

# Know The Law

## Marine Mammal Protection Act

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/mmpa](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/mmpa)

In general, it is prohibited under the MMPA to (1) take<sup>1</sup>, (2) import, and (3) possess, transport, sell, export or offer to purchase, sell or export marine mammals or their products. *There are some exemptions for Alaska Native handicrafts, made using marine mammal parts. For more information, visit <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/node/29881>.*

## Endangered Species Act

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/esa](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/esa)

Sea turtles and some marine mammals are also protected under the ESA. In general, it is prohibited under the ESA to (1) take<sup>2</sup>, (2) import, (3) export, (4) sell or offer for sale, and (5) possess or transport listed species.

**Violations of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) or the Endangered Species Act (ESA) may result in civil or criminal penalties.**

1. According to the MMPA, "take" means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture or kill any marine mammal.
2. According to the ESA, "take" means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect any threatened or endangered species.



# NOAA FISHERIES

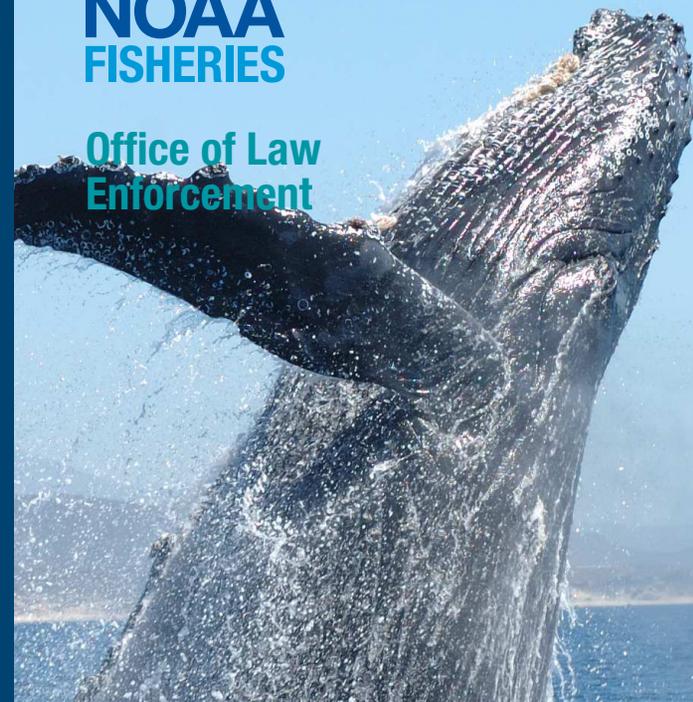
## OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

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# NOAA FISHERIES

## Office of Law Enforcement



# Traveling Abroad? Some Souvenirs Are Illegal.



# Buyer Beware!

Some very beautiful souvenirs and interesting foods are offered for sale abroad. However, you should know that it may be illegal to take these items into the United States. Things to know:

- Although sold abroad, marine mammal parts and products, as well as items from endangered species, are prohibited from being imported into the U.S.
- Many stores abroad do not post signs explaining the rules related to importing prohibited products into the U.S.
- Tourists may lawfully buy such souvenirs in a number of foreign countries BUT it may be illegal to import them into the U.S.
- It is not likely to get a refund if your purchase is seized by Customs or Federal inspectors.
- You may find yourself subject to monetary penalties for importing illegal products.

Keep in mind, buying items made of parts from marine mammals and endangered species may add to the demand for such products and support a market for which more animals are killed. However, buying authentic Alaska Native handicrafts, made from marine mammal parts, supports traditional practices using animals that are harvested by Alaska Natives for subsistence.



**Unsure about an item? Ask a store employee:**

- What is this product made of?
- Where was this product made?
- Is it legal for me to take it home?

*When in doubt, go without.*

**If you have questions, call the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Hotline at 1-800-853-1964.**



## Some Examples of Prohibited Imports

The below list includes commonly purchased items, but does not include all illegal items.

### Whales

Whale bones, ivory (in any form), whale meat (in any form), baleen (in any form).

### Seals/Sea Lions

Fur, seal skin toys, purses, wallets, key cases, clothing, seal meat, seal pills.

### Sea Turtles

Shell, shell items (jewelry, hairpins, etc.), leather goods (wallets, belts, etc.), eggs, facial cream.

### Sea Otters\*

Fur (in any form), clothing.

### Polar bears\*

Hunting trophies, rugs, clothing.

### Walruses\*

Ivory (in any form), jewelry, trinkets.

\* Protection enforced by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service