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GOVERNMENT OF TONGA



WHY IS CITES IMPORTANT?

More than 180 countries have agreed to abide by the protections outlined in CITES. The protections that prevent the export and import of turtle products here in Tonga, are the same ones that protect the mountain gorillas in parts of Africa and the rhinoceros across Africa and Asia.

For over 45 years, CITES has focused on sustainable management of species to help them recover from over-exploitation. To achieve further success, we need to treat these protections seriously and diligently.

CONTACT US

If you need to get a CITES permit, or if you have any questions, please get in touch.

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Thank you for being a responsible traveller.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE TONGA, STOP AND THINK... COULD YOU BE BREAKING WILDLIFE LAWS?

Tonga is home to many threatened species including corals, marine turtles, whales, dolphins, sharks and more. The survival of these species is further threatened by the global trade in plants, animals and products that may be made from them.



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SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

*A resilient Pacific environment sustaining our livelihoods
and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.*



HELP US TO PRESERVE TONGA'S WILDLIFE

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) regulates the international trade of over 35,000 species of animals and plants worldwide. As a signatory to the Convention, Tonga works hard to ensure that international trade of wildlife and wildlife products does not threaten the survival of those species.

WHEN YOU'RE SHOPPING AND PACKING, KEEP CITES IN MIND

Souvenirs and handicrafts can sometimes include plant and animal products that are protected under CITES. You may be unaware that you are breaking the law by buying them or taking them from one country to another. It is best to ALWAYS check first with Department of Environment or Ministry of Fisheries to avoid fines or confiscation of your personal belongings.

If you plan to export any wildlife product, please contact Department of Environment or Ministry of Fisheries.

IF IN DOUBT, ASK!



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PROHIBITED ITEMS

You cannot take these items out of Tonga

RED SHINING PARROT POLYNESIAN MEGAPODE (MALAU)

and other birds listed in the Birds Act 2016

TURTLE PRODUCTS

- All marine turtle species are listed under CITES.
- Watch out for handicrafts and souvenirs that may include turtle shell.

WHALE AND DOLPHIN PRODUCTS

- All cetacean (whales and dolphins) species are listed under CITES.
- Watch out for items, such as jewellery, that may include bones or teeth from these species.

SHARK AND RAY PRODUCTS

- A number of shark and ray species are listed under CITES, which would require a permit for trade.
- Watch out for any products such as souvenirs, cosmetics, supplements/alternative medicine, meat or dried fins.

*Together, we can help our
threatened species survive.*



CITES PERMIT REQUIRED

Obtain a permit if you plan to travel with the following:

GIANT CLAMS AND THEIR SHELLS OR MEAT

- Giant clams are listed under CITES.

ORCHIDS AND OTHER PLANTS

- All orchid species are listed under CITES.

If you are found to be in possession of a prohibited item or without a valid CITES permit, your product(s) will be seized by border control officials. You may be subject to penalties or fines.

ASK FIRST

SEA CUCUMBERS

- Three species of sea cucumbers (teatfish) are listed under CITES, which would require an export permit for trade.

CORALS AND SHELLS

- You need a permit to export or import some types of coral and shells – including jewellery made from these items.
- The number or weight of shells that you have will determine the quantity that can be exported.

If you're travelling with sea cucumbers, coral and/or shells, contact Ministry of Fisheries for more information.