

A tight grip on bio-smuggling from Turkey

International trade in wildlife is not all about elephants and tigers. It includes a wide range of animals and plants, and products derived from them – foods, leather goods, musical instruments, timber, tourist curios and medicines. It is important that countries cooperate to avoid depletion of their native flora and fauna – and Turkey, as a country with ambitions for closer links with the EU, is upgrading its engagement in conservation, with EU assistance.

A MORE EFFECTIVE FIGHT AGAINST BIO-SMUGGLING

Turkey is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), the United Nations agreement to control legal trade and to prevent bio-smuggling. With EU aid, it is improving the efficiency of its controls. Through a series of programmes delivered by experts from Spain, more than 260 civil servants received in depth training on putting CITES into effect.

The trainees increased their knowledge and their institutions almost doubled their capacities for controlling species covered by CITES. A sense of engagement became apparent during the project, with increased interest by customs officers, and an increase in the number of confiscations of illegally traded species and specimens.

IDENTIFYING SPECIES AT RISK AND TARGETING CHECKS

The project also resulted in the translation and adaptation of documents to enhance the work of the Turkish authorities, including a species identification manual of some 5,000 pages. And dedicated software was adapted for online control, monitoring and grants of permission for international trade of CITES species geared to Turkish needs. This makes it possible to monitor the export and import of CITES species more closely, and to comply more fully with the requirements of the Convention. It also makes it easier to follow up species which are subject to illegal trade and to set up rapid alarm systems for them.



Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)

Turkey

IPA – AN INVESTMENT IN EUROPE. AN INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM.

The project set out to strengthen the sustainability of Turkey's biological diversity, in line with the CITES regulation. It boosted the country's administrative and technical capacities for controlling trade in CITES

species. By developing these capacities, Turkey is also aligning itself more closely with the EU norms and standards on environmental protection.

PROJECT DETAILS –

Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations

Partners:

Republic of Turkey – Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs
Spain – Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness

Total cost in €:

1.425 million

EU Contribution in €:

1.318 million (92.5%)

Start date:

November 2011

End date:

December 2013

Results:

- 80% increase in capability to control CITES species;
- 90% increase in trainees understanding of the CITES implementations;
- At least 15% increase in the control of trade in CITES species at customs points (prevention of illegal trade);
- Working relationships between CITES management authorities;
- New database and IT application for online control;
- Species identification manuals translated, printed and circulated

Techniques:

- Trainings (hands-on and theoretical);
- Study visits;
- IT application modification;
- Translation of important documents such as species identification manuals

Project website:

<http://cites.ormansu.gov.tr>

