

The unregulated exotic pet trade in the EU: a threat to health and biodiversity

3 June 2021 | 12:30-3:00pm CEST

Event hosted by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council



Agenda

Opening speech from **Maria do Céu Antunes**, Portuguese Minister of Agriculture

Presentations

The EU as a main consumer of live wildlife and the risk of overexploiting biodiversity - Challenges to overcome uncertainties to warrant a legal, traceable and sustainable wildlife trade. **Mark Auliya**, Department of Conservation Biology, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research GmbH - UFZ, Germany

Zoonotic risks associated with the trade and keeping of exotic pets in the EU (including a virtual visit to AAP's quarantine facility). **David van Gennep**, Executive Director, AAP Animal Advocacy and Protection

How the exotic pet trade leads to the introduction of invasive alien species into the EU. **Julie Lockwood**, Chair and Professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources, Rutgers University

Impact of legal (unregulated) trade on the animal health and welfare
Pedro M. Canavilhas de Melo, Portuguese General Direction of Food and Veterinary Border Control Posts at veterinary agencies under the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture.

Debate with Panelists

moderated by Reineke Hameleers (CEO, Eurogroup for Animals)

- **Dr François Diaz**, Chargé de mission Preparedness and Resilience Department, OIE
- **João José de Bastos Loureiro**, Portuguese National Authority for Nature Conservation (ICNF), Head of Department of Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (Ministry of Environment – Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests)
- **Jorge Rodriguez Romero**, DG Envi, Deputy Head of the Multilateral Environmental Cooperation Unit
- **Elaine Toland**, Director, Animal Protection Agency
- **Marina Michaelidou-Kadi**, Senior Officer of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, Cyprus

Closing remarks

Speakers



Maria do Céu Antunes, Portuguese Minister of Agriculture

Maria do Céu Albuquerque was born in 1970 in Abrantes. She has a degree in Biochemistry from the Faculty of Science and Technology of the University of Coimbra and a postgraduate degree in Quality Management and Food Safety from the Egas Moniz School of Health Sciences. She is currently the Minister of Agriculture in Portugal. From February to October 2019, Maria was Secretary of State for Regional Development, before that she was the Mayor of Abrantes for 9 years and since 2013 has chaired the Council of the Médio Tejo Intermunicipal Community. She was a member of the Economic and Social Council, and of the Council of European Communities and Regions at the Standing Committee for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. She was a member of the Monitoring Committee of the Regional Operational Programme of the Centro Region - Centro 2020, and of the Executive Committee of the Regional Tourism Authority of the Centro de Portugal Region, and also chaired the board of TecParques - Portuguese Association of Science and Technology Parks.



Marina Michaelidou-Kadi, Senior Officer of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment, Cyprus

Marina Michaelidou-Kadi is a Senior Officer at the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment of Cyprus. She has a background in psychology and environmental conservation, with emphasis on the human dimensions of wildlife management (PhD, Cornell University). Since joining the Environment Ministry in 2004, her work has focused on promoting new environmental and animal welfare policies, and leading a number of environmental awareness campaigns. She is also known for writing books for young children, which cultivate environmental and animal welfare consciousness. Several of her books have been recognized locally and internationally.

Speakers



**Mark Auliya, Department of Conservation Biology,
Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research
GmbH - UFZ, Germany**

Mark Auliya holds a PhD in zoology, botany and ecology from the University of Bonn. His focus is conservation science, especially of reptiles. In the course of numerous and extensive stays in the tropics, he has been dealing with reptile trade issues for more than 20 years. He has been and continues to be a member of various IUCN expert committees and has worked with several stakeholders such as CITES, academic institutions, industry and NGOs. He is particularly interested in finding solutions for intensively traded species and thus calls for a political hearing and more responsibility for a legal and transparent way to sustainably protect biodiversity.



**David van Gennep, Executive Director, AAP Animal
Advocacy and Protection**

David van Gennep completed his studies on immunology and marine ecotoxicology in 1990, and thereafter worked as a researcher at the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture. He started volunteering with AAP Sanctuary for Exotic Animals in 1980 and was appointed Executive Director in 1995. AAP provides shelter, rehabilitation and relocation to exotic mammal species that originate from the (illegal) trade, pet trade and circuses from all over Europe. AAP does not just help individual animals in need, but always strives for sustainable solutions. In recent years David's work has mainly focused on external communication and international collaboration in order to improve legislation (and enforcement of legislation) regarding exotic animals and their welfare.

Speakers



Julie Lockwood, Chair and Professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources, Rutgers University

Julie Lockwood, PhD, is a Professor in Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources at Rutgers University (USA). Her research explores the influence of trade and commerce on the rate at which non-native animals establish, and on the impact of invasive wildlife. Her research group has published extensively on early detection, eradication and management of invasive species in North America. She has contributed to several global efforts to synthesize invasive species science, including within the recent United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report on invasive species.



Pedro M. Canavilhas de Melo, Portuguese General Direction of Food and Veterinary Border Control Posts at veterinary agencies

Pedro M. Canavilhas de Melo DVM. MVsc graduated in Veterinary Medicine in 1989, at the Escola Superior de Medicina Veterinária, Technical University of Lisbon. He completed his Master of Veterinary Public Health in 2006 from the Faculdade de Medicina Veterinária (FMV), of Lisbon University and currently performs institutional duties on Border Control Posts at veterinary agencies under the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, since 1990. He is the inviting Professor of Medicine of Wildlife Species and Conservation at FMV of Lisbon University, a veterinary practitioner of wild animals at Wildlife Rehabilitation Centers since 1990, and a veterinarian at Conservation Biology projects.

Speakers



Reineke Hameleers (CEO, Eurogroup for Animals)

Reineke Hameleers is the CEO of Eurogroup for Animals, the leading Pan-European animal protection organisation convening 74 members in the EU and all over the world. She is very passionate about driving positive change for animals at institutional level by uniting the animal protection movement. Reineke holds a Master's degree in Arts and Science Studies from Maastricht University and her thesis was on the human-animal relationship. She has been active in animal advocacy since 2003 and worked before as Regional Director of the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals. Reineke is also a member of the Netherlands Committee for the Protection of Animals during Scientific Purposes.



Dr François Diaz, Chargé de mission Preparedness and Resilience Department, OIE

Dr François Diaz works at the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). He is chargé de mission at the OIE Headquarters in the Preparedness and Resilience Department. He works on wildlife and biodiversity, diseases of bees, and the international transport of diagnostic specimens. A French national, Dr François Diaz was awarded a degree of Doctor of Pharmacy and also obtained a Masters degree in International Law and law of International Organizations.



Jorge Rodriguez Romero, DG Envi, Deputy Head of the Multilateral Environmental Cooperation Unit

Jorge Rodriguez Romero has worked in DG Environment from 2004 in different posts related to EU and international environmental policies. Since January 2017, he has been Deputy Head of Unit in DG Environment Multilateral Environmental Cooperation unit, dealing among other issues with international forest, wildlife trafficking and international environmental governance. Before joining the Commission I worked for the Spanish Ministry for the Environment and as a consultant.

Speakers



João José de Bastos Loureiro, Head of Department of Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (Ministry of Environment – Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests)

João José de Bastos Loureiro is currently the Head of Department of Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (Ministry of Environment – Institute of Nature Conservation and Forests). He has also worked as an environmental NGO leader between 1987 and 1997 and 2000 and 2003 (regional leader and Vice-President of Quercus-ANCN, the biggest Portuguese Environment and Nature Conservation NGO). He studied a medicine university course followed by a degree in Biology. To name but a few of his key qualifications, he is an expert in vertebrate fauna identification and birds behaviour, organizer and teacher of fauna Identification courses, handling of wild animals, and fauna and flora related legislation in Portugal, to university students and all national agencies which have competences in CITES (customs, veterinary, enforcement authorities, prosecutors, judges), teacher at the Master's course on Management, Access and Conservation of Species in Trade. Held in Baeza, Spain, CITES Management Authority of Portugal between 1997 and 2000 and since 2003 to date, Coordinator of CITES Enforcement Group of Portugal since 2009 and he is responsible for the elaboration of protection and nature conservation legislation.



Elaine Toland, Director, Animal Protection Agency

Elaine Toland is a biologist and Founder and Director of the Animal Protection Agency, who has spent over 20 years campaigning on issues relating to the exotic pet trade. The Agency has been particularly successful in curbing wild animal markets in the UK and in raising awareness of the problems associated with exotic pet keeping. Elaine has co-authored several scientific papers and reports on subjects ranging from mortality rates in reptiles to exotic pet trade regulation. Her research and projects earned her post-graduate MSB status from the Royal Society of Biology and Fellowship status of the Royal Society for Public Health.