in May 2016 German authorities internally seized shipments containing raw and worked ivory totalling 625 kg *en route* to consignees in Viet Nam. This then led to an internal seizure involving a total of 570 kg of ivory carvings and tusks of various sizes. The majority of internal seizures were made in private houses, or fairs/exhibitions/shows during investigations.

¹⁹ Member States listed here in decreasing number of seizure records in 2016.