

IV. CUSTOMS CONTROLS AGAINST SMUGGLING OF OTHER ITEMS

There are other items prohibited from import and export under the Customs Act, in addition to illicit drugs, firearms, and goods infringing intellectual property rights. There are also items whose import and export are regulated under other domestic laws and regulations.

1. Seizures of Smuggled Gold Bullion

In order to cope with the smuggling of gold bullion, which has increased rapidly since 2014, Japan Customs formulated and published "Emergency Countermeasures to 'Stop Gold Smuggling'" in November 2017 with the aim of strengthening inspections, tightening penalties, and enhancing the collection and analysis of information. After the upper limits of penalties were raised in April 2018, the number of seizures and seized amount both decreased significantly.

< Seizures of Smuggled Gold Bullion >

The number of seizures of smuggled gold bullion* during the one-year period from January to December of 2022 was 9 cases (up by 80% from the previous year), and the amount of seized gold bullion also increased to approx. 135 kg (up by approx. 5 times (id.)).

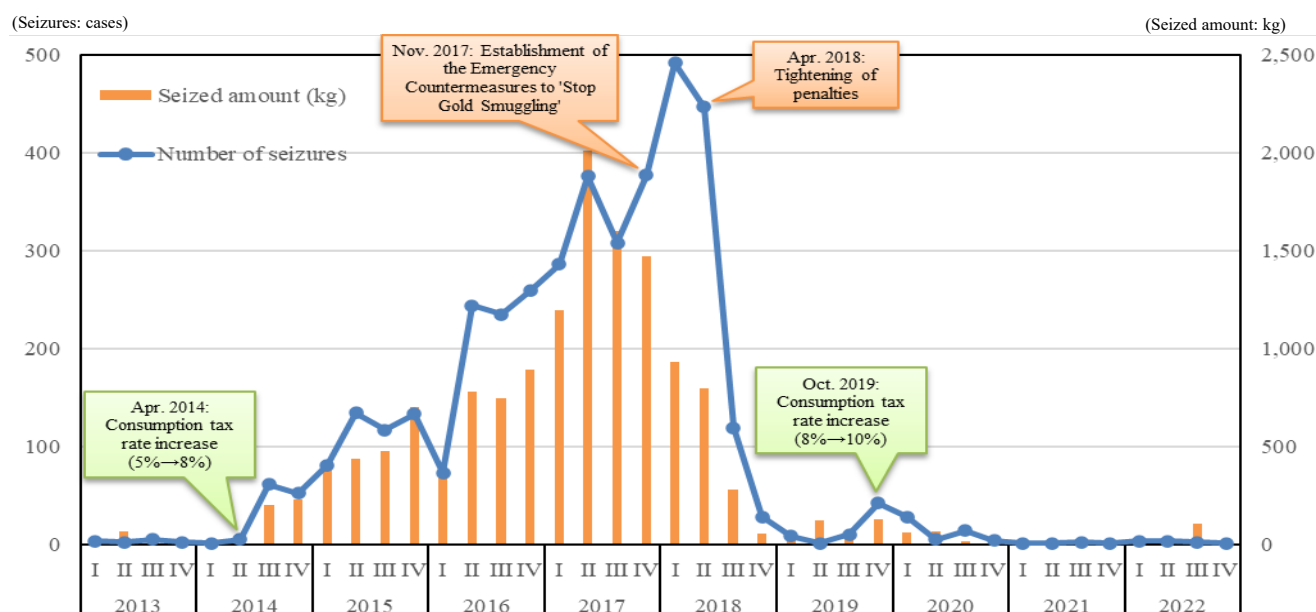
* Gold bullion includes partially processed gold products, in addition to gold ingots.

[Seizures of smuggled gold bullion during the past 10 years]

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of seizures (cases)	12	119	465	811	1,347	1,086	61	51	5	9
Seized amount (kg)	133	449	2,032	2,802	6,277	2,054	319	150	27	135

(Note) Figures for 2022 are provisional.

[Transition in the number of seizures and seized amount]



2. Smuggling Cases Involving CITES-listed Species

In 1973, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was adopted in Washington D.C. for the purpose of regulating international trade of endangered species and protecting them from extinction. This Convention is called the Washington Convention. The Convention covers not only live animals and plants as pets or for appreciation, but also processed products, such as stuffed animals, and coats and other clothes, handbags, belts, shoes, pieces of work, and Chinese medicines, etc. using animals and plants.

During the one-year period from January to December of 2022, Customs made accusations of 3 smuggling cases involving CITES-listed species.

< Major smuggling case involving CITES-listed species >

[Case] Smuggling of monkeys

Customs accused a Japanese national who attempted to smuggle **21 monkeys (Saimiri sciureus, etc.)** by air from Thailand of violating the Customs Act. (Oct. 2022; Tokyo Customs)



3. Illicit Export Cases

There are specific cargo items whose export requires permission or approval under laws and regulations other than the Customs Act. The effectiveness of regulations under these laws and regulations is to be secured by linking them with the export permission system under the Customs Act. In collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies, Customs also regulates illicit exports that may lead to the outflow of products and technologies that are likely to be diverted to military use.

Customs made accusations of one case of illicit export of waste electronic substrates, etc. during the one-year period from January to December of 2022.

< Major illicit export case >

[Case] Illicit export of waste electronic substrates, etc.

Customs accused a corporation and six Chinese nationals that attempted to export **waste electronic substrates, etc. (cargo subject to the Basel Convention)** illicitly to Malaysia using a foreign-flagged vessel of violating the Customs Act. (Nov. 2022; Osaka Customs)

4. Counterfeit postal stamps

Under the Customs Act, counterfeits, forgeries, and imitations of coins, bills, bank notes, stamps, postal stamps, and securities, and counterfeit cards are specified as cargo that must not be imported.

In April 2022, Customs made accusations of a case of counterfeit postal stamps.

< Smuggling of counterfeit postal stamps >

[Case] Smuggling of counterfeit postal stamps

Customs accused one Japanese national who attempted to smuggle **a total of 42,500 counterfeit postal stamps** by the use of international mail from China of violating the Customs Act. (Apr. 2022; Tokyo Customs)

