



**Australian Government**

**Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **ANIMAL CRUELTY CHARGES SECURE JAIL TERM**

The federal environment department has welcomed a court-imposed jail term for a man charged with animal cruelty and attempted export of 14 shingleback lizards.

The Japanese national was sentenced to 12 months jail after pleading guilty to 14 charges of attempted export and 11 charges of cruelty under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* in the Perth Magistrates Court last week.

Federal Environment department spokeswoman Kelly-Anne Butcher said the sentence was a firm reminder that there were tough penalties under the national environment law for wildlife smuggling activities as well as the treatment of our native species.

"These laws are in place to protect Australia's wildlife from what has become a very cruel industry—so we're very pleased with this outcome," Ms Butcher said.

"Australia boasts some of the world's most unique and diverse animals and plants. Many Australians are lucky enough, simply by walking around their neighbourhood, to get a glimpse of kangaroos, parrots, insects and reptiles.

"We want to keep that for our future generations and we can only do so by ensuring they're adequately protected.

"This outcome highlights also the excellent work of Australian Customs and Border Protection Service officers who enforce our legislation at the borders."

Customs and Border Protection officers detected the lizards hidden in clothing and small pet carriers during targeted x-ray screening of the man's luggage at Perth International Airport in September.

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