

Turtle and Tortoise Protection Legislation

Abstract

The thesis focuses on turtle and tortoise protection in international law, Czech legislation on breeding turtles in captivity, and legislation concerning protection of biodiversity against turtles as alien or invasive species.

The objective is to describe and analyse turtle protection legislation and if concluded that the legislation is not sufficient, make proposals *de lege ferenda*. Another objective is to describe biodiversity protection legislation in a situation when a turtle species is in a position of alien or invasive species.

The first part contains introduction to the matter considered. It includes biological classification, the importance of turtles for ecosystems, with special focus on sea turtles, and threats to turtles, again with special focus on sea turtles.

The second part focuses on turtle protection in general agreements on nature protection – global and regional. In the first chapter, there are global agreements which are then divided to The Convention on Biological Diversity, agreements on protections of habitat, and agreements on species protection. In the second chapter, there are regional “land” agreements listed.

The third part concentrates on specifics of sea turtle legislation. At first, relevant parts of UNCLOS are mentioned. Then sources of law in which the turtles are in a position of migratory species and specifics of CITES for the sea turtles. Also, in regards of the protection of sea turtles as species which are threatened by international business, the Shrimp-Turtles case is mentioned. Finally, this part contains regional “sea” protocols and Inter-American Convention.

In the fourth part, Czech legislation on turtle breeding and on keeping in zoos is described. The end of this part focuses on threat of turtles as alien, or invasive, species. Legislation in sources of international law and European law is described.

After the analysis of the legislation, the following conclusions were reached. The protection of sea turtles on the high seas and the protection of engaged tortoise and turtle in international law in South-East Asia can be considered as insufficient. Better education of the public and attempt to help local people who are involved in illegal activities related to turtles to find would also be beneficial.