



Operation Charm Fact Sheet

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Information for Antiques Traders on Endangered Species

The trade in endangered species is strictly controlled within the European Union, and in United Kingdom law. Under the Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) Regulations 1997 (as amended in 2005) it is an offence to sell, offer for sale or keep for sale any endangered species listed in the European Union Regulation 33897. A list of the species concerned can be obtained from the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at the address shown below. It is also an offence to buy an endangered species included in the list.

Antique Items

The law protects endangered species from trade in any form. It applies to live and dead specimens, their body parts and any form of derivative obtained from them. There is a specific exemption in law which permits the trade in "worked" antique items, provided that documentary evidence can be produced by the seller, at the point of sale, to show that the specimen was acquired prior to 1st June 1947.

In any other circumstances the seller must apply to Defra for a licence to sell the item. Without this, any attempt to sell or purchase would be an offence.

Worked Specimens

The law defines worked specimens as being "significantly altered from their natural raw state, for jewellery adornment, art, utility or musical instruments before 1st June 1947." These specimens will be considered as worked "only if they are clearly in one of these categories and require no further carving, crafting or manufacture to effect their purpose." Again, in any other circumstances, a sales licence must be applied for.

Penalties

In Britain the maximum penalty for offences is a fine of £5,000 per item or up to 5 years imprisonment, or both.

If you need more information please contact Defra at:

The Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Wildlife Trade Licensing Branch
Temple Quay House, 2 The Square
Temple Quay
BRISTOL BS1 6EB Tel.
0117 372 8691 / 8168

