**GUIDE TO THE NON-COMMERCIAL LOAN, DONATION OR EXCHANGE OF SCIENTIFIC SPECIMENS BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN AND REGISTERED OVERSEAS INSTITUTIONS.**

# Under national environmental law - the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), permits are required for the:

# export of specimens of native species,

# import and export of specimens of species listed on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (see http://checklist.cites.org/#/en or https://www.speciesplus.net/) and the

# import of live specimens.

# Scientific institutions (museum, laboratory, forensic research institution etc.) that have been registered for this purpose may exchange certain specimens of CITES-listed species and Australian native specimens without permits, provided it is part of an exchange of non-commercial scientific specimens. Such scientific transfers do not require a formal export or import permit but under this exemption they must carry a label detailing specific information regarding the specimen(s). This exemption for certain scientific specimens is designed to facilitate scientific study, including study into the taxonomy or conservation of species.

##### CITES-listed specimens

Both the Australian and overseas scientific institutions must be registered with the CITES Management Authority in their country if they wish to exchange specimens derived from CITES species. The Register of scientific institutions is available at https://www.cites.org/eng/common/reg/e\_si.html.

##### Australian native specimens (except CITES specimens)

Both the Australian and overseas scientific institutions must be registered to participate in the scientific exchange system for Australian native species not listed under CITES.

# Overseas institutions that are already registered for exchange of CITES specimens do not need an additional registration for the purpose of exchanging non-CITES Australian native specimens. Overseas institutions which are not registered by their CITES Management Authority but wish to only exchange Australian native non-CITES specimens can apply to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment for registration.

**What is covered by this system?**

# The loan, donation or exchange of specimens must be done without monetary compensation and the specimens must be legally obtained and have been accessioned into the organisation’s collection.

**Before you import goods to Australia**, it is important that you understand your responsibilities as an importer and the import conditions that may apply to your goods. Complying with these requirements can reduce costly delays and help keep biosecurity risks offshore. For more information on how to import goods to Australia, please examine biosecurity requirements at: <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/import/before>/how-to-import

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Specimens that are covered:** | * herbarium specimens (e.g. dried or pressed plants and flowers). * preserved, dried or embedded specimens (e.g. microscope slides or specimens preserved in alcohol, taxidermy specimens, or tanned skins). * frozen specimens (e.g. frozen tissue samples). * live plant material. * animal DNA derived from preserved, dried or embedded museum specimens or plant DNA derived from live plants, herbarium specimens or preserved, dried or embedded museum specimens. * wildlife forensic research specimens [of the types included in [annex 1 of Res. Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP18)](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-11-15-R18.pdf)]. * diagnostic samples of the type listed in [annex 4 of Res. Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18)](https://cites.org/sites/default/files/document/E-Res-12-03-R18.pdf). |
| **Specimens that are not covered:** | * **live animals.** * any specimens that *are not* first accessioned into the collection of a registered institution (e.g.: **fresh blood, sera or semen samples, or** specimens collected by field researchers). * wildlife enforcement specimens for the purpose of assisting in an ongoing criminal investigation. |

##### HOW TO EXCHANGE SPECIMENS

### Export

When registration is approved, each Australian institution is issued with an official scientific exchange label template individually created for that institution. This template allows registered institutions to print their own labels as required. There are two versions of the templates—one for CITES specimens and one for Australian native non-CITES specimens. For export from Australia, the package containing the specimen must have a scientific exchange label attached that shows:

* the scientific and common name of the specimen
* the quantity and a short description of the specimen
* the Australian institution’s name and registration code number
* the receiving institution’s name and registration code number
* the specimen’s registration number from the organisation’s collection register
* the date on which the package was sealed
* the name and signature of the person authorised through registration to exchange specimens and the designation or title of that person.
* for a CITES specimen:
* the Appendix to CITES in which the species is listed.

The labels do not replace the requirement to affix the appropriate Customs Declaration forms supplied by Australia Post. In addition, all export requirements of Australian Border Force must be met. Where the value of the consignment exceeds $2000 or a permit requirement applies, a formal export declaration must be lodged with Australian Border Force. If the value is $2000 or less and no permit requirement applies, a formal export declaration is not required. Clearance must also be obtained from Australian Border Force for the import of goods into Australia. For details about these requirements contact an Australian Border Force office in your state capital or the head office at:

**Australian Border Force**  
131 881 (within Australia) or +61 2 6196 0196 (from outside Australia)

**www.homeaffairs.gov.au**

### Import

### For import into Australia, CITES specimens must be accompanied by documentation issued or endorsed by the exporting country’s CITES Management Authority complying with the CITES provisions for exchange of scientific specimens (Article VII.6 and Resolution Conf 11.15). The scientific exchange label is not required for the import of Australian native non-CITES-listed specimens.

### Keeping records

Registered institutions must maintain a record of all exchanges undertaken. These records must be made available to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment annually, on 31 August each year. The records should be for the financial year.

## Review/Revocation of Registration

A review of the register of scientific institutions will be conducted periodically to ensure the information is up-to-date and that all institutions continue to meet the requirements of registration. Institutions that no longer meet the requirements or that may have been exchanging specimens contrary to the requirements outlined above will be removed from the Register.

## Other research purposes

If a specimen does not meet all the criteria for scientific exchange, registered institutions must apply for a research permit. Information on obtaining permits for the import and export of specimens for research purposes can be found at:

http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-trade/permits/index.html

Note: Further information is available from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment at:

Ph. +61 2 6274 1900 (option 2)

wta@environment.gov.au