

The Belgian draft action plan to combat the illegal importation and consumption of wild meat

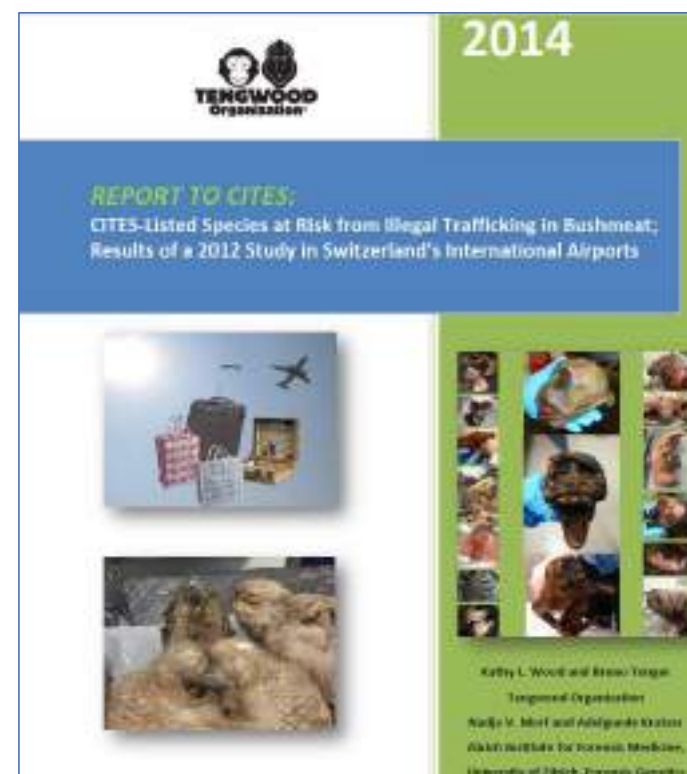
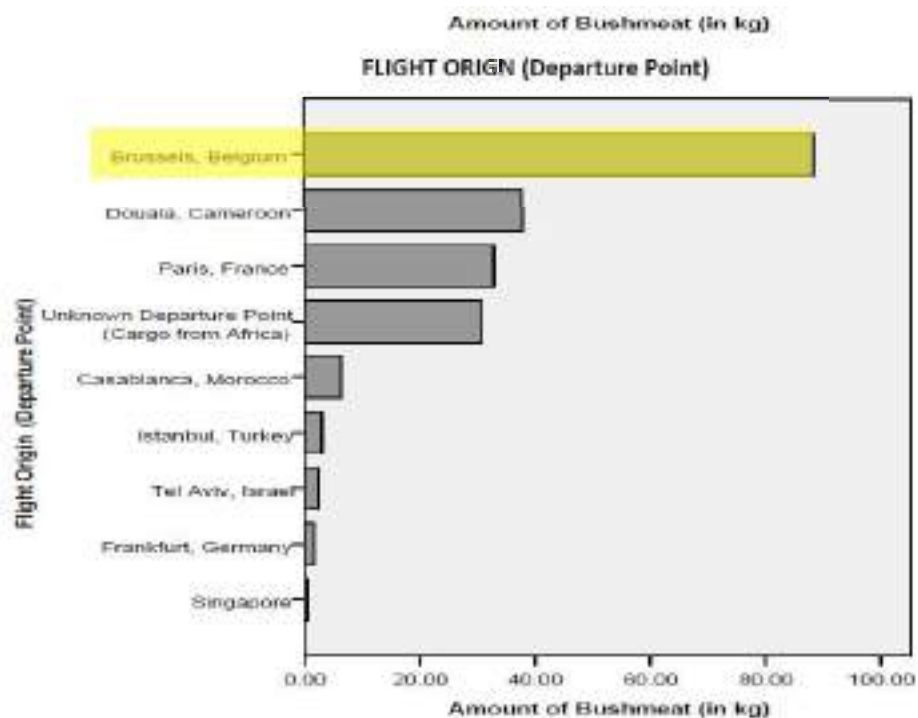
Workshop on the illegal importation of wild meat



Brussels, December 12th

Background for a national plan on illegal wild meat

2014 Swiss report to CITES



Background for a national plan on illegal wild meat

2019

Official Belgian study

(2017-2018)

(...) Using the information of bushmeat seized and an estimate of the number of people entering Brussels from West and Central Africa each month, it was estimated that an average **of 3.7 tonnes of bushmeat was being brought through Brussels airport each month**. A range of species were identified, some of which were CITES listed.



Background for a national plan on illegal wild meat

December 2019

Conference 'Dead or alive: Towards a sustainable wildlife trade'

4 Key Policy recommendations



POLICY BRIEF

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE WILDLIFE TRADE: THE CASE OF BUSHMEAT IMPORT

THE BRIEF

This policy brief is part of a series of three, being the result of a collaborative work carried out under the leadership of the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (Belgium) within the framework of the 'One Health' Institute on the trade in exotic animal species. Its content is based on the background documents, the panel discussions, and the keynotes presentations from the 'Towards a sustainable wildlife trade' conference organized in Brussels on 3 and 4 December 2019. The keynote speakers whose presentations made it possible to develop this document are: Saša Mujicic (WWF-Belgium), Jani Rajala (Maastricht University - CIRDH), Alesia Chaker (University of Leuven & University of Antwerp), Hervé Lesp (University of Antwerp), Mubir Mikić (University of Jigra), Sandrine Morrison-Leprieux (University Medical Center Utrecht), Carole Biller (Ghent University & Brussels Bar) and Erik Verheyen (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences).

KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a coherent One Health policy framework for the legal importation of meat, including bushmeat
- Effective and efficient border controls
- Collect data and enhance knowledge
- Strengthen and diversify testing

- ❑ Priority for environmental & health policies
- ❑ Strengthen enforcement capacities
 - Appropriate resources
 - Frequent, regular and efficient controls
 - Proportionate & dissuasive administrative or criminal penalties
 - Collaboration between MS
- ❑ Collect data & enhance knowledge
 - Volumes, sources, pathways of introduction, taxonomic identity, potential risks
 - Drivers of consumption
 - Reliable & transparent databases
- ❑ Collaborative communication strategy with all stakeholders

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

ENSURE A COHERENT 'ONE HEALTH' POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE LEGAL IMPORTATION OF MEAT, INCLUDING BUSHMEAT

A coherent 'One Health' policy framework can be ensured by establishing transversal and coordinated National and European strategies and action plans to oversee the legal importation of meat, including bushmeat, encompassing following features:

- Making the issue of legal bushmeat import a priority in health and environmental policies
- Establishing effective and efficient biosecurity measures and ensuring current and legal policy frameworks are fit for purpose, timely supplementing these with new developments if needed
- Engaging with all concerned actors (civil society, governments, airlines companies, airports, policy-makers at national, European and international levels, and NGOs) and facilitating collaboration.

EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT BORDER CONTROLS

An effective and efficient border control system is required to prevent the legal importation of meat, including bushmeat, into the European Union. Concerned public authorities should work together and implement a coherent set of actions. Strengthened enforcement capacities at borders can be achieved by:

- Providing appropriate resources for border authorities to perform controls at passengers airports, cargo airports, ports and sea borders
- Increasing frequency, regularity and efficiency of controls, targeting in particular flights from countries at risk
- Imposing proportionate and dissuasive administrative or criminal penalties to offenders and informing passengers on the criminal dimension of bushmeat importation
- Ensuring collaboration between Member States

COLLECT DATA AND ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE

Decision-making regarding the legal importation of meat, including bushmeat relies on evidence which can be improved by:

- Better characterising the volumes, sources, pathways of introduction, taxonomic identity, and potential risks of imported bushmeat at national, EU and international level
- Better characterising the drivers of consumption of bushmeat and the perception and behaviours of consumers in Europe
- Considering transdisciplinary research by integrating sociological, economic, biological, epidemiological, anthropological and legal approaches
- Establishing reliable, transparent and traceable databases and dataflows flows on imported wild meat species following FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable²⁰) to allow reproducible data analysis and interpretation
- Strengthening research on pathogens for consideration in risk analysis processes

INFORMATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

Awareness can be improved by:

- Establishing a collaborative communication strategy with all relevant stakeholders (public authorities, private sectors, airline companies, airports, press and media) targeting all potential audiences from passengers to technical officers. This collaborative approach will ensure endorsement by the different stakeholders.
- Adopting to risk communication approaches.

Background for a national plan on illegal wild meat

September 2020:

National Task Force on Sustainable Wildlife Trade

- ❑ Interministerial mandate
- ❑ To draft an action plan
- ❑ 2023 Public Consultation
- ❑ 2025 final action plan
 - priority actions
 - estimated budget



Members of the Task Force (wild meat part)



MINISTER OF FINANCE



Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain

MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE



MINISTER OF
ENVIRONMENT

MINISTER OF
AGRICULTURE

Minister of Public
Health



Draft national action plan (wild meat part)

□ 22 actions

□ Importation & consumption

□ In Belgium (not in sources countries)

□ 5 axis:

- Gaining knowledge
- Continuous data collection and centralization
- Control
- Enforce & prosecute
- Sensibilisation



INTERCEPT RESEARCH

Draft national action plan (wild meat part)

- December 2024: workshop
- Specific webinars to fine-tune draft actions (air transport sector)?
- Include actions linked to source countries?
- 2025 – Final plan

Thank you !

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