CORE CONCEPT

Wildlife Crime and CITES Enforcement Course: Illegal Wildlife Trade Investigation and Control

2 – 6 November 2026
London - Central London four-star

Wildlife Crime and CITES Enforcement Course: Illegal Wildlife Trade Investigation and Control

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Introduction:

Wildlife crime and CITES enforcement, covering illegal wildlife trade investigation and control, is a 1-week course for environmental enforcement, customs, border and wildlife authority staff, ending with a Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan for a case organisation. Live birds, reptiles, ivory and skins cross borders with forged or recycled permits, false captive-bred claims and mislabelled cargo, while sellers move stock through social media faster than inspectors can react. Nominees already inspect shipments, issue permits or handle seizures, and learn through case studies on permit sets and seizure files. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this wildlife crime and CITES enforcement course.

Course Objectives:

- Verify CITES export permits, re-export certificates and pre-Convention and captive-breeding certificates against the Appendix listing of each specimen
- Apply species identification sheets and expert referral routes so frontline inspectors can flag suspect live animals, parts and derivatives
- Profile shipments, passengers and smuggling routes for wildlife risk using cargo data, concealment indicators and broad commodity codes
- Monitor online and social media wildlife sales and turn captured listings into intelligence reports and test purchase decisions
- Handle wildlife seizures with sampling, chain of custody, forensic submission and placement of live animals so that cases stay admissible
- Coordinate inter-agency controls on falconry, exotic pet and live-animal trade through a joint enforcement action plan

Target Audience:

- Environmental enforcement staff responsible for inspecting traders, pet markets, breeders and holding facilities
- Customs and border control staff responsible for examining cargo, baggage, postal parcels and live-animal consignments
- Wildlife authority staff responsible for issuing CITES permits, registering captive stock and advising on non-detriment findings
- Investigation staff responsible for building wildlife crime case files for prosecutors
- Port veterinary and quarantine inspection staff responsible for live animals detained at entry points

Course Outline:

Day 1: Wildlife Crime Landscape and the CITES Permit System

- CITES Convention Purpose, Parties and Domestic Implementation Duties
- Appendix I, II and III Listing Rules Compared
- Management Authority and Scientific Authority Roles in Permitting
- Wildlife Trade Typology of Live Animals, Parts and Derivatives
- Current-State Review of Agency Seizure and Permit Records

Day 2: CITES Permits, Certificates and Species Identification Support

- Export Permit and Re-Export Certificate Field Verification Checklist
- Non-Detriment Finding Evidence and Trade Suspension Triggers
- Pre-Convention and Captive-Breeding Certificate Authenticity Checks
- Species Identification Sheets and Expert Referral Protocol for Inspectors
- Forged, Altered and Recycled Permit Detection Indicators

Day 3: Smuggling Detection, Shipment Risk Profiling and Online Trade Monitoring

- Smuggling Route Mapping Through Air Hubs, Seaports and Land Crossings
- Concealment Methods in Baggage, Crates and Mislabelled Cargo
- Harmonized System Code Gaps and Shipment Risk Profiling Rules
- Social Media Wildlife Listing Monitoring and Evidence Capture Procedure
- Online Seller Profiling and Test Purchase Decision Criteria

Day 4: Seizure Handling, Wildlife Forensics and Falconry and Exotic Pet Controls

- Seizure Inventory, Photographs and Chain of Custody Forms
- Wildlife Forensic Sampling for DNA Species Confirmation
- Live Animal Triage, Temporary Holding and Placement Options
- Falconry Bird Ownership Records, Leg Ring and Microchip Checks
- Exotic Pet Laundering Through False Captive-Bred Claims

Day 5: Case Study Build of the Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan

- Case Study of a Reptile Consignment With Mismatched Permits
- Case Study of an Online Parrot and Primate Seller Network
- Inter-Agency Referral Map and Controlled Delivery Decision Points
- Seizure Outcome Tracking Register and Enforcement Performance Indicators
- Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan Completion and Panel Challenge

Skills You Will Gain:

- CITES Permit Verification
- Species Identification Referral
- Shipment Risk Profiling
- Online Wildlife Trade Monitoring
- Wildlife Seizure Handling
- Chain of Custody Management
- Forensic Sample Submission
- Inter-Agency Case Coordination

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver a Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan to the head of the enforcement unit and to partner customs and wildlife authorities
- Decide whether a consignment is released, detained for expert identification or seized, based on permit and species checks
- Avoid dismissed cases, deaths of seized animals and returned contraband caused by broken evidence chains or poor holding arrangements
- Coach inspection colleagues to use permit checklists, identification sheets and online listing capture procedures

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant gives the head of the enforcement unit, the CITES Management Authority focal point and customs risk managers a Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan. Customs uses its risk profiles to select consignments for examination, the wildlife authority uses its permit checks to refuse doubtful applications, and investigators use its seizure procedures to prepare case files. After the first major seizure or online trade operation, the unit should review which indicators triggered detection, whether the evidence held up and which referrals between agencies were slow.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before a wildlife crime and CITES enforcement course?

Participants should already inspect consignments, issue wildlife permits or handle seizures in an enforcement or wildlife body. No scientific training is needed. Anonymised permits, cargo declarations or seizure reports from their own work help during the case studies.

How does a wildlife crime and CITES enforcement course differ from a protected area management course?

It follows wildlife once it enters trade: permits, borders, online sales, seizures and evidence. Protected area courses manage reserves, patrols and habitats, and zoo courses run animal collections, so field patrols and captive husbandry appear here only where they feed trade cases.

Why does wildlife crime and CITES enforcement depend on permits issued before trade?

CITES requires trade in listed specimens to be authorised in advance, so border officers check the permit or certificate before a consignment moves. A specimen without a valid document for its Appendix listing can be refused, detained or confiscated under domestic law.

What do participants take back from the wildlife crime and CITES enforcement course?

Participants take back a Wildlife Trade Enforcement Action Plan for a case organisation, with a permit verification checklist, shipment risk profiling rules, an online listing capture procedure, seizure and sampling forms and an inter-agency referral map.