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Member countries

When the government of a State decides that it will be bound by the provisions of CITES, it can 'join' the Convention by making a formal declaration to this effect in writing to the Depositary Government, which is the Government of Switzerland. Once a document containing this declaration has been received by the Depositary, through the diplomatic channel, the Convention enters into force for the State concerned 90 days later (see [Article XXII](#)).

A State for which the Convention has entered into force is called a Party to CITES. Currently there are 180 Parties. The two links below provide the:

- [List of Parties in alphabetical order](#); and
- [List of Parties in chronological order](#).

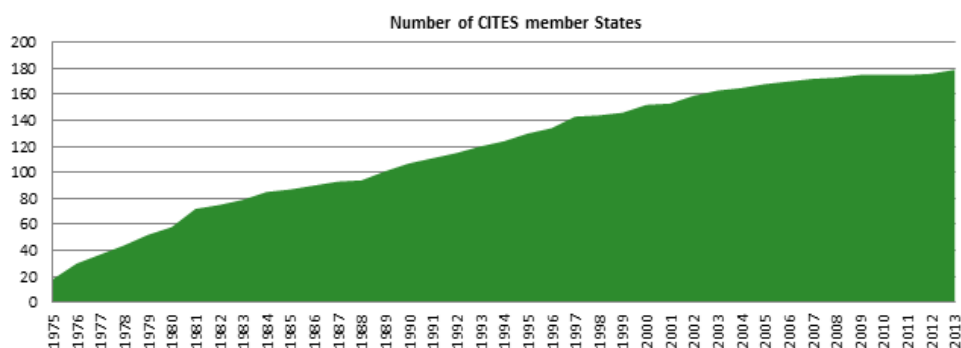
A State that is a Party to CITES may withdraw from the Convention at any time by a process of denunciation (see [Article XXIV](#)). This has happened only once in the history of the Convention with the United Arab Emirates acceding to the Convention on 21 November 1974 but withdrawing from it on 27 January 1988. However the United Arab Emirates became a Party to the Convention again on 9 May 1990.

The process of making a declaration to be bound by the provisions of CITES is called 'ratification', 'acceptance', 'approval' or 'accession'. Ratification, acceptance and approval are legally equivalent actions but are only applicable in relation to the States that signed the Convention when it was open for signature, between 3 March 1973 (when it was concluded) and 31 December 1974. (Acceptance and approval are the actions taken by certain States when, at national level, constitutional law does not require a treaty to be 'ratified'.) All States that had signed the Convention have now ratified, accepted or approved it. The term 'accession' is used in relation to the States that did not sign the Convention (see [Articles XIX, XX and XXI](#)).

It should be noted that the number of Parties to CITES may fluctuate because of geopolitical changes such as the unification of two Parties (for instance the unification of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the German Democratic Republic on 3 October 1990) or the division of a State into two or more separate States (for instance the division of Czechoslovakia on 1 January 1993 into the Czech Republic and Slovakia).



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The Conference of the Parties to CITES, which is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention and comprises all its member States, has adopted two amendments to the original text of the Convention, as made possible under [Article XVII](#) of the Convention. The first amendment was adopted at Bonn (Germany) on 22 June 1979, and entered into force on 13 April 1987. The second was adopted at Gaborone (Botswana) on 30 April 1983, but has yet to be accepted by a sufficient number of States then party to CITES to come into effect. The two links below provide further information on these amendments and on the Parties that have accepted them.

[List of Parties](#) having accepted the [amendment to Article XI](#) of the Convention adopted at Bonn (Germany), 22 June 1979, entered into force on 13 April 1987.

- [List of Parties](#) having accepted the [amendment to Article XXI](#) of the Convention adopted at Gaborone (Botswana), on 30 April 1983.



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