

Question for written answer E-002411/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Tilly Metz (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Alleged illegal exports of protected wildlife to India's Vantara zoo raise concerns over CITES compliance and EU-funded conservation in the DRC

Since 2022, tens of thousands of wild animals, mostly protected species, are reported to have been exported to the 'Vantara' zoological complex, located within an oil refinery complex in India. Numerous sources indicate that these exports do not comply with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) requirements, particularly for species listed in Appendix I. The European Union is among the main exporters, having sent over 5 400 specimens from its Member States. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is also implicated: chimpanzees, declared as captive-bred by the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) despite the lack of known CITES-compliant breeding facilities, are being exported to Vantara. Yet the ICCN receives significant EU funding for conservation projects.

The CITES Secretariat has been tasked with investigating this matter, while non-governmental organisations are urging the Commission to take action.

1. What checks has the Commission carried out to ensure the legality of exports from the EU?
2. What evaluations have been carried out concerning the ICCN, and does the Commission plan to suspend its funding until the CITES technical assessment and verification mission is completed?

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