

Importing Personal Sport-hunted Trophies from Africa: Guidelines for U.S. Hunters

General Requirements

- Most hunting trophies imported from Africa must come through a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated port. Under limited circumstances, you may be authorized under permit to use a port that does not normally handle wildlife trade. You must show that using one of our designated ports would result in substantial deterioration or loss of the wildlife, or would cause undue economic hardship. If you are importing your trophy through a non-designated port, you must have a copy of your valid port exception permit. You can find general information on importing, including our ports in our Office of Law Enforcement Library Collections on our website.
- You must file a Declaration for Importation or Exportation of Fish or Wildlife (Form 3-177) with our wildlife inspectors at an authorized FWS port of entry and receive clearance before U.S. Customs and Border Protection releases your shipment. You may file your declaration electronically (<https://edecs.fws.gov/>) or in hard copy form (form available in our Office of Law Enforcement Library Collections on our website).
- We will charge a premium fee for inspecting your protected species trophy when you clear it through a designated port during normal business hours. You will pay both base inspection and premium fees if you use a port exception permit. You will pay overtime fees if you import outside of normal business hours. The Service also charges a fee when you apply for CITES or other wildlife import permits.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

- If your trophy animal is protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species ([CITES](#)), you will need an original valid CITES export document from the country of export or re-export. If the animal is listed on CITES Appendix I (for example, leopard), you also need an original import permit from the United States. You must obtain this permit from the Service before you import your trophy.
- Trophies must be imported into the United States before all of your documents expire, and your CITES documents must be validated upon export by the foreign country's inspecting officials. Your CITES documents must contain the information required by our regulations. See our guidance in our Office of Law Enforcement Library Collections on our website
- If you import worked, manufactured or handicraft items made from your trophy for use as clothing, curios, ornamentation, jewelry, or other utilitarian items, you must have CITES documents that indicate a purpose other than hunting (H) for the items (i.e., personal, commercial). If you plan to import curios or other items either separately or in your trophy shipment that you purchased while overseas, be aware that there might be restrictions on what you can import.

- You must follow all permit conditions and make sure your trophies are tagged or marked as required. For example, crocodile or leopard skins must have a CITES tag inserted through the skin and locked in place using the locking mechanism of the tag. A mounted trophy must be accompanied by the tag from the skin used to make the mount. CITES documents must contain all the information that appears on the CITES tag.

Stricter U.S. Wildlife Laws

- You should be aware that there are several U.S. wildlife laws that may restrict the import of your trophy. If the animal is protected by the Endangered Species Act (for example, leopard, brown hyena or bontebok), you will need to obtain an endangered species import permit before importing your trophy. Some bird trophies (for example, hoopoe) may need permits under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. You can find the list of migratory birds at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-10/subpart-B/section-10.13>.
- Many countries require export permits for wildlife, even for species not protected under CITES. Be sure to check with the exporting country for any additional requirements. Importing trophies without permits required by a foreign country is a violation of U.S. law.

Other Agency Requirements

- Many hunting trophies are subject to requirements and restrictions enforced by other U.S. federal agencies.
- General import requirements for U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) can be found at: <https://www.cbp.gov/trade/basic-import-export>. If you are exporting and re-importing any guns, you should register with CBP before you go (<https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/cbp-advises-hunters-planning-international-travel>).
- You can find animal import information for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) at: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/infosheets/guidanceforhunters.pdf, including specific guidelines for importing ruminant, swine and bird trophies. Hunters should be aware that some shipments may need to be consigned and shipped to a USDA approved establishment.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have restrictions on the import of animals that might be vectors, hosts or agents of disease. You can find information on these restrictions, in particular, on African rodents, non-human primates, and civets at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm>.

For additional information, contact:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of Law Enforcement
Phone: 703-358-1949
Fax: 703-358-2271
E-mail: lawenforcement@fws.gov