



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 335577
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

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Dear Consultee,

Consultation on reform to CITES implementation in the UK

We are writing to invite views on proposed regulatory reforms to the CITES implementing framework in the UK.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (“CITES”) is an international agreement that aims to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants is conducted legally and does not threaten the survival of the species. A key part of this is achieved through the issuing of permits for the import, (re-)export and introduction from the sea of species listed on the CITES Appendices.

The body of legislation that implements CITES in the UK largely derives from the European Union (EU) and was designed to administer a common EU-wide system. Under the [Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Act 2023](#) (“REUL Act”) and assimilated powers that passed to the Secretary of State following EU Exit there is an opportunity to review CITES implementing legislation to ensure that it is clear, proportionate, and fit for purpose for the UK as a single CITES Party. This aligns with recommendations from the Corry Review¹, which advocates for regulations that deliver effective outcomes for both economic growth and nature recovery. The reform presents an opportunity to create a more coherent and effective regime that protects wildlife and supports sustainable trade.

The consultation builds on a period of informal engagement with stakeholders affected by, and with an interest in, CITES. This includes traders and industry representatives, NGOs and individuals in the environmental sector and officials across the UK CITES regime. The consultation seeks formal feedback on the proposals and options developed to date to help identify a final proposed package of reforms. Information and data on the costs and benefits of the proposed options for reforming the UK CITES legislation, and the impact on

¹ Delivering economic growth and nature recovery: an independent review of Defra’s regulatory landscape 2025: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-economic-growth-and-nature-recovery-an-independent-review-of-defras-regulatory-landscape>

affected sectors, are key outcomes sought from this consultation. This will allow us to finalise a package of recommendations for consideration by Ministers. Subject to further analysis, some of the options outlined in the consultation may exceed the powers currently available to achieve them. Feedback on these will also be important in determining powers that may need to be sought in the future to effectively implement CITES in the UK.

The proposals are set out in three parts:

1. Proposals to amend CITES assimilated legislation
2. Proposed amendments to the CITES fees and charges framework
3. Draft statutory guidance on the use of civil sanctions to enforce certain breaches of CITES legislation.

This consultation is UK-wide, however, due to the arrangements under the Windsor Framework some of the legislative proposals in Part Two are only applicable to Great Britain. The devolved governments have been engaged during the development of the proposals and we intend to continue working closely with them in further finalising the policy options outlined in this document.

The following documents may be found on <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/cites/cites-reform-proposals>:

- Consultation on reform to CITES implementation in the UK
- Consultation letter
- Privacy notice

We welcome your views and comments on the proposals. If you wish to obtain a copy of this consultation, please contact CITES.UKMA@defra.gov.uk.

Responses

To submit your consultation response please complete the consultation questionnaire provided through Citizen Space (Citizen Space is an online consultation tool).

If you require a copy of the consultation, please contact us at CITES.UKMA@defra.gov.uk.

Responses should be received by 23:59 on 23 October 2025. This slightly reduced period is to responsibly manage the downstream delivery timelines and risks. We consider this reduction appropriate as this consultation builds on extensive engagement in workshops

and bilaterally with industry representatives, NGOs and other interested stakeholders on the co-development of the proposals outlined in the consultation. Anyone that may need additional support to respond to the consultation within this timeframe should contact us via CITES.UKMA@defra.gov.uk.

This consultation is being conducted in line with the [Cabinet Office consultation principles](#).

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information legislation. We respect your personal privacy when responding to access to information requests. We only share information when necessary to meet the statutory requirements of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Using and sharing your information

How we use your personal data is set out in the consultation and call for evidence exercise privacy notice which can be found [here](#).

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please email consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries, please contact us as above.

Yours faithfully,

UK CITES Management Authority
CITES.UKMA@defra.gov.uk
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs