

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Guidance notes for Personal Ownership Certificates

You should read this guidance note together with the general guidance notes for importers and exporters (GN1) and the general guidance notes for commercial use (GN2). These will give more detail on the exact procedures and requirements when you apply for licences.

These notes are for guidance only and are not a full statement of the law. If you need points of law to be explained, you should get independent legal advice.

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1 Introduction

The Regulations allow us to issue a **Personal Ownership Certificate** for live animals that are kept as personal pets. These certificates enable the owners of these animals to move them across national boundaries into and out of the EU, without the need for further EU documentation.

2 What specimens are covered?

These certificates may be issued for any live specimen of any species listed on Annex A – C providing you will not be using them for commercial purposes. The specimens must have been bred in captivity and have been owned for at least 6 months. They must also be marked in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation.

The term 'bred in captivity' is more involved than just breeding in a cage, aviary or enclosure and you should ask us if you are not sure if your specimen would be considered captive bred.

Specimens that were obtained before CITES itself came into force in 1975 may also be issued with a certificate.

3 Marking of Specimens

Currently, birds bred in captivity must be marked with a uniquely marked close ring or, if this is not possible due to the physical or behavioural characteristics of the specimen concerned, an unalterable microchip that meets ISO Standards 11784:1996 and 11785:1996 (E).

All other animals must be marked with a microchip as described above or, if this is not possible due to the physical or behavioural characteristics of the specimen concerned, a ring, band, tag, tattoo or other appropriate method.

Marking must be carried out taking account the humane care, wellbeing and natural behaviour of the specimens concerned.

4 Validity of documents

These certificates will not cover the first import into the EU of your pet. For this you will require a formal import permit. You should read GN1 if you need to apply for one of these. You will need to keep your import permit in a safe place as you may need it to show that your pet was legally imported and to support any future applications for a Personal Ownership Certificate or other documentation.

The certificate should be issued by the Management Authority of the member state in which the specimen originates, or if it is imported, the country of its original destination and are valid for up to 3 years. At the end of this period the certificate expires and the **specimen must be returned** to the member state that issued the certificate.

When being transported, the specimen must be accompanied by their legal owner.

A personal ownership certificate may be used as:

- An import permit – other than for the first import in to the EU.
- Where the country of destination agrees, as an export or re-export permit.

If you wish to sell the specimen or use it commercially in any way, the certificate must be returned to the issuing Management Authority and if the specimen is listed on Annex A, then you must apply for an Article 10 Certificate. If you want to use your pet for any commercial purpose you should read Guidance Note 2 for information on how to apply for a sales certificate.

If a certificate is lost, stolen or destroyed then it can only be replaced by the original issuing management authority. If an animal covered by a certificate gives birth in another EU member state, then an application for another certificate for the offspring should be made to that member states CITES Management Authority.

If your specimen is transferred to a new owner the certificate will no longer be valid and must be returned to the Department.

5 Exemptions from marking

You may not have to mark your specimen if you can show us evidence from a vet that the physical or behavioural characteristics of the specimens at the time of issue mean that any method of marking would harm it.

6 How do I apply?

All applications require an application form. These can be obtained from our website or from the enquiries desk.

As the applicant it is your responsibility to supply us with all the information required to process your application, so you should fill in as much of the information as you can. The application form is a signed legal declaration by you that the information you have given is correct.

The more information you are able to supply to us, the more quickly your application will be processed. It is not part of our role to pursue information on your behalf. If there is not enough information, it is possible that your application may be refused.

You must give us a full description of the item or specimen, including details of all marks, tags, microchip numbers, ring numbers, and other identifying features in the description box. You should also confirm that any **rings fitted to birds are close rings** rather than split rings. Close rings are continuous bands with out any breaks.

You should also include evidence that the specimen was lawfully obtained

It would also be useful if you would include a telephone number or an e-mail address so that we can contact you quickly if we need to. If you have any difficulty with the application form please contact us and we will be happy to help you.

7 Turn around times and Customer Charter

We have published a Customer Charter as part of the Government's service initiative to raise standards of public service. We aim to process 90% of complete licence applications within 15 working days and the remainder within 30 working days. You should allow this amount of time for your application to be processed. Copies of the Service Charter can be obtained from the enquiries desk.

8 Release of Information

Information supplied in applications may be used for the purposes of monitoring compliance of EC Regulation 338/97 and supporting regulations, and in the investigation of possible offences. The information may be passed to HM Revenue & Customs under the provisions of Article 14 of Regulation 338/97 and to the Police and the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) for the purposes of gathering and analysing intelligence on possible wildlife crimes. Information (including personal data) may also be released on request to other enforcement authorities, under the Environmental Information Regulations, the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

It is a condition of making an application that you agree to the Department passing on information to these organisations.

9 Enquiries desk and application forms

If you have any further questions or would like an application form, contact to our enquiries desk at:

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service
Floor 1, Zone 17
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6EB.

CITES questions and contact numbers

Phone: 0117 372 8692 (Bird registration and Article 10 applications for birds of prey)

Phone: 0117 372 8691 or 0117 372 8168 (all other Article 10 and all CITES import or export applications)

Fax: 0117 372 8206

E-mail: wildlife.licensing@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/index.htm

You can also visit: www.ukcites.gov.uk
www.wcmc.org.uk/species/trade/eu/tradereg.html