

19th February 2024

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Dear Commissioner,

We, the undersigned coalition of NGOs, dedicated to the advancement of animal welfare and the protection of wildlife and biodiversity across the globe, write to inform you that on Thursday 25th January 2024, **the Belgian Federal Parliament voted unanimously on a legislative proposal to ban the import of hunting trophies of endangered species into Belgium**. The legislation will end the import of hunting trophies from many species currently at risk of extinction, including all species listed in Annex A¹ of EU Regulation 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora, along with certain species in Annex B² of the same regulation that are also listed in Annex XIII to Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 regulating the trade of protected wild flora and fauna.

The European Green Deal - rightly - positions the EU as the protector of international biodiversity. **We therefore call on the Commission to propose a legislative measure to ban trophy hunting imports into the European Union**. In 2022, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution calling on the Commission and the Member States to take immediate effective action to ban the import of hunting trophies derived from CITES listed species.³ In its updated Action Plan against wildlife trafficking, the EU also recognises the need to apply increased

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31997R0338&from=EN#page=24>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31997R0338&from=EN#page=24>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52022IP0344&from=EN> Resolution 2023/C 132/05, paragraph 39. Urges the Commission and the Member States to take immediate effective action in the framework of its commitments outlined in the EU biodiversity strategy to ban the import of hunting trophies derived from CITES-listed species

scrutiny to the import of hunting trophies. With an increasing number of Member States introducing legislation to restrict trophy hunting imports, **an EU measure is necessary to prevent further fragmentation of the single market**. We also believe it is a necessary step to ensure that our shared commitment to the protection of global biodiversity, where animals can thrive and flourish, becomes a reality.

You will be aware that Belgium is not the only Member State regulating this issue:

- In May 2016, **the Netherlands** instituted a ban⁴ on the import of hunting trophies for more than 200 endangered species.
- In **France**, a similar cross-party legislative proposal⁵ which expands the 2015 ban on lion trophy imports, is currently being discussed by MPs. The bill is working its way through the legislative process and was adopted by the National Assembly's Sustainable Development Committee in January 2024.
- The import of hunting trophies into **Finland**⁶ was restricted in June 2023.
- In **Germany**, the current Minister for the Environment, Steffi Lemke, announced the government's intention to restrict the import of hunting trophies from protected animal species.
- In **Italy**, bills aimed at banning the import, export and re-export to and from Italy of hunting trophies obtained from CITES-protected species were presented to the Chamber of Deputies in 2022 and the Senate in 2023.

Yours sincerely,

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Andrea Höppner, Chair, Pro Wildlife, Germany

⁴ <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/stcrt-2016-23849.html>

⁵ https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/16/textes/l16b1895_proposition-loi

⁶ <https://sey.fi/import-of-trophies-into-finland-restricted-parts-of-the-most-endangered-animals-no-longer-allowed-as-souvenirs/>

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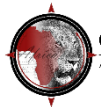
Association
STÉPHANE LAMART



AVES France



bmt
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TROPHY
HUNTING



CAPTURED IN AFRICA
FOUNDATION
COMMITTEE TO CONSERVATION



CATCA Environmental
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CNRG
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CEEL



CONSERVATION KENYA



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Endangered Wildlife
INVESTIGATIONS



Endangered Wildlife
INVESTIGATIONS



EYES WILD OPEN



WCEL

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COMMISSION MONDIALE DE DROIT DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
COMISSÃO MUNDIAL DE DIREITO DO AMBIENTE

ethics specialist group



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Suzanne Anthony
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