

## Turtles saved from chef's knife

**Source:** BBC News World Edition

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### **Woburn Safari Park has helped to rescue three turtles which were destined for dining tables in the Far East.**

The Malaysian Giant Pond Turtles were found on a boat which was intercepted by the authorities in Hong Kong.

Woburn animal manager Dr Jake Veasey said: "The mass trade of turtles for food in China and South East Asia is not only unsustainable but cruel."

The safari park in Bedfordshire has specialist facilities to help with turtle conservation.

#### **'Butchered alive'**

Dr Veasey said it may be too late even now for the turtles' continued survival in the wild.



Millions of turtles are collected for the food and drug trade every year

"Turtles are shipped alive to food markets in crates or bags where they are piled layers deep," said Dr Veasey.

"They often have injuries from hooks or internal injuries from being crushed and are typically butchered alive.

"These are sensitive, vulnerable animals. When you pick them up, they are nervous and hide in their shells. They feel pain. Above all, they do not deserve this appalling treatment.

"We shall do what we can to help the turtles by continuing to develop the turtle conservation facilities here at Woburn so that we can respond to further seizures in the Far East."

The European Association of Zoos and Aquaria has made the plight of the turtles the theme for their 2005 fundraising campaign – ShellShock.