

## **Don't kill the bee!**

### **Legal insights to combat the biodiversity crisis**

VIII Tarragona International Environmental Law Colloquium (TIEC)

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## **PANEL 2. Legal challenges to achieve a regulatory body that embraces an ecocentric and biocentric approach**

### **The illegal trade in European eels: how is the legislation that governs their trade failing to protect the species?**

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The European eel is a species exploited to be consumed as food for centuries. Nowadays, overfishing is one of the threats pushing the species to the brink of extinction. Following the decline in numbers, the European eel has been listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and it resulted in an export ban outside the European Union (EU). However, despite the efforts in protecting the species, eels are among the most trafficked wildlife. Thus, understanding what is the role of the legislation that governs the trade of European eels in facilitating or fulfilling their traffic is key. As found, legal asymmetries within their trade have an impact at the international, EU, and Spanish levels, failing to protect the species from their traffic.