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## UN-backed pact launches new tool to monitor trade in endangered species



The rainbow lorikeet, one of several birds that can be monitored on the CITES Trade Data Dashboard

25 August 2010 – The secretariat of a United Nations-backed conservation convention today announced the launch of a new web-based interactive tool that enables users to view trade data about wildlife and plants that was submitted by the 175 State parties to the international agreement.

The Trade Data Dashboards of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**), which is administered by the UN Environment Programme (**UNEP**), is designed to monitor the worldwide trade in wild fauna and flora as more terrestrial and aquatic species are used, and sometimes over-used, as part of human activities.

The tool was launched to mark the 35th anniversary of CITES, which was designed to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

Users accessing the dashboards can, for example, learn with a few key strokes that reptile skins, specifically crocodile skins, are legally traded at a high volume, and that Colombia is one of the major exporters of spectacled caiman, the reptile most frequently traded for its skin.

The dashboard displays data on internationally-regulated species that are legally traded under CITES for purposes such as food, personal care, housing, clothing and scientific and medical research.

The global dashboard displays global trade trends, while the national dashboard shows information by country. Users can consult the dashboards on the CITES website to determine which species are traded, and in what volumes, both globally and by particular countries.

The trade data dashboards were developed by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre ([UNEP-WCMC](#)) under a contract with the CITES secretariat. They provide decision-makers access to important trade information to help them make the best decisions to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of species whose trade is regulated by CITES.

“The CITES trade dashboards make the trade datasets easier to use and accessible by a wider audience. They offer policymakers an additional tool for identifying patterns of trade in listed species and related issues that may require special attention,” said John Scanlon, the Secretary-General of CITES.

Jon Hutton, Director of UNEP-WCMC, said the tool “complements others such as the recently launched Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool ([IBAT](#)), which provides general information on biodiversity and natural habitats worldwide.”

More than 10 million trade transactions in animal and plant species have been reported to CITES since the Convention was established.

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