



## ONLINE TRADE OF LIVE CROCODYLIANS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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**ABSTRACT** – The ongoing utilization of online platforms to trade wildlife in the Philippines appears to be increasing in the last two decades. An online survey on 20 Facebook groups specializing in the trade of live reptiles was conducted from July 2016 to December 2018 to elucidate the dynamics of live crocodylian trade in the Philippines. A total of 71 unique posts representing three crocodylian species and a minimum of 164 individuals were posted by 50 traders in Facebook groups during the study period. The Spectacled Caiman *Caiman crocodilus* was the most traded species with 126 individuals or 77% of the total quantity. The Saltwater Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* and the critically endangered Philippine Crocodile *Crocodylus mindorensis* were also documented. While all *C. crocodilus* individuals offered for sale were most likely imported legally or captive-bred in the Philippines, some *C. porosus* and *C. mindorensis* offered for sale may be sourced illegally from the wild.

*Keywords: CITES, Crocodylus, illegal wildlife trade, Tomistoma*



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