

Fashion industry alerted to new guidance for trade of animal products

As this year's London Fashion Week gets underway, the government is urging consumers and the fashion industry to check new [guidance](#) effective from January 2021 around importing and exporting products which are covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

CITES is an international agreement which protects more than 35,000 species of endangered animals and plants, by checking how they are traded or moved, either as live specimens or as products made from their parts.

At the end of the Transition Period on 1 January 2021, new rules will mean that these products, including some reptile skins, leather, shells, coral and feathers, will need documentation in order for them to be legally transported between Great Britain and the EU, and between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

London Fashion Week highlights the importance of checking which products, will be protected by CITES. It covers a range of products, including ingredients in skincare such as cacti and caviar, leather shoes and watch straps, snakeskin handbags, jewellery and sunglasses made from shells or coral, and exhibition artefacts.

Members of the public who sell second hand fashion items online should also check the guidance before posting items abroad.

People returning to the UK from abroad should check if the items they want to bring with them are listed in the [CITES species list](#) before moving these goods across the border. If necessary, they will need to apply for CITES documentation from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and travel through designated UK Points of Entry and Exit (PoE).

The government has increased the number of UK land, sea and air ports to 29 locations with a full list and further information available on [Gov.UK](#).

Emma Biggs, APHA's Head of International Trade and Customer Service Centres said:

CITES plays a crucial role in ensuring that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival in the wild.

All businesses and individuals looking to move animal or plant products across the GB border from 1 January 2021 must check whether they need to apply for CITES documentation.

People moving CITES products outside of Great Britain should check the specific requirements of the intended import country on the [Global CITES website](#). All UK import and export permits are valid for 6 months, so people are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, allowing at least 30 days to receive them. Businesses and individuals should also make sure to use a CITES designated PoE and present their CITES documents upon arrival and departure.

The government is committed to protecting nature and biodiversity and to upholding our commitments under CITES, whilst working hard to ensure there is minimal disruption for businesses and consumers at the end of the Transition Period.