

AN OVERVIEW OF SEIZURES OF
**CITES-LISTED
WILDLIFE IN THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2018



TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

Compiled by TRAFFIC for the European Commission

OVERVIEW

SEIZURE RECORDS AND TOP COMMODITIES SEIZED

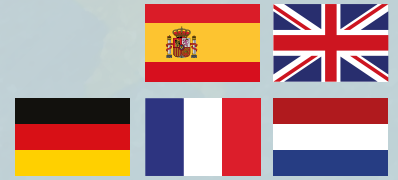


6012

seizure records reported by EU Member States in 2018 compared to 5644 in 2017

79%

of these were reported by France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain and the Netherlands



The main commodity types seized in the EU in 2018 were:



1381

Medicinals



654

Corals



540

Reptile bodies, parts, and derivatives



496

Live birds



468

Live reptiles



420

Elephant ivory



403

Mammal bodies, parts, and derivatives

REPORTED SEIZURE AND TRADE VALUES

The reported value of illegal wildlife trade in the EU was a minimum of

€2.3 MILLION



€1.8 MILLION
in 2017

9%

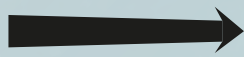
(522 seizure records) reported an estimated value of commodities seized

DESTINATIONS AND LOCATIONS OF SEIZURES



3806

seizure records had countries / territories of destination reported



3587

(60%) were en route to EU Member States

219

seizure records (ca. 4%) were destined for non-EU countries, with mainland China the leading destination

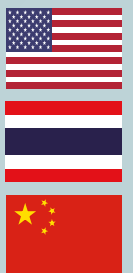
in 2018, the point of seizure breakdown was reported as:

IMPORT	INTERNAL	EXPORT	TRANSIT
2969 (49%)	580 (10%)	267 (4%)	204 (3%)



37% of seizure records were made at airports

Thailand, the US, and mainland China were the leading exporters





1 INTRODUCTION

This briefing aims to provide an overview of all CITES-related seizures reported by Member States of the European Union¹ (EU) for the twelve-month period January to December 2018 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.

This briefing is based on all seizures reported by EU Member States having taken place both at EU external

borders (airports, maritime ports, land boundaries and postal centres) and inside the EU (i.e. not at the external borders). The quantitative analysis of these seizures (in Sections 2 and 4) and examples of seizures (in Section 3) are based on seizure records submitted in the 2018 Annual Illegal Trade Reports (including information on prosecutions) submitted to the EU-TWIX³ database by EU Member States. In 2018, a total of 27 EU Member States provided data on seizures which occurred in 2018³.

¹ The Member States of the EU in 2018: 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 European Union–Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange—the system includes a database of CITES seizures in the EU (<https://eu-twix.org/>).

³ Romania reported two seizure records for 2018, however these were submitted after the reporting deadline and were therefore not included in this analysis.

2 AN OVERVIEW OF REPORTED SEIZURES INVOLVING THE EU

A total of 6012 seizure records were reported by EU Member States in 2018. France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain and the Netherlands reported 79% of all seizure records for 2018.

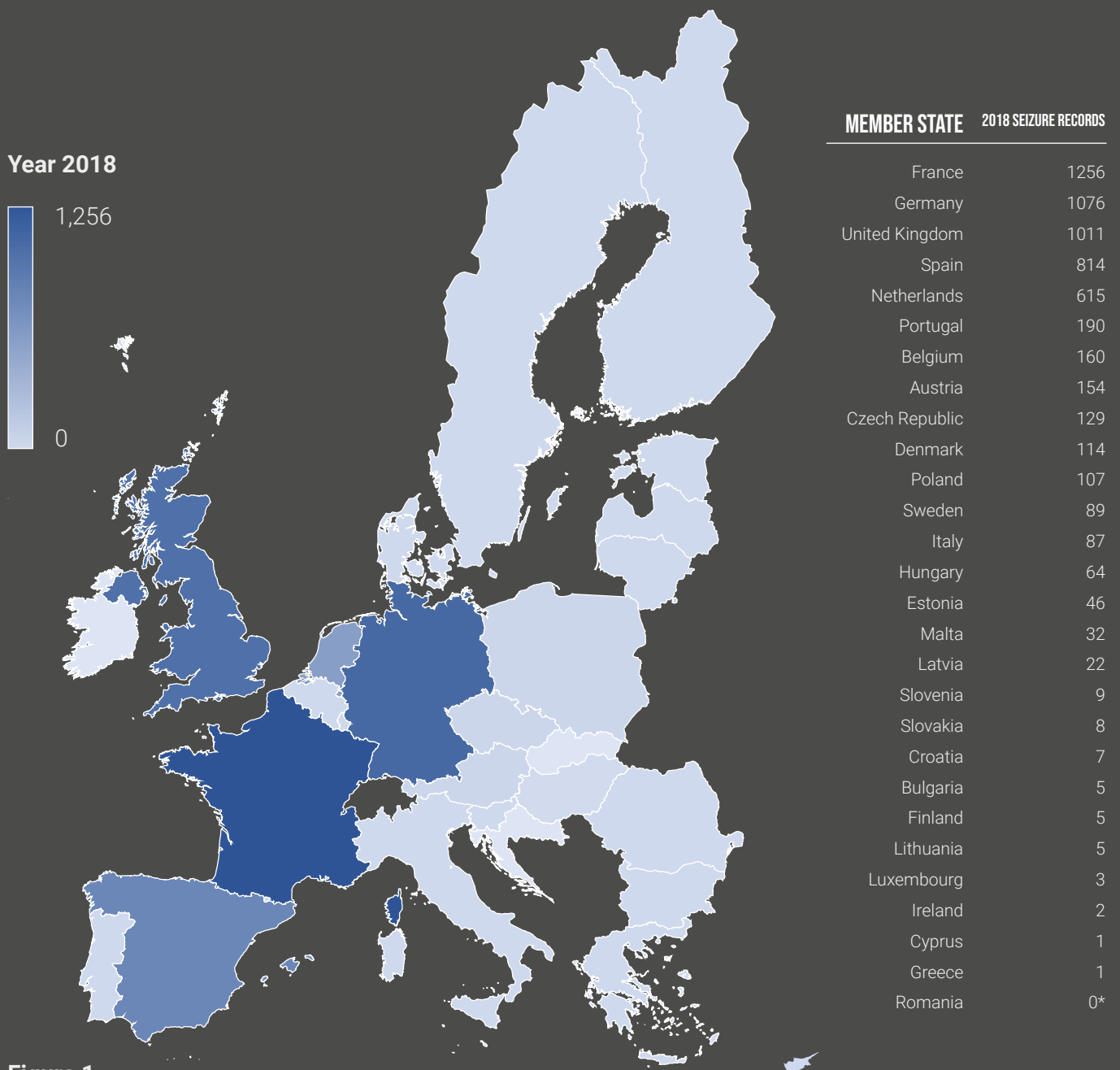



Figure 1
 Distribution of seizure records across reports from EU Member States, based on number of seizure records, 2018. *Note: Romania reported two seizure records for 2018, however these were submitted after the reporting deadline and were therefore not included in this analysis.

The main types of commodities seized in the EU in 2018 were, in order of number of reported seizure records (**see Figure 2**):

	MEDICINALS⁴ including both medicinal products (medicinal products are also understood to include health/food supplements) and parts/derivatives for medicinal use ⁵ (300 996 items (e.g. pills, packets, etc.) and an additional 7010 kg and 24 l). This included 260 562 plant-derived medicinal items (and an additional 6685 kg and 23 l) and 40 434 animal-derived medicinal items (and an additional 325 kg and 1 l);
	CORALS (4130 specimens and an additional 1011 kg);
	REPTILE BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES (4626 specimens and an additional 236 kg);
	LIVE BIRDS (1135 specimens);
	LIVE REPTILES (2311 specimens and an additional 11 kg);
	ELEPHANT IVORY (2825 specimens and an additional 145 kg);
	MAMMAL BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES (1713 specimens and an additional 83 kg and 1 l).

⁴ 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, or kg or l was used.

⁵ Including animal parts/derivatives, e.g. bear, seahorse, big cats, and crocodile.

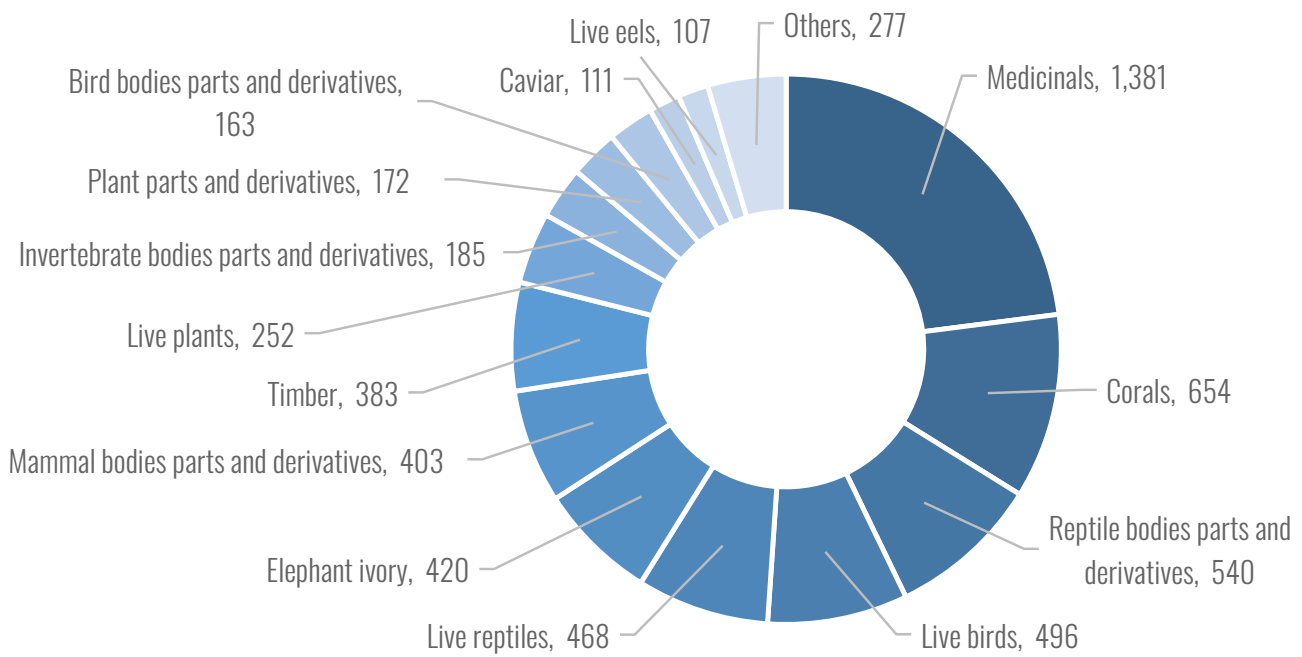


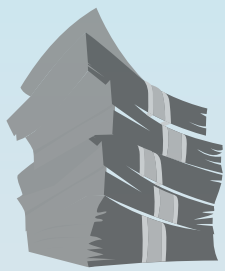
Figure 2

Distribution of all seizure records reported by EU Member States across commodity groups, 2018 (based on number of seizure records).

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

According to the EU-TWIX database, in 2018, over 49% (2969 seizure records) were seized on import,

which was followed by internal seizures (580 seizure records, 10%), seizures on export (267 seizure records, 4%) and seizures in transit (204 seizure records, 3%). The rest (1992 seizure records, 33%) was unknown/other or no information was provided.



Of the total seizure records, ca. 9% (522 seizure records) reported an estimated value of commodities seized. The reported value of illegal wildlife trade in the EU was a minimum of EUR 2.3 million. This value increased from EUR 1.8 million in 2017 (ca.10%, 548 records reported an estimated value).

In 2018, the top commodities with a reported value (EUR) were live specimens (Figure 3 and 4), mainly live eels, birds and reptiles. Seizures involving live mammals and live amphibians were also reported as high value commodities (based on the low number of seizures yet high value reported). Other high value commodities included mammal bodies, parts and derivatives (BPD), elephant ivory, animal-derived medicinals and timber.



Figure 3

Top commodities seized by value (EUR), 2018.

Note: only 9% (522 seizure records) reported an estimated value (EUR) of commodities seized.

BPD - Bodies, parts and derivatives



Figure 4

Other high value commodities (EUR), 2018. Note: only 9% (522 seizure records) reported an estimated value (EUR) of commodities seized.

In addition, airports were the main types of locations for seizures, accounting for approximately 37% (2218 seizure records), followed by mail centres (1149 seizure records, 19%), private houses (770 seizure records, 13%) and markets and shops (491 seizure records, 8%). The remaining seizures were intercepted in other locations including maritime ports, roads and highways, fairs/exhibitions and zoological gardens.

2A EXPORTERS/“COUNTRIES OF DEPARTURE OF ILLEGAL TRADE”

3933

reported countries/
territories of export

500

seizure records were exported
from EU Member States

THAILAND


was the exporter for
634 seizure records


A total of 3933 seizure records (ca. 65%) had countries/territories of export (or “departure of illegal trade”) reported; 500 seizure records (8%) were exported from EU Member States (excluding their overseas territories) and 3433 seizure records (57%) were exported from non-EU countries/territories. For 2018, the UK, Belgium, France, and Spain were among the top 20 exporters/“countries of departure


of illegal trade” but the direction of trade reported was mainly internal, on export (mainly the UK) or reported as unknown.

Figure 5 depicts the main countries/territories of export (or of departure; non-EU Member States) of illegal trade as reported by EU Member States, based on number of seizure records.

 **Thailand was the reported exporter for 634 seizure records:** a total of 36% of these records involved plant- and animal-derived medicinals (227 records comprising 12 465 specimens and an additional 13.5 kg and 0.1 l) mainly containing *Cacti Cactaceae* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) (126 records, 7739 specimens and an additional 10 kg). Timber (111 seizure records comprising 308 specimens) and live plants (85 seizure records comprising 278 specimens) were the other main commodity types seized.

 **Mainland China was the reported exporter for 457 seizure records:** similar to 2017, the majority of these records involved plant- and animal-derived medicinals (351 records involving 178 824 specimens (pieces, pills, packets etc) and an additional 5177 kg and ca. 0.5 l) mainly containing parts and derivatives of taxa such as *Orchids Orchidaceae* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) and *Costus Root Saussurea costus* (App. I/Annex A).

 **The United States of America (US) was the reported exporter for 262 seizure records:** ca. 26% of these records involved plant-derived medicinals (68 records involving 6467 specimens and an additional ca. 7.5 kg and 1 l) mainly containing parts and derivatives of *Hoodia Hoodia* spp., African Cherry *Prunus Africana*, *Aloe* spp. and American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius* (all in App. I,II/Annex A,B). Timber (61 seizure records comprising of 827 specimens and an additional 2 kg) and reptile bodies, parts and derivatives (54 seizure records comprising 315 specimens and an additional ca. 10 kg) were the other main commodity types seized.

 **Indonesia was the reported exporter of 191 seizure records:** 41% of records involved live corals and coral rock comprising of 348 specimens and an additional ca. 19 kg mainly consisting of raw corals particularly of *Stony coral Scleractinia* spp. (App. II/Annex B). Plant-derived medicinals (72 seizure records comprising of 11 865 specimens) and reptile bodies, parts and derivatives (23 seizure records comprising of 114 specimens and an additional 20 kg) were the other main commodity types seized.

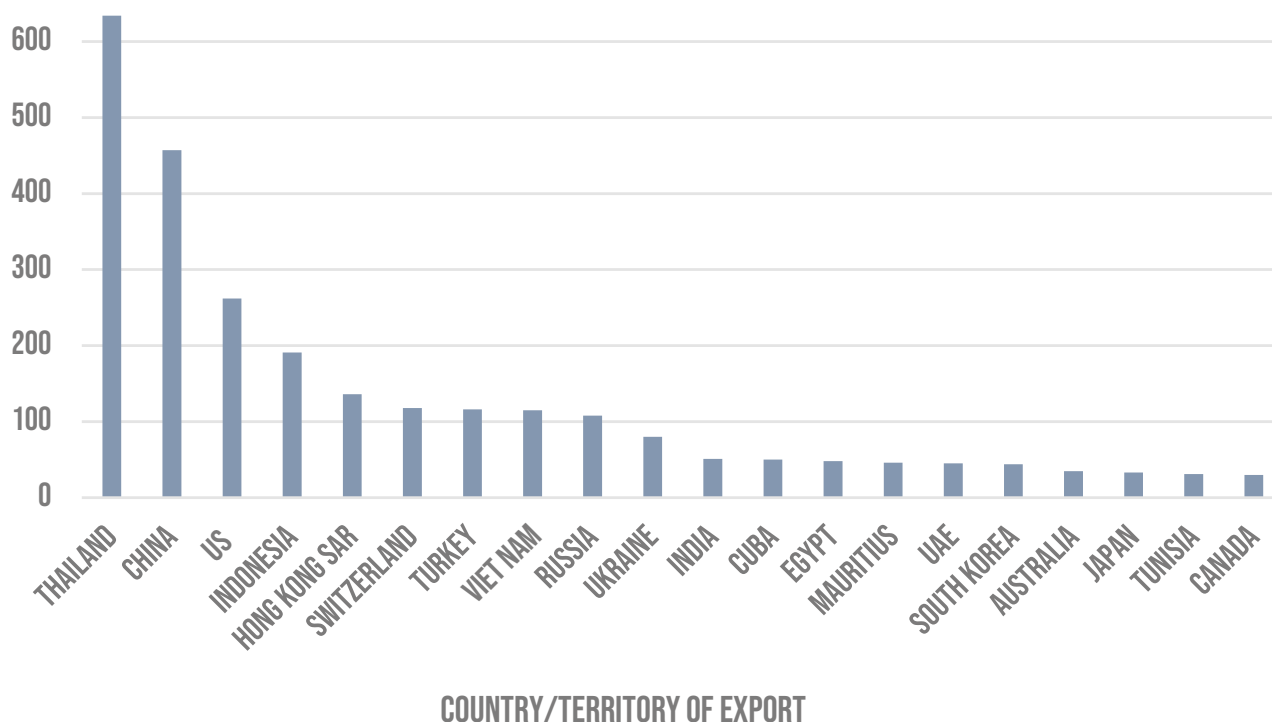


Figure 5

Top 20 (non-EU) countries/territories of export or departure of illegal trade as reported by EU Member States, according to number of seizure records, 2018.

Source: EU-TWIX database.

Abbreviations: US – United States of America, Hong Kong SAR – Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, Russia – Russian Federation, UAE – United Arab Emirates.

2B DESTINATIONS



A total of 3806 seizure records had countries/territories of destination reported; 3587 seizure records (60%) were en route to EU Member States⁶ and 219 seizure records (ca. 4%) were destined for non-EU countries. Of the 219 seizure records destined for non-EU countries, mainland China was

the leading destination for commodities seized upon (re-)export from the EU/import into the EU/while in transit in the EU or seized internally, accounting for 40% with 87 seizure records (Figure 6). Together, mainland China and Hong Kong SAR were the destination for 94 seizure records.

⁶ Excluding their overseas territories.

A total of 33% of these records involved animal-derived medicinals including bodies of seahorses *Hippocampus* spp. (App. II/Annex B) (14 seizure records comprising of 336 specimens exported from West Africa [mainly Sierra Leone]) and pangolin scales (App. I/II, Annex A/B) (12 seizure records comprising of three specimens and ca. 245 kg mainly exported from West and Central Africa [e.g. Liberia and Sierra Leone]).

Mainland China and Hong Kong SAR were also important destination countries/territories for reptile bodies, parts and derivatives (24 seizure records comprising of 52 specimens and an additional ca. 38 kg mainly exported from Africa [mainly Liberia]), ivory (16 seizure records comprising of 96 specimens and an additional ca. 5 kg) and live eels (13 seizure records comprising ca. 849 kg).

In addition, the US and Viet Nam were important destinations: the US for reptile bodies, parts and derivatives (seven records of small leather products mainly made of Crocodile *Crocodylia* spp. [both App. II/Annex B]); Viet Nam was an important destination for shipments of:

ANIMAL-DERIVED MEDICINALS

including three records of gall and gall bladders from Brown Bear *Ursus arctos* (App. I/II, Annex A), one seizure record of Tiger bone *Panthera tigris* (App. I/Annex A) and pangolin scales *Manidae* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B). For example, France seized ca. 6 kg of pangolin *Manidae* scales at an airport in transit from Cameroon to Viet Nam.

LIVE EUROPEAN EELS *Anguilla anguilla*

(App. II/Annex B). A total of ca. 149 kg of live European Eels *Anguilla anguilla* was seized (reported in four seizure records) at airports in Portugal and Spain on export to Viet Nam.



Fried pangolin scales seized from a shipment transitting through Brussels in 2019



Bear gall bladder for sale



European Eel *Anguilla anguilla*

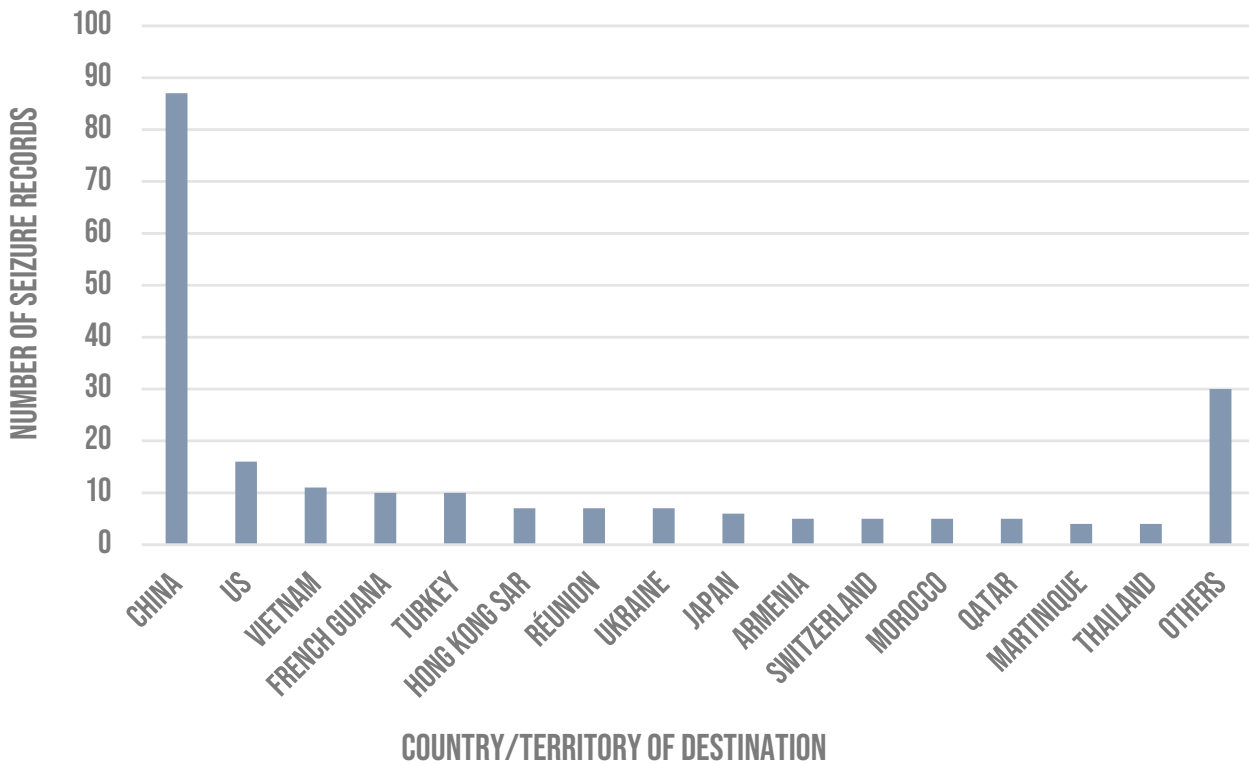


Figure 6

Countries/territories of destination of illegal trade from the EU (excluding their overseas territories) to non-EU countries as reported by EU Member States, according to number of seizure records, 2018.

Source: EU-TWIX database.

Abbreviations: US – United States of America, Hong Kong SAR – Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China.

2C INTERNAL SEIZURES



A total of 580 internal seizure records were reported by 13 EU Member States (Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Hungary, Austria, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Malta, France, Latvia, Croatia, Italy and Slovakia⁷) in 2018, with Spain, Belgium and Portugal together reporting ca. 73% of these records. The

main commodity types seized within the EU in 2018 (in order of importance based on number of reported seizure records) were live birds, followed by live plants, bird bodies, parts and derivatives and mammal bodies, parts and derivatives.

⁷ Member States listed here in order of importance based on number of seizure records in 2018.

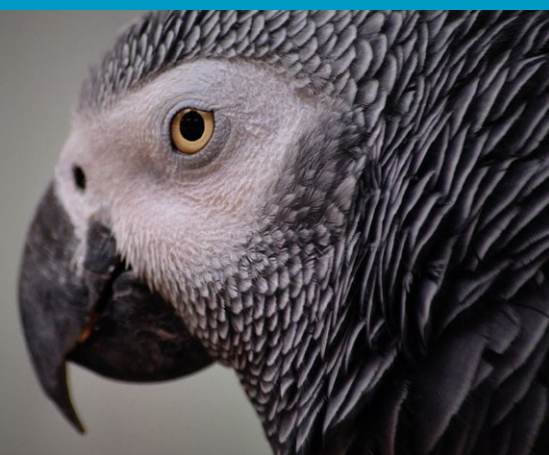
Of the 349 live birds seized internally within the EU in 2018, a total of 316 live birds were parrots such as Fischer's Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri*, Yellow-collared Lovebird *Agapornis personatus* (App. II/Annex B) and Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* (App. I/Annex A), mainly reported by Spain and Portugal. For example, Spain reported seizures involving a total of 143 live birds including 60 Fischer's Lovebird, mainly from private houses.

A total of 3818 live plants were seized internally in 2018, 71% (2,695 specimens) of which were cacti Cactaceae spp., with *Euphorbia* spp. the other main species seized (847 specimens). Spain reported almost all these seizure records (94 records involving 3811 specimens) intercepted in markets and shops.

In 2018, EU Member States (eight) reported 62 internal seizure records involving a total of 161 specimens of bird bodies, parts and derivatives, most of which were bodies and trophies (mainly those of Falconiformes spp.). Hungary and Austria were the main reporting countries. For example, Hungary reported one seizure record involving a total of 43 bodies including 13 Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* bodies seized from private houses.

A total of 90 specimens of mammal bodies, parts and derivatives were seized internally within the EU in 2018, mainly bodies (big cats Felidae spp. including Wild Cat *Felis silvestris* [App. II/Annex A] and Tiger *Panthera tigris* [App. I/Annex A]) and skins (including big cats Felidae spp. [App. I/II, Annex A/B], Grey wolf *Canis lupus* and bears *Ursus* spp. [App. I/II, Annex A/B]).

Seizures were mainly reported by Spain, Hungary and Belgium. For example, Hungary reported 5 seizure records of 18 bodies of mainly big cats Felidae spp. (App. I/ II, Annex A/B) seized at a private house due to illegal possession.



Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus*



Fischer's Lovebird *Agapornis fischeri*



Seized Tiger skins



Grey wolf *Canis lupus*

3 DETAILS OF KEY SEIZURES REPORTED BY EU MEMBER STATES IN 2018

Table 1 contains details of key seizure records reported by EU Member States for the period January to December 2018. Seizures were selected based on 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 2018 arranged by commodity type (reporting country in bold).

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
MEDICINALS				
South Korea	→	Estonia	12 721 cosmetic products (weighing approx. 17 litres) containing artificially propagated <i>Aloe maculata</i> (App. II/Annex B).	Detected at a border post as a result of risk assessment (May 2018)
Switzerland	→	Germany	Multiple seizures involving a total of 14 940 pieces of medicinal products containing Costus Root <i>Saussurea costus</i> (App. I/Annex A) transported in courier parcel.	Detected on a road during physical inspection (Feb–Nov 2018)
China	→	UK	120 000 medicinal products containing orchid <i>Cremastra appendiculata</i> and 4608 kg of medicinal products containing orchid <i>Dendrobium nobile</i> (both App. II/Annex B).	Detected at a maritime port as a result of risk assessment (November 2018)
Indonesia	→	Sweden	Multiple seizures of a total of 10 960 pills of medicinal products containing Tall Gastrodia <i>Gastrodia elata</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in courier parcel.	Detected at mail centres (Mar–Dec 2018)

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
Thailand	→	Germany	Multiple seizures involving 6007 specimens and an additional ca. 10 kg of medicinal products containing cacti (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in courier parcels.	Detected at mail centres during physical inspection (January–November 2018)
China	→ Poland or Germany	→ Bulgaria	Two seizures of 35 kg of medicinal products containing African Cherry <i>Prunus africana</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in courier parcel.	Detected at an airport during physical inspection (June and August 2018)
Egypt	→	Malta	1188 pieces of medicinal products containing musk deer <i>Moschus</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to physical inspection (June 2018)
Sierra Leone	→ (Liberia and) Belgium	→ China	Multiple seizures of a total of 193 specimens of seahorse <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. bodies.	Detected at an airport as a result of risk assessment or random check (January–November 2018)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	→ Belgium	→ China	A total of 131 kg of Pangolin <i>Manis</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) scales transported in courier parcel.	Detected at a mail centre due to random check (March 2018)
Ukraine	→	Poland	Multiple seizures of a total of 5486 live specimens of medicinal leeches <i>Hirudo</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B).	Detected on import (April–November 2018)
TIMBER				
India	→	UK	Multiple seizures of a total of 27 048 specimens of rosewood mainly <i>Dalbergia sissoo</i> (App. II/ Annex B) products transported in sea freight.	Detected at a maritime port mainly as a result of risk assessment (May–December 2018)
Madagascar	→	Réunion (France)	3150 wood products made of rosewood <i>Dalbergia</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B).	Detected at a maritime port (March 2018)
Indonesia	→	Germany	276 wood products made of Ramin <i>Gonystylus bancanus</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to physical inspection (February 2018)
LIVE PLANTS				
South Africa	→	UK	1100 specimens of live Cape Aloe <i>Aloe ferox</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport (February 2018)

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
Peru →	Netherlands →	Germany	539 specimens of live orchid <i>Orchidaceae</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to random check (June 2018)
CORAL				
India	→	France	717 kg of live specimens of coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B).	Detected at an airport (April 2018)
Egypt	→	Germany	Multiple seizures in total of live specimens of coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to physical inspection (January–December 2018)
Indonesia →	Singapore and Turkey →	Czech Republic	A total of 19 live specimens of wild sourced coral <i>Scleractinia</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) detected in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to random check (July 2018)
LIVE REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS				
Tunisia →	Italy →	France	Multiple seizures of a total of 12 live Common Tortoise <i>Testudo graeca</i> (App. II/Annex A).	Detected inside vehicle at a maritime port due to routine inspection or risk assessment (March–November 2018)
France	→	UK	436 live Afghan Tortoise <i>Testudo horsfieldii</i> and 42 African Spurred Tortoise <i>Geochelone sulcata</i> (both App. II/Annex B).	Detected at rail station (July 2018)
France	→	UK	108 live dwarf chameleons <i>Bradypodion</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) transported by car.	Detected at road, highway, public parking (November 2018)
REPTILE BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
Senegal →	Belgium →	Denmark	162 small leather products made from African Python <i>Python sebae</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in courier parcel.	Detected due to tip-off (November 2018)
Curacao	→	Netherlands	1728 g of Common Green Iguana <i>Iguana iguana</i> (App. II/Annex B) meat transported in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to random check (April 2018)

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
Indonesia	→	France	20 kg of small leather products made from monitor lizards <i>Varanus</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B).	Detected at an airport (August 2018)
IVORY				
Australia	→	UK	229 pieces of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory carvings transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport (August 2018)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	→	Belgium	98 pieces (20 kg) of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory carvings transported in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to random check (August 2018)
Central African Republic	→	France	105 pieces of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory pieces.	Detected at an airport (January 2018)
Liberia →	Belgium →	China	35 pieces of African Elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) ivory jewellery transported in personal baggage.	Detected in a box of milk powder at an airport due to random check (September 2018)
LIVE MAMMALS				
Cameroon	→	France	One live Ape Hominoidea spp. and one live Pangolin <i>Manis</i> spp. (Both App. I/II, Annex A/B).	Detected at an airport (July 2018)
MAMMAL BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
Rwanda →	Netherlands →	Belgium	150 kg of Hippopotamus <i>Hippopotamus amphibius</i> (App. II/Annex B) ivory carvings.	Detected at an airport due to random check (April 2018)
South Africa	→	UK	300 specimens of <i>Loxodonta africana</i> (App. I/II, Annex A/B) blood plasma.	Detected at an airport (August 2018)
LIVE BIRDS				
Mexico	→	Spain	6 live Keel-billed Toucan <i>Ramphastos sulfuratus</i> (App. II/Annex B).	Detected at an airport due to physical inspection (April 2018)
Algeria	→	France	Multiple seizures of a total of 7 live Grey Parrot <i>Psittacus erithacus</i> (App. I/Annex A).	Detected at a maritime port (May–November 2018)

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
Spain	→	Morocco	One live Red-and-green Macaw <i>Ara chloropterus</i> , one live Eclectus Parrot <i>Eclectus roratus</i> (both App. II/Annex B) and one live Military Macaw <i>Ara militaris</i> (App. I/Annex A).	Detected at a maritime port as a result of targeting based on Intelligence (October 2018)
BIRD BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
Suriname	→	Netherlands	31 feathers of parrots <i>Pstittaciformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to random check (September 2018)
STURGEON CAVIAR/PRODUCTS CONTAINING STURGEON				
Poland	→	Ukraine	164 kg of caviar containing <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B).	Detected on export (March 2018)
US	→	UK	69 kg of sturgeon caviar <i>Acipenseridae</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) detected in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to routine inspection (October 2018)
Russia	→	Austria	Multiple seizures of a total of 7.3 kg of caviar containing <i>Acipenseriformes</i> spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in personal baggage.	Detected at an airport due to random check (January–December 2018)
South Korea	→	Estonia	Multiple seizures of a total of 14 687 cosmetic products containing captive-bred sturgeons <i>Acipenser</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport as a result of risk assessment (May–July 2018)
France	→	Taiwan	1560 items of cosmetic products containing Russian Sturgeon <i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i> (App. II/Annex B).	Detected at an airport (September 2018)
LIVE EELS				
France	→	Netherlands → Singapore	3901 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i>	Detected at premises (April 2018)
Italy	→	Hong Kong SAR	450 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> detected in air freight.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on intelligence (February 2018)

TRADE ROUTE			SPECIES AND QUANTITY SEIZED	DETAILS
EXPORT/ COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE	TRANSIT	DESTINATION		
Portugal →	France, Germany and Russian Federation →	China	105 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> detected from personal baggage.	Detected at an airport as a result of targeting based on intelligence (November 2018)
Portugal	→	China	Multiple seizures of a total of ca. 346 kg of live European Eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> detected in suitcases.	Detected at airports due to physical inspection (January–November 2018)
OTHER LIVE FISH				
Thailand	→	UK	120 live Seahorses <i>Hippocampus</i> spp. (App. II/Annex B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to targeting (April 2018)
Indonesia	→	UK	47 live Banggai Cardinalfish <i>Pterapogon Kauderni</i> (Annex D) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport (April 2018)
FISH BODIES, PARTS AND DERIVATIVES				
Mexico →	Germany →	China	A total of 405 kg of shark fins of Silky Shark <i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i> , Scalloped Hammerhead <i>Sphyrna lewini</i> and Smooth Hammerhead <i>Sphyrna zygaena</i> (all in App. II/Annex B) transported in air freight.	Detected at an airport due to physical inspection (February 2018)
Peru	→	Germany	360 scales of Pirarucu <i>Arapaima gigas</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in courier parcel.	Detected at a mail centre due to physical inspection (February 2018)
INVERTEBRATES				
Togo	→	UK	161 live Emperor Scorpion <i>Pandinus imperator</i> (App. II/Annex B) transported in air mail.	Detected at a mail centre by X-ray (August 2018)
US	→	UK	20 bodies of butterfly Ornithoptera spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) transported in air mail.	Detected at a mail centre due to risk assessment (November 2018)



4 A BRIEF COMPARISON TO 2017

A comprehensive and quantitative comparison of seizures reported in 2017 and 2018 is not possible due to, among other things, an increase in the number of seizure records lacking some information (e.g. direction of trade for 1992 seizure records (33%) was unknown/other or no information was provided in 2018). However, some observations can be made when comparing these two years.

A total of 6012 seizure records were reported by EU Member States in 2018 while a total of 5644 seizure records were reported in 2017. The commodity groups involved in the seizures, and their order of importance (in terms of number of reported seizure records), were similar in 2017 and 2018, with the commodity groups medicinals, coral and reptile bodies parts and derivatives included in the top commodity groups in both years.

While the number of seizure records and number of specimens declined compared to the previous year, a significant number of seizures of timber were reported; in 2018, 42 028 specimens and an additional 13 768 kg were seized whereas the total international and internal seizures of timber in 2017 was 245 641 specimens and an additional 40 136 kg and 31 m³. The year 2017 saw a significant number of seizures mainly due to an increase in seizures of rosewood *Dalbergia* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) products following the recent CITES-listing of all genera of *Dalbergia* spp. to Appendix II⁸, which came into force in January 2017; in 2018, 96 % of seizure records of timber were *Dalbergia* spp. mainly seized on import.

⁸ Excluding Brazilian rosewood *Dalbergia nigra* which has been listed in Appendix I of CITES since 1992.

A significant number of seizures of elephant ivory continued in 2018, which involved a total of 2825 specimens and an additional 145 kg. Based on number of seizure records, 24% were seized on export; 12% internal; 9% on import; 5% in transit and the remainder (50%) were unknown or no information was provided. Ivory carvings accounted for 80% of ivory seizure records. All the ivory seizure records on export were reported by the United Kingdom in 2018: a total of 101 ivory seizure records involved three specimens and an additional ca. 16 kg, seized at an airport or mail centres on export, the destination of which were all reported as unknown. In addition, 669 specimens and an additional 2.4 kg were seized on import in 2018, which was exported from at least 12 countries/territories including African countries. Furthermore, the seizures in transit (20 seizure records) suggest the EU was continually being utilised as a transit location for the smuggling of elephant ivory from Africa to Asia (mainland China).

Seizures of live European Eel *Anguilla anguilla* (App. II/Annex B) continued in 2018. There were 107 seizure records involving 9841 kg and an additional 107 specimens of live European Eel in 2018, which was an increase from the previous year (67 seizure records involving 2366 kg and an additional 187 specimens in 2017). Based on number of seizure records, 47% were seized on export; 5% internal; 3% in transit; 1% on import and the remainder (45%) were reported as unknown or no information was provided. Of the seizures on export, most of the specimens were destined for Asia, China and Viet Nam being the main destinations. Seizures were mainly reported by Spain, France and Portugal. For example, France reported one seizure record involving 3901 kg of live eels en route from the Netherlands to Singapore in professional premises.

Other important continuing/emerging trends in illegal trade in 2018 include:

- The continued internal seizures of **live birds, particularly parrots** (e.g. Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* [App. I/Annex A]).
- The continued seizures of **sturgeon caviar** *Acipenseriformes* spp. (App. I/II, Annex A/B) mainly intercepted on import.
- The continued shipment of specimens, derivatives and products of illegal wildlife through the **postal system** (subsequently detected in mail centres).

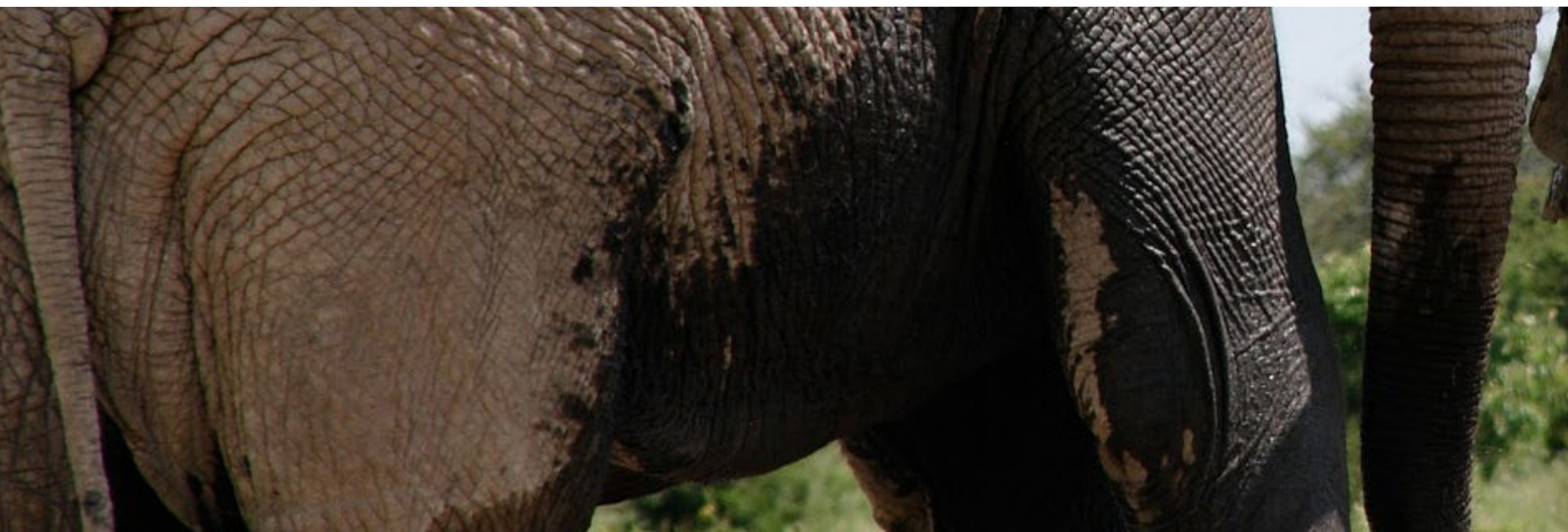


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