

Practical amphibian conservation projects and illegal reptiles and amphibians trade in Spain

Silvia Díaz Lora (WWF Spain)



Catalunya Caixa Project

- Amphibians Recovery Project at local level (in the Hoces del Río Riaza. Segovia, Spain)
- Previous identification study (Location of areas of importance for amphibians thanks to local knowledge)
- CENSUS before and after the actions to evaluate their effectiveness





CatalunyaCaixa
Obra Social

RECUPERACIÓN DE ANFIBIOS EN LAS HOCES DEL RIAZA

WWF, en colaboración con Obra Social de CatalunyaCaixa, comenzó en 2011 a trabajar en la mejora del hábitat para recuperar las poblaciones de anfibios en las Hoces del río Riaza.

2011

ESTUDIO PREVIO DE IDENTIFICACIÓN

Localización de las zonas de importancia para anfibios gracias al conocimiento local.

CENSO DE ANFIBIOS

Censo anterior y posterior a las actuaciones para evaluar su efectividad.

CHARCA PEÑARRUBIA



RESTAURACIÓN
DE 2 CHARCAS
DEGRADADAS

Trabajos realizados: remodelación de márgenes y eliminación de escombros, basuras, troncos, materia orgánica, etc.

CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA CERRA



CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA CERRA



CREACIÓN DE 3 NUEVAS CHARCAS

Trabajos realizados: preparación del terreno, impermeabilización, naturalización, creación de refugios y conexión con una fuente de agua.

CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA CERRA



CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA CERRA



PARTICIPACIÓN, SENSIBILIZACIÓN
Y COMUNICACIÓN

2012

Catalunya Caixa Project

- RESTORATION of 2 ponds degraded (remodeling of margins and removal of debris, garbage, logs, organic matter...)
- CREATION of 3 new ponds (land preparation, waterproofing, naturalization, creation of shelters and connection to a water source)
- PARTICIPATION, AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION





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CHARCA PEÑARRUBIA


RESTAURACIÓN DE 2 CHARCAS DEGRADADAS
Trabajos realizados: remodelación de márgenes y eliminación de escombros, basuras, troncos, materia orgánica, etc.


PREPARACIÓN DEL TERRENO


CREACIÓN DE 3 NUEVAS CHARCAS
Trabajos realizados: preparación del terreno, impermeabilización, naturalización, creación de refugios y conexión con una fuente de agua.


FINALIZACIÓN




PARTICIPACIÓN, SENSIBILIZACIÓN Y COMUNICACIÓN

2012

Biodiversity Foundation Project

- Amphibian awareness and conservation project at national level
- Replicable and transferable project
- Expert workshop with AHE → *Priorities report for amphibian conservation in Spain*



Prioridades para la conservación de anfibios en España

INTRODUCCIÓN

Biodiversity Foundation Project

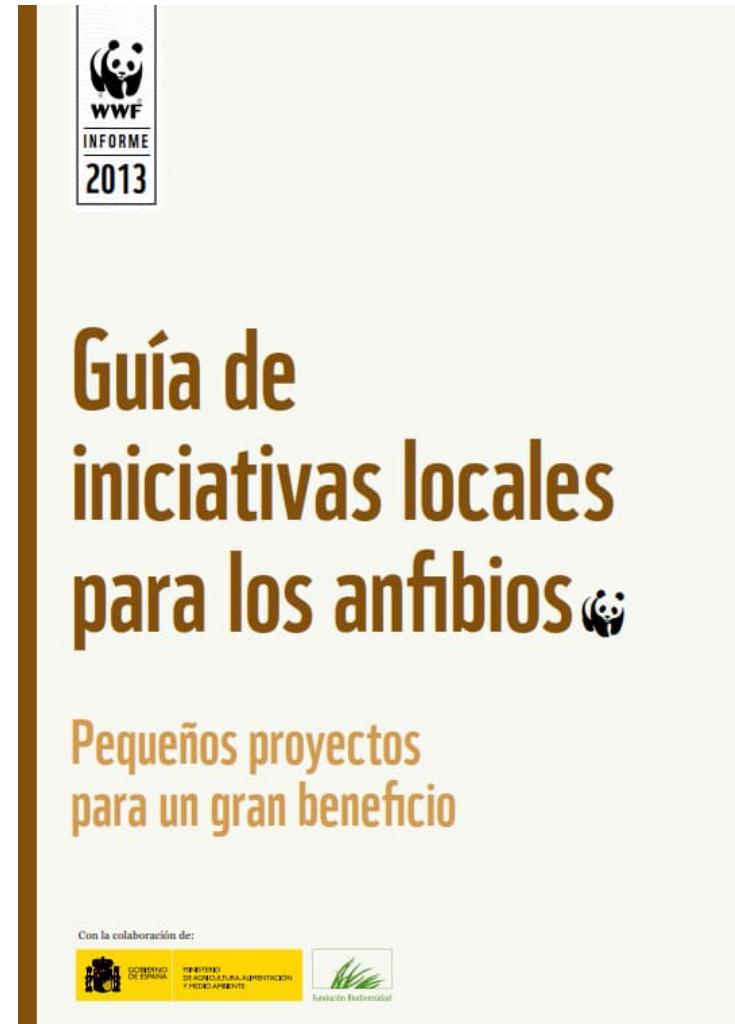
- Promotion of actions at the local level:
 - "Frog Searches Pond" Contest (many requests: participation of 67 city council)
 - *Guide to local initiatives for amphibians* (for city council)



NOTICIAS
RANA busca CHARCA - Concurso de microproyectos para la conservación de anfibios

Publicado el 8 febrero 2013

Winner of the contest: *Manzanares del real (Madrid)*



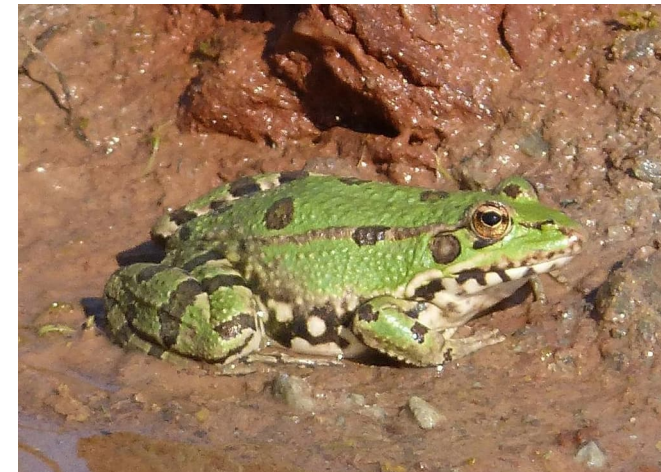
Biodiversity Foundation Project



- Pond restoration



- Training for the Spanish Amphibian and Reptile Monitoring Program (SARE) to the network of local volunteer groups of WWF Spain



Montemadrid and Caja Madrid Foundation



- Awareness and participation project for the conservation of amphibians in the center of Spain
- “SalvaRanas” campaign (*Save frogs, jump to save amphibians*)
- WWF developed a Pocket Guide “El SalvaRanas” to facilitate their recognition in the field, and a simple application to publicize their threats and the solutions to conserve them
- Informative materials presented in an educational center in Madrid with more than 100 students. The purpose is to raise awareness in society so that it values the importance of conserve amphibians
- CENSUS



Montemadrid and Caja Madrid Foundation



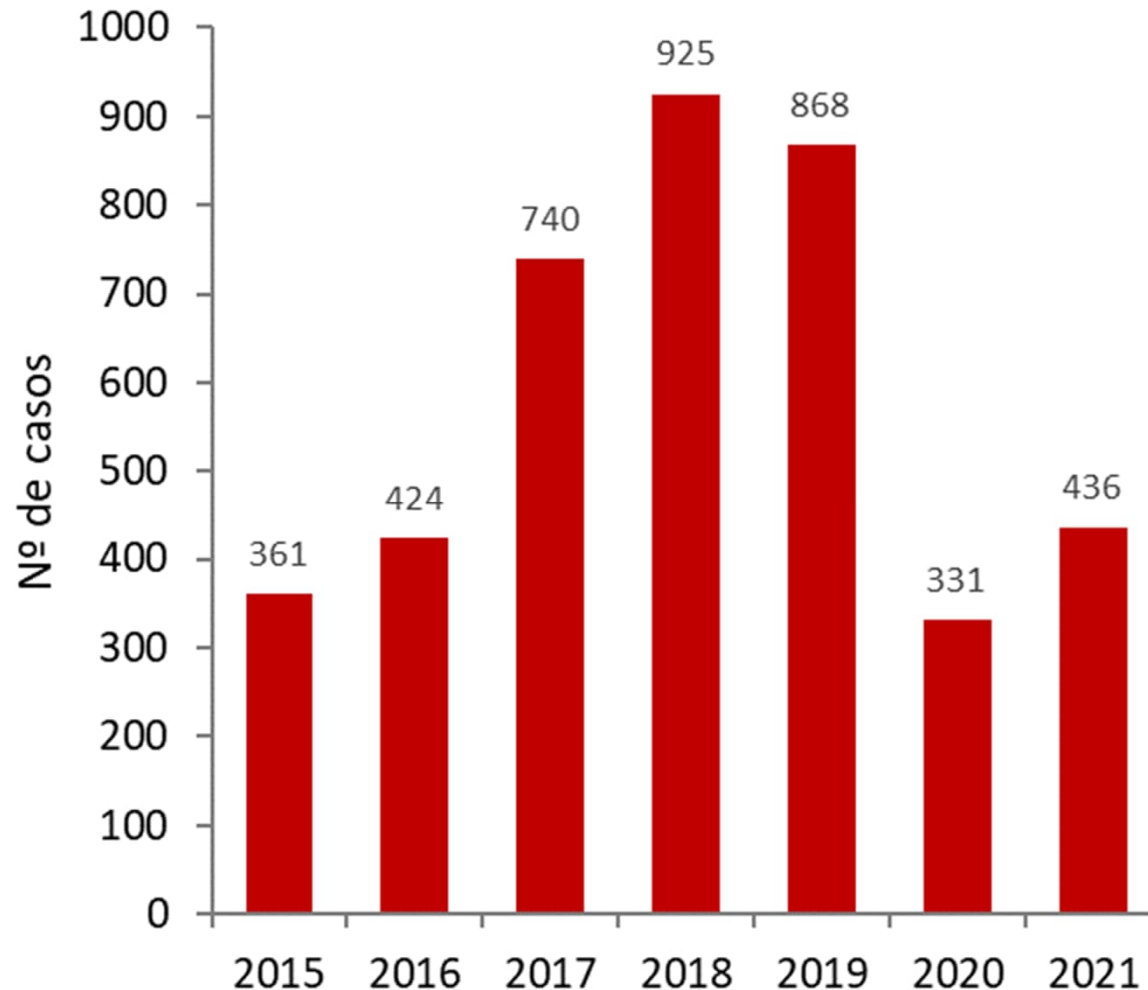
- RESTORATION of 8 water points
- 500 specimens of amphibians rescued, preventing them from being run over
- More than 10,000 people directly involved in dissemination, training, exchange, educational and volunteering



Wildlife trafficking in Spain (European LIFE SWiPE Project)



Number of seizures in species trafficking/ year in Spain



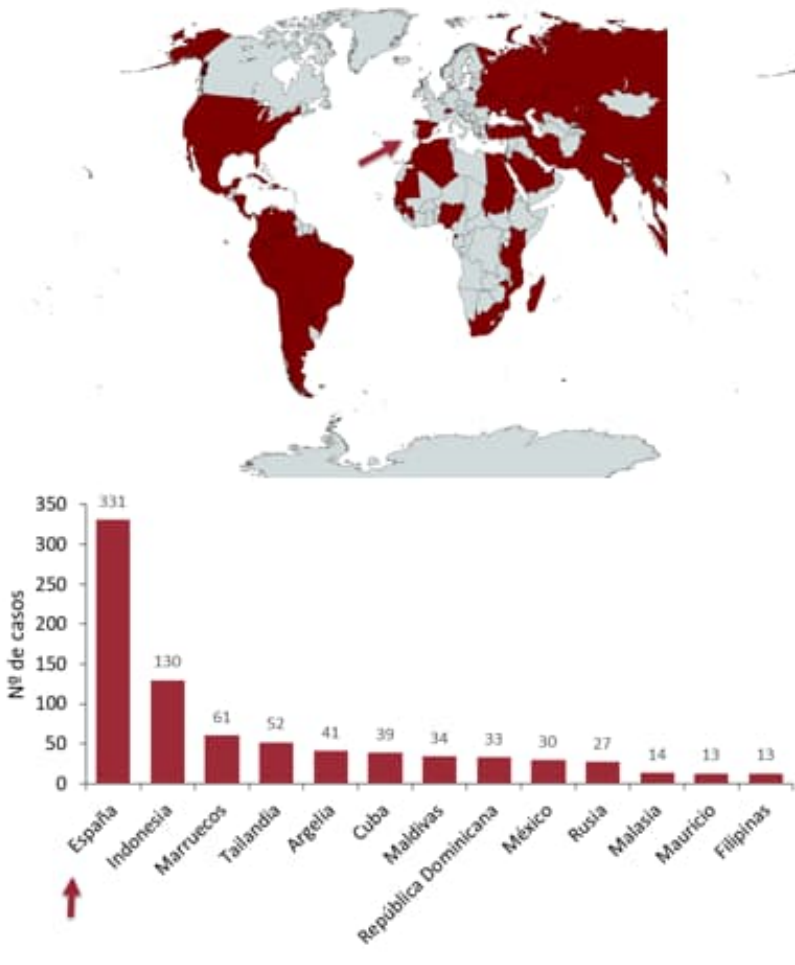
4085 seizures

SPAIN IS A TRANSIT
COUNTRY FOR THE
WILDLIFE
TRAFFICKING

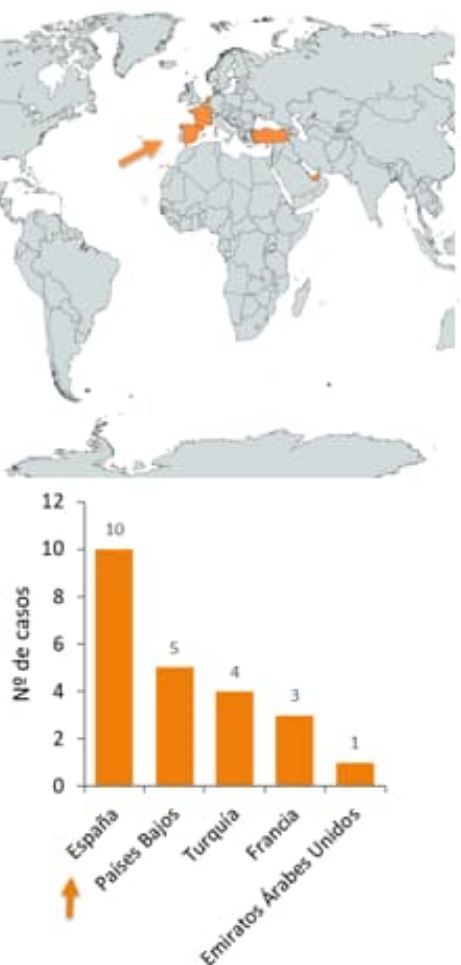
Spain as a country of export, import and destination



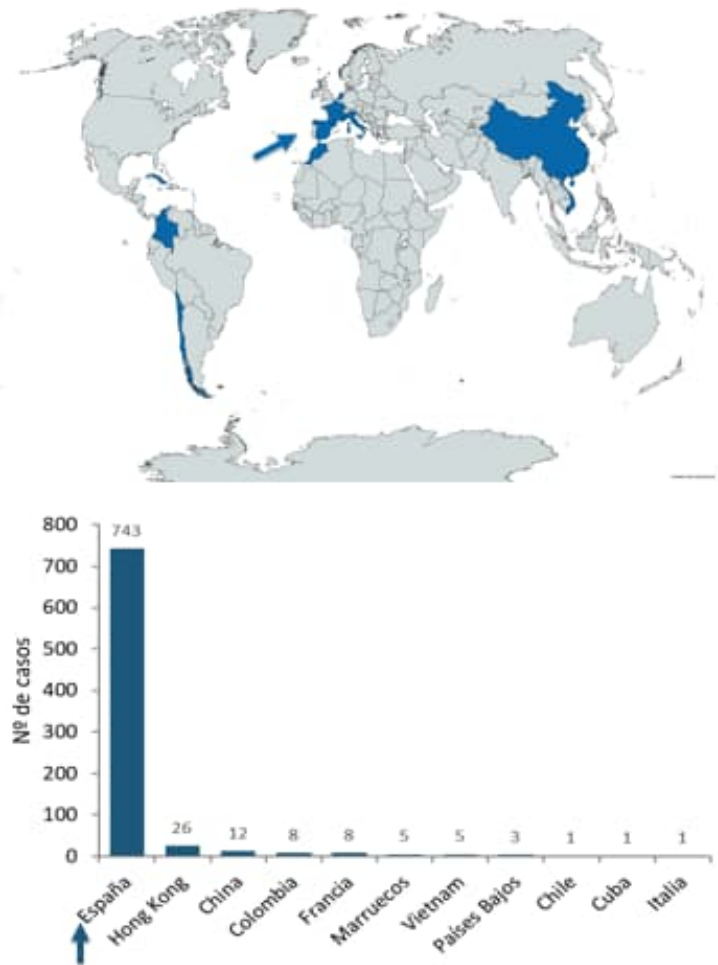
Countries of export



Intermediate countries



Country of destination



Wildlife trade in Spain: what is being trafficked?



1) LIFE SPECIMENS



2001 cases
49,0%

3) IVORY PRODUCTS



371 cases
9,1%

2) CORAL



604 cases
14,8%

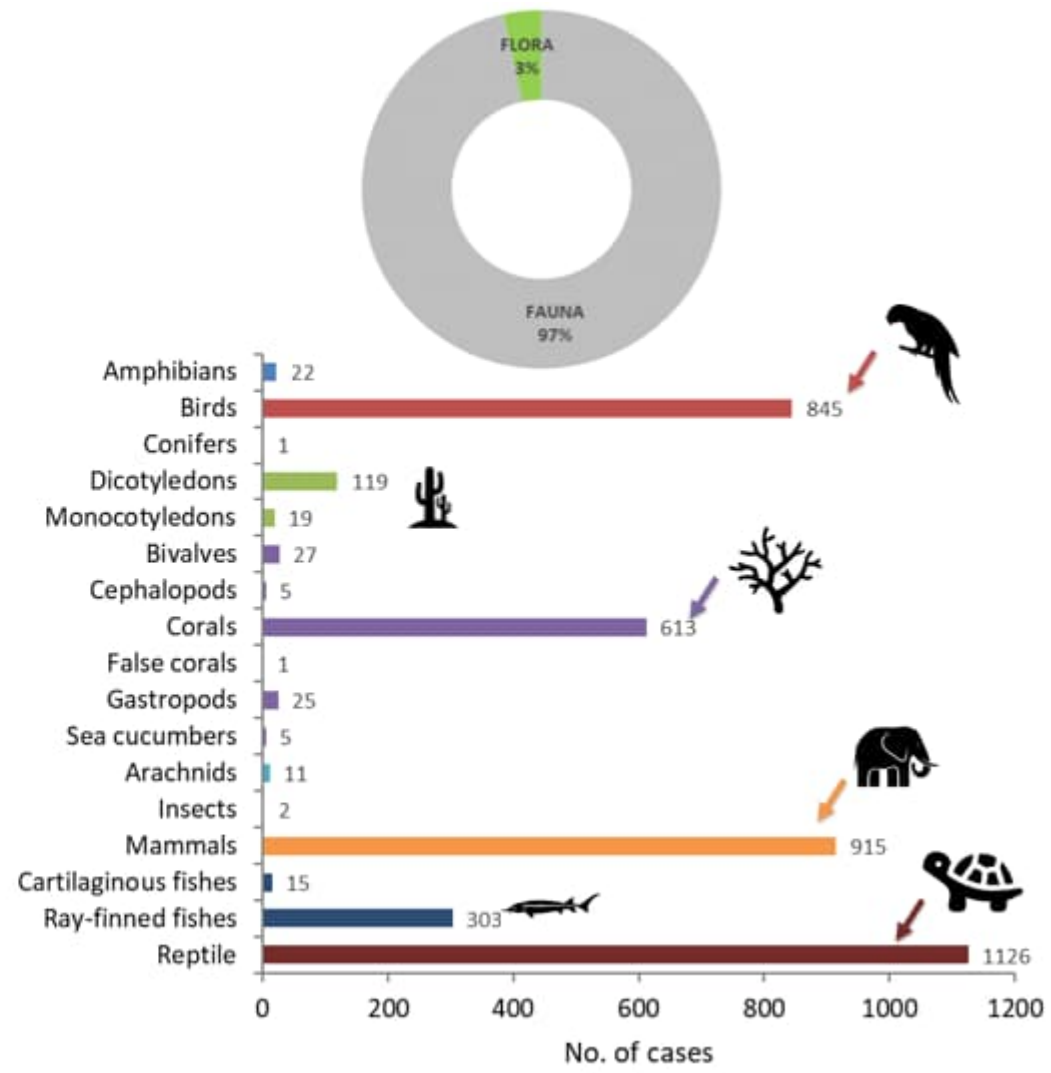
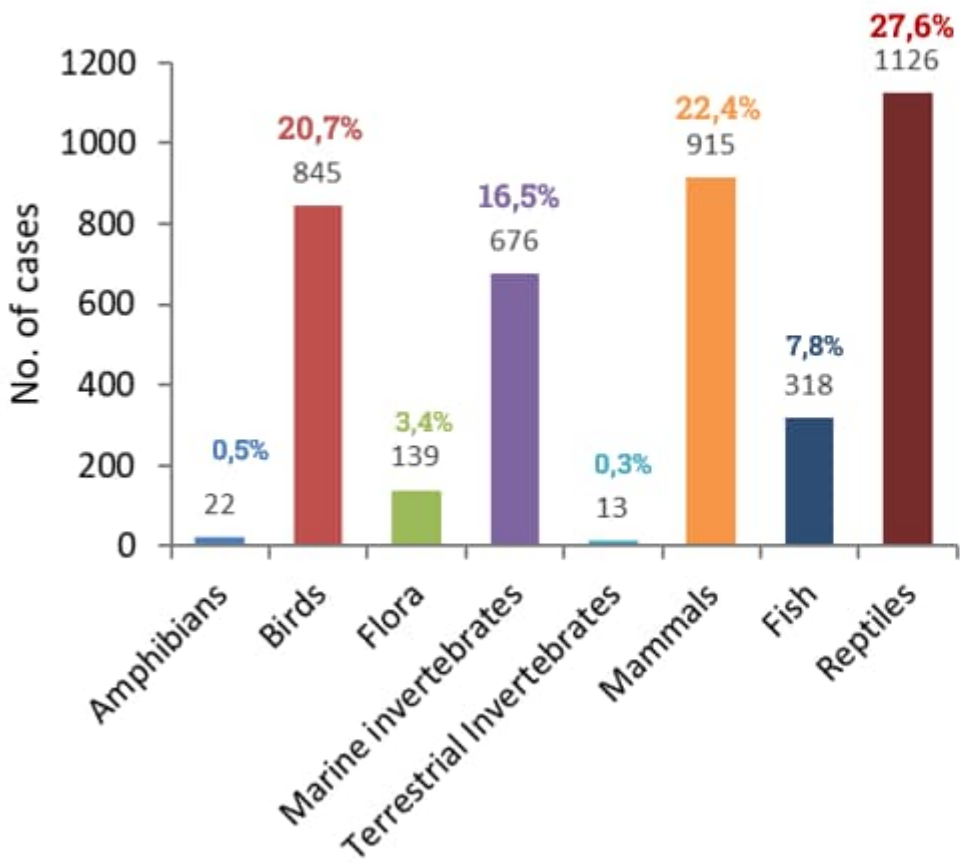
4) DEAD SPECIMENS



283 cases
6,9%



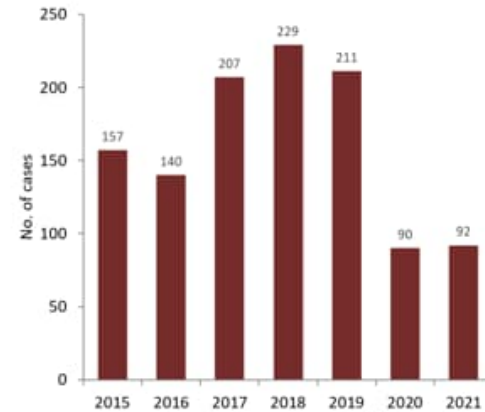
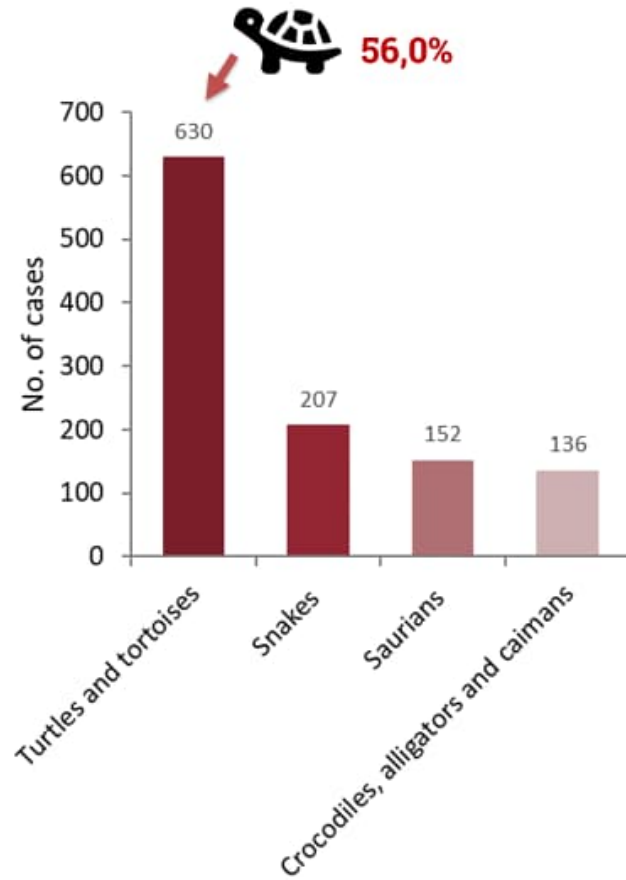
Wildlife trade in Spain: what is being trafficked?



Reptiles: the most trafficked group of animals in Spain (life and dead specimens)



Reptiles (1126 cases; 3904 specimens; 101 species)



Greek tortoise
Testudo graeca
(363 cases) VU

1º LIFE SPECIMENS (877 CASES)



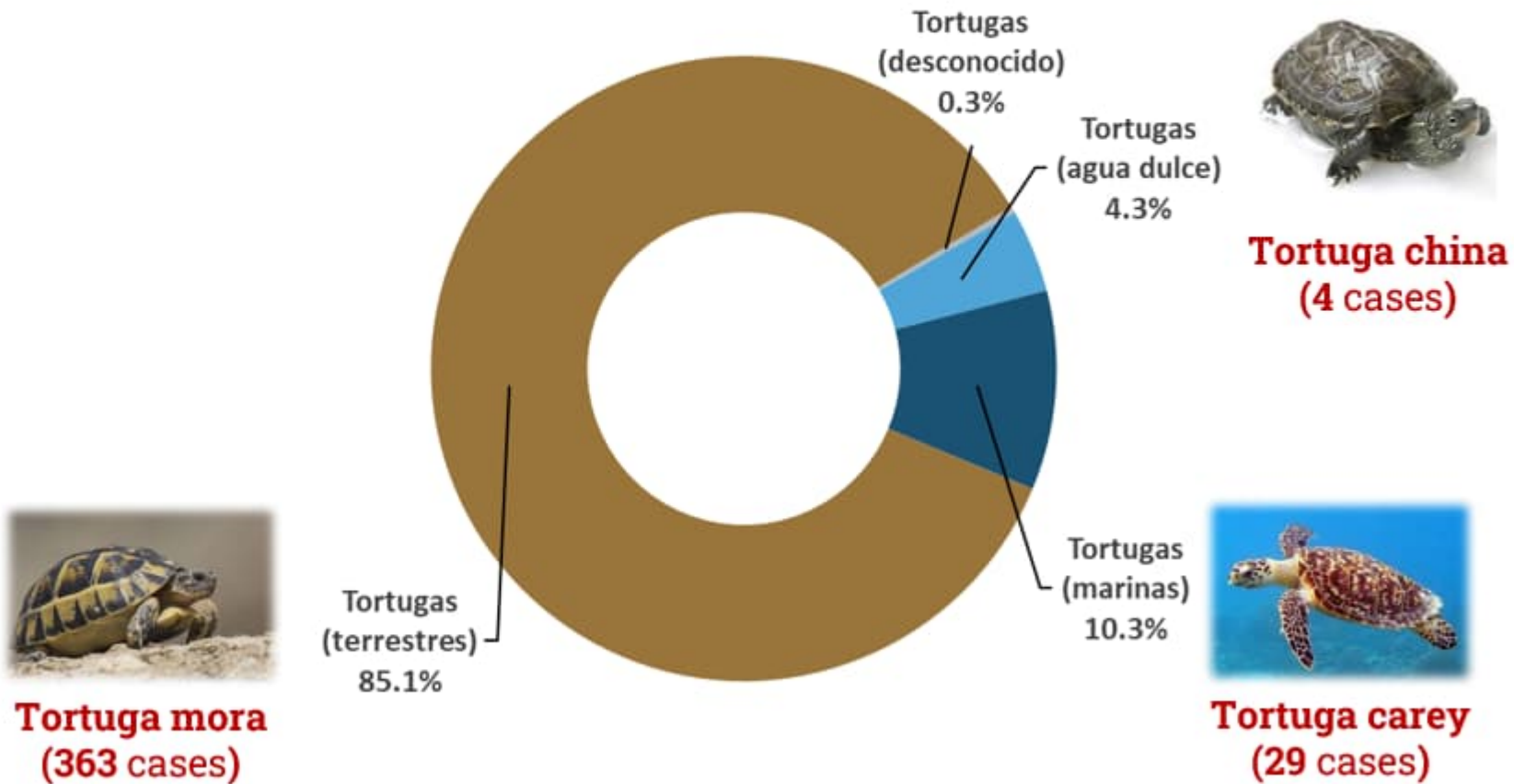
2º DEAD SPECIMENS (107 CASES)



Reptiles: the most trafficked group of animals in Spain (life and dead specimens)



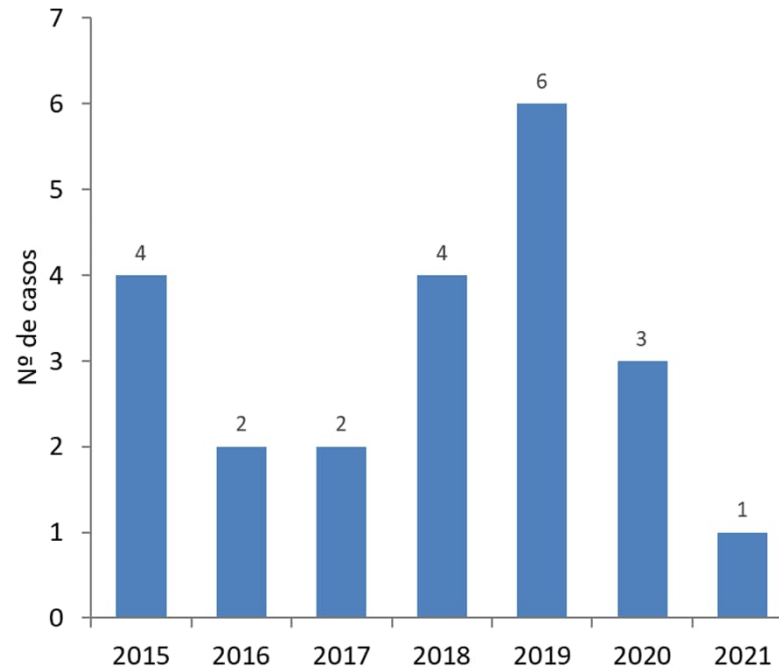
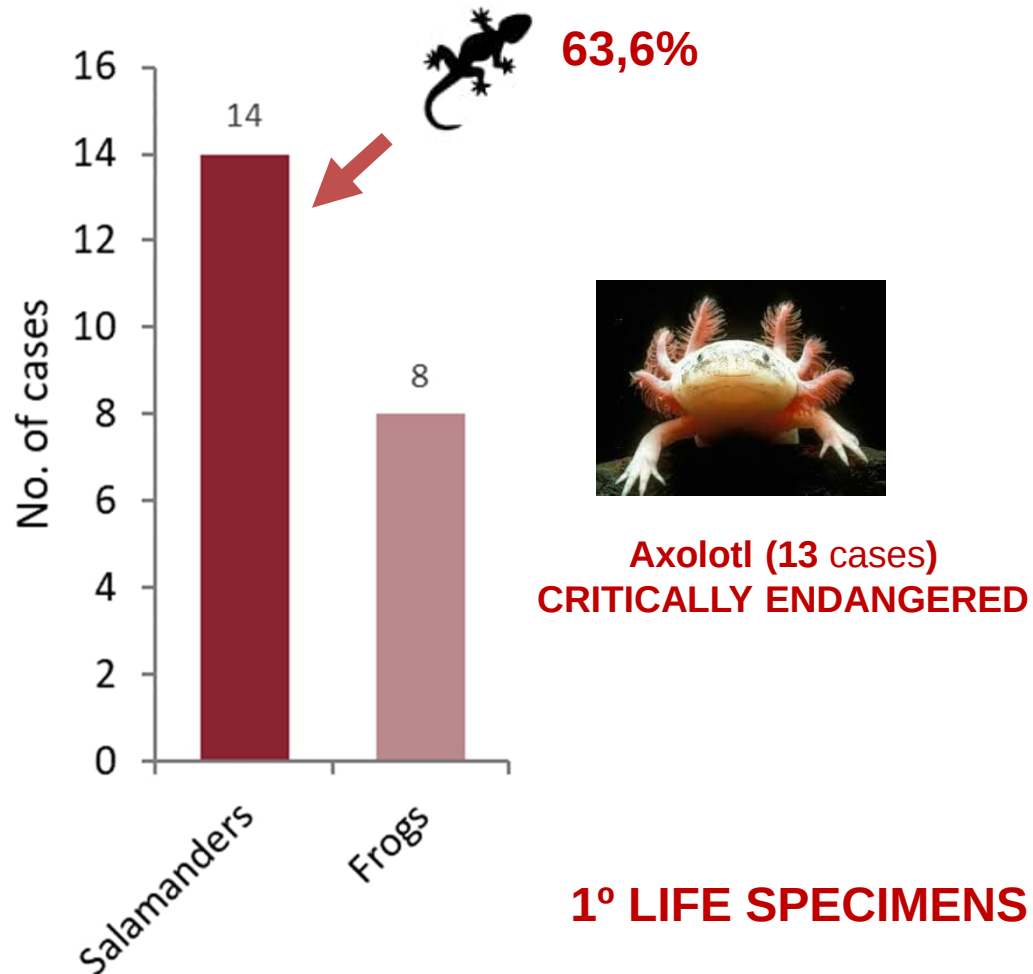
Turtles (630 cases; 2266 specimens; 31 species)



Wildlife trade of amphibians in Spain



Amphibians (22 cases; 248 specimens; 8 species)



¿Stolen or captive-bred reptile?



- Wild species are frequently documented as being bred in captivity
- Lack of awareness and knowledge



The common agama (*Agama agama*)



Tokay gecko (*Gekko gekko*)



Emerald tree monitor (*Varanus prasinus*)



Green tree python (*Morelia viridis*)



Timor monitor (*Varanus timorensis*)

WOULD YOU HAVE A “PET” THAT HAS BEEN ILLEGALLY STOLEN FROM ITS NATURAL HABITAT?

¿Stolen or captive-bred threatened species?



- **Wild and threatened species** are frequently documented as being bred in captivity
- Lack of awareness and knowledge



Greek tortoise (*Testudo graeca*)
VULNERABLE



Spiny turtle (*Heosemys spinosa*)
ENDANGERED



Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*)
VULNERABLE

WOULD YOU HAVE A “PET” THAT IS A ENDANGERED SPECIES AND HAS BEEN ILLEGALLY STOLEN FROM ITS NATURAL HABITAT?

Exotic amphibians pets and emerging zoonoses



- Wild species of amphibians are frequently documented as being bred in captivity
- Lack of awareness and knowledge
- **Amphibians: the most endangered group of vertebrates on the planet**
- **Chytridiomycosis**: a disease which has devastated amphibian populations globally. These fungus have been unintentionally introduced at various points around the world as part of **global trade in amphibians** as food, pets, or research animal
- WWF has recommended excluding all amphibian species from the positive list



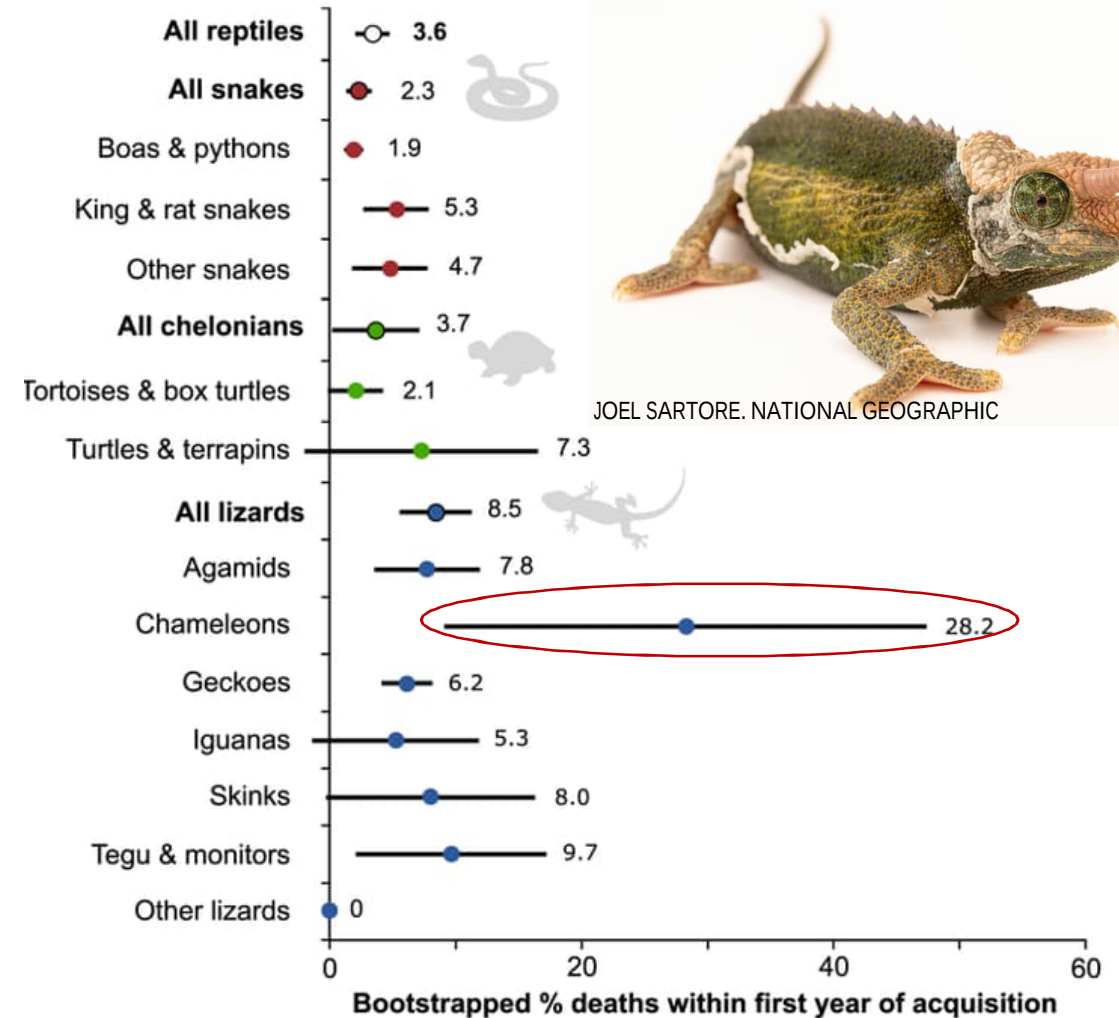
Red-eyed tree frog (*Agalychnis callidryas*)

WOULD YOU HAVE A “PET” THAT HAS BEEN ILLEGALLY STOLEN FROM ITS NATURAL HABITAT?

Exotic pets and high mortality



- Jackson's chameleon (*Trioceros jacksonii*)
- Difficult to breed in captivity (bred in their country of origin (Kenya))
- They do not adapt well to the climate of Spain and most die shortly after
- Mortality in captivity of animals caught in the wild or farmed in their countries of origin is much higher
- For an individual to reach your house as a “pet”, many die along the way

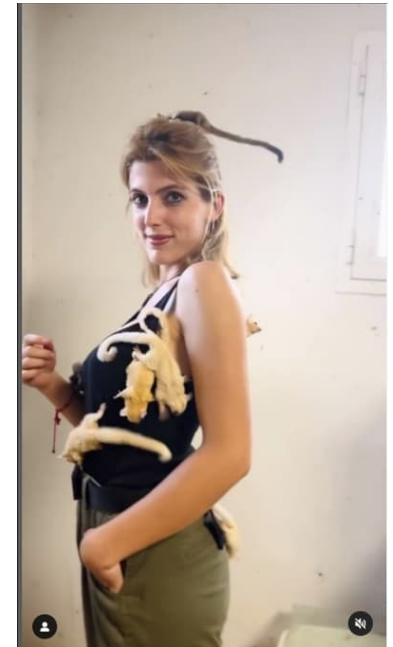


- **Amphibians are the most threatened vertebrate group of the planet** (41% threatened, IUCN), however:
 - Lack of knowledge (complex life cycle)
 - Lack of attention at all levels (EU, Spain, Local...)
 - Not taken into account in *Environmental Impact Assessments*
 - There are no specific measures for amphibians in the *Common Agricultural Policy*(CAP): **good agricultural practices for herpetofauna**
 - Small ponds have historically received very little legislative protection in Europe. There is little national awareness or concern about their value
 - The *Habitats Directive* has not led to real protection initiatives although it refers to the important connecting function of ponds
 - The *Water Framework Directive*, which aims to protect all water bodies, will not be generally applied to wetlands of less than 50 hectares
 - Initiatives are usually small-scale, linked to community action and tend to lack coordination and sustainability, due to the lack of long-term financial and technical support from national or regional administrations



Key messages

- Their delicate situation go unnoticed by society and by the competent administrations in charge of their management and conservation
- Need for greater attention and resources
- Increase awareness about the risks associated with exotic pet trades: *If there is no demand, there is no trafficking of species*
- Proper surveillance systems should be implemented in the pet trade





Thank you for your attention

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