

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 July 2014

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Compliance and enforcement

Enforcement matters

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP16) on *Compliance and enforcement*, the Conference of the Parties instructs the Secretariat to:

b) submit a report on enforcement matters at each Standing Committee meeting and each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The present report outlines a number of important activities and developments on enforcement matters that have taken place since the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), additional to those described in other documents on enforcement prepared for the present meeting.

International cooperation, commitment, measures and activities to combat wildlife crime

3. The world has been confronted by illegal wildlife trade for decades, but the recent spike in the scale and a change in the nature of this illicit activity is seriously affecting a number of species. The increased involvement of organized crime groups, and on some occasions rebel militia, has changed the dynamics of combating wildlife crime. As a consequence, law enforcement authorities around the world are facing increasingly difficult and complex situations as they seek to scale up their fight against the illegal wildlife trade.
4. CoP16 was marked by unprecedented levels of international cooperation in combating wildlife crime, and Parties recognized that the problem could only be solved by working together across source, transit and destination States. A powerful suite of Decisions and Resolutions on law enforcement were adopted at CoP16; these provide a strong basis for Parties to take concrete action to put an end to existing high levels of illegal wildlife trade.
5. The convening of a number of major political events and the implementation of a number of important measures and activities since CoP16 have contributed to efforts to combat wildlife crime more effectively, to raise the profile of wildlife crime and to secure political support for combating it. The following events, measures and activities have provided sustained momentum and a further powerful basis for a strong global response to the threat posed by wildlife crime:
 - a) A meeting by Ministers of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 21 to 23 March 2013, to adopt an emergency plan to combat poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Central Africa;¹

¹ https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/declaration_eccas_reunion_d_urgence_de_la_ceeac_sur_la_lab_version_finale.pdf

- b) At the G8 Summit held in Lough Erne, Northern Ireland, from 17 to 18 June 2013, G8 Leaders recognized the need to tackle trafficking and to strengthen border security, including in relation to illegal trafficking of wildlife,² and agreed in the final communiqué of the meeting to “... also take action to tackle the illegal trafficking of protected or endangered wildlife species”;³
- c) In adopting the Bali Declaration on 8 October 2013,⁴ in Bali, Indonesia, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders, committed their respective countries to “combat wildlife trafficking by enhancing international cooperation through Wildlife Enforcement Networks (WENs) and other existing mechanisms, reducing the supply of and demand for illegally traded wildlife, increasing public awareness and education related to wildlife trafficking and its impacts, and treating wildlife trafficking crimes seriously”;⁵
- d) The African Elephant Summit held in Gaborone, Botswana, from 2 to 4 December 2013, brought together delegates from 30 countries and 27 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Discussions at the Summit focused on the urgent measures needed to stem the growing illegal ivory trade and its impacts on elephant populations in Africa. A set of 14 urgent measures were adopted by consensus at the Summit;⁶
- e) The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, together with the British Royal Family, hosted the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade on 12 and 13 February 2014. This Conference brought high-level representatives from 46 countries and eleven international organizations together in London.⁷ The London Declaration adopted by acclamation by represented countries called for further measures to eradicate markets for illegal wildlife products, ensure effective legal deterrents, strengthen law enforcement and support sustainable livelihoods.⁸ Additional resources were committed to implement these measures and to assess progress made in delivering on these political commitments over the next 12 months and beyond. During his intervention at the conference, the Secretary-General of CITES highlighted the collaborative approach taken by CITES, focusing on how Parties could collaborate across source, transit and destination States to combat wildlife crime.⁹ At the conference, Botswana offered to host a follow up high-level conference to review progress in early 2015;
- f) The illegal trade in wildlife was given prominence during the 22nd Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), held in Vienna, Austria, from 22 to 26 April 2013. The theme for the meeting was “The challenge posed by emerging forms of crime that have a significant impact on the environment and ways to deal with it effectively”. The CITES Secretary-General was a panelist at the thematic discussion of this topic, on 23 April 2013. A key outcome of the CCPCJ was the adoption of a draft Resolution on “Crime prevention and criminal justice responses to illicit trafficking in protected species of wild fauna and flora”.¹⁰ This draft Resolution was subsequently adopted by the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as Resolution 2013/40 of 25 July 2013. It encourages States to treat illicit trafficking in wild fauna and flora as a serious crime when organized criminal groups are involved, and to fully utilize the UN Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime and Corruption to implement appropriate measures to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in wild fauna and flora. The UN General Assembly in its Resolution 68/193 on the *Strengthening the United Nations crime prevention and criminal*

² http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20130621_g8.php

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207771/Lough_Erne_2013_G8_Leaders_Communique.pdf

⁴ http://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2013/2013_aelm.aspx

⁵ http://cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20131008_bali_declaration.php

⁶ https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/african_elephant_summit_final_urgent_measures_3_dec_2013_2.pdf

⁷ <http://cites.org/eng/news/pr/2014/london-conference-20140214.php>

⁸ <http://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/sundry/2014/london-wildlife-conference-declaration-140213.pdf>

⁹ http://cites.org/eng/news/sg/2014/20140213_intervention-london_conferece.php

¹⁰ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20130502_ccpcj_resolution.php

justice programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity, of 18 December 2013,¹¹ reaffirmed ECOSOC Resolution 2013/40 of 25 July 2013;

- g) At its 37th session, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from 16 to 27 June 2013, the World Heritage Committee adopted Committee Decision 37 COM 7 on *Emerging trends and general issues*,¹² in which it expressed its utmost concern about the impacts that rising levels of poaching of African elephants and rhinoceroses are having on World Heritage properties, and welcomed the measures taken at CoP16 to help address the poaching crisis. It also called on the World Heritage Centre and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to strengthen their cooperation with the CITES Secretariat. A statement from the Secretary-General of CITES was read to the Committee. In May 2013, the Secretary-General addressed the Steering Committee of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) on the disturbing upward trends in the illegal international trade in wildlife, and most particularly the poaching of the African elephant and rhinoceroses. The Secretary-General asked the WCEL and its affiliated IUCN Academy of Environmental Law to consider the inclusion of CITES issues, and in particular the fight against wildlife crime, in their existing and future programmes, especially in areas of work with legislators, prosecutors and the judiciary, as well as through academic research and capacity building.¹³ Further to this, the Chairs of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication were encouraged to incorporate CITES-related issues into their programmes, including their work on World Heritage sites in Africa. The Secretariat will continue to work closely with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to assist Parties in implementing the measures decided at CoP16;
- h) On 1 July 2013, the President of the United States of America issued an Executive Order¹⁴ on Combating Wildlife Trafficking, which addresses the country's domestic response to the current surge in wildlife trafficking, as well as its international response;¹⁵
- i) On 26 September 2013, the Secretary-General of CITES moderated a high-level side event on *Poaching and Illicit Wildlife Trafficking*,¹⁶ hosted by Gabon and Germany at the UN General Assembly in New York. Discussions at this meeting focused on the multidimensional nature of illegal wildlife trade and the challenges it poses for the international community, and how the UN system can best respond to these challenges;¹⁷
- j) In December 2013, a round table on "Combating poaching and trafficking of endangered species", with a focus on elephant and rhinoceros poaching in Africa, was held in Paris, France, on the sidelines of the Élysée Summit for Peace and Security in Africa. The Secretary-General of CITES was invited to attend and made a brief intervention at the meeting;
- k) In February 2014, the European Commission (EC) launched a public consultation to seek contributions from international and regional organizations, national ministries and enforcement authorities, the judiciary, the private sector and civil society who are involved in the fight against illegal wildlife trade. The public consultation aimed to assist the EC in identifying challenges in the current European Union (EU) approach against wildlife trafficking and possible actions and solutions at the EU and at global level, to tackle key challenges.¹⁸ The Secretariat provided detailed comments to the EC during the public consultation process, which was concluded by a conference on the EU approach against wildlife trafficking held in Brussels, Belgium, on 10 April 2014. The Secretariat contributed to the conference through a video message from the Secretary-General, and its Chief of Enforcement Support participated in the event.¹⁹ The following day, the EC hosted

¹¹ http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/193

¹² <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5018/>

¹³ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20130503_iucn_wildlife_crime.php

¹⁴ http://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/pr/2013/us_wildlife_eo.pdf

¹⁵ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20130702_us_eo.php

¹⁶ http://cites.org/eng/news/sg/2013/20130926_unga_side-event.php

¹⁷ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sg/2013/20130926_unga_sideevent_sum.php

¹⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/wildlife_trafficking_en.htm

¹⁹ http://www.cites.org/eng/CITES_SG_expert_conference_EU_approach_against_wildlife_trafficking

workshops on strengthening EU diplomatic action to combat wildlife trafficking and on developing support of action against wildlife trafficking. The Secretariat participated in the workshop;

- l) In March 2014, the Prime Minister of Viet Nam issued a Directive²⁰ to ministries, sectors and local authorities to prioritize and strengthen responses to wildlife crime, including the trafficking of ivory and rhinoceros horn. The Directive outlines a number of actions to combat wildlife crime in Viet Nam, including directing ministries to strengthen responses to transnational organized crime syndicates, increase inter-agency efforts at checkpoints and border crossings, and address identified areas where illegal wildlife trade may occur;²¹ and
 - m) From 22 to 25 April 2014, an ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) technical workshop on environmental crime took place in Bangkok, Thailand. The key objective of the workshop, in which the Secretariat participated, was to facilitate a discussion among ASEAN Member States on the approach, scope of work and contribution of the SOMTC to tackle environmental crime. The recommendations formulated at this meeting are to be presented to the 14th SOMTC in Brunei in June 2014.
6. The Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude to the EC and the Government of Hong Kong, China, for the generous funding it provided, which enabled the Secretariat to participate in the meetings mentioned in paragraphs d), e), f), i), j), k) and m).

UN Security Council

7. On 20 May 2013, the UN Secretary-General presented a report on the activities of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa and on the areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), to the UN Security Council.²² The report identified the spread of cross-border criminal activities including poaching of elephants as a growing security concern in Central Africa and noted in particular Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad and Gabon as countries facing this problem.²³ The Secretary-General of CITES, also in May 2013, expressed his grave concern over reports of the deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic. At the time, information suggested that armed groups had entered and may have started to massacre forest elephants in a World Heritage Site located in the south-western corner of the country bordering Cameroon and the Republic of Congo.²⁴
8. On 29 May 2013 the UN Security Council was briefed on the situation in the Central African sub-region, by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa, during which attention was also drawn to the issue of poaching.²⁵ The Council adopted a Presidential Statement²⁶ encouraging the UN, the African Union and ECCAS to work together, including through joint field assessments, to develop a common operating picture of the LRA's current capabilities and areas of operation, and investigate the LRA's logistical networks and possible sources of military support and illicit financing, including alleged involvement in elephant poaching and related illicit smuggling.
9. In October 2013, the UN Security Council condemned the devastation of natural heritage in the Central African Republic and, in its Resolution 2121 (2013),²⁷ noted that poaching and trafficking of wildlife were among the factors fuelling the crisis in that country.²⁸
10. On 28 January 2014 and 30 January 2014 respectively, the UN Security Council adopted Resolutions 2134 (2014)²⁹ and 2136 (2014)³⁰ on UN sanctions targeting armed groups in the Central African

²⁰ http://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/VietNam_Directive_Wildlife_Crime.pdf

²¹ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2014/20140318_vn_pm.php

²² http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2013/297

²³ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20130523_un_lra.php

²⁴ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/2013_elephant_dzanga_sanga.php

²⁵ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20130531_un_lra.php

²⁶ http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/PRST/2013/6

²⁷ [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2121\(2013\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2121(2013))

²⁸ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20131011_unsc_poaching.php

²⁹ [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2134\(2014\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2134(2014))

Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which were financed by the illegal exploitation of natural resources, including poaching and illicit wildlife trade.³¹ These sanctions subject individuals or entities involved in such armed groups in these countries to travel bans and asset freezes. In Resolution 2136 (2014), the Security Council also reiterated its call to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and States in the Great Lakes region to cooperate at the regional level to investigate and combat regional criminal networks and armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation of natural resources, including wildlife poaching and trafficking.

11. The deliberations of the United Nations Security Council recognize the serious threat that illegal trade in wildlife represents to the natural resources, environment, economy and national security of a number of countries. It also emphasize the need for harsh sanctions against those who are involved and the importance of enhanced regional cooperation.

Implementation of Decisions 16.39 and 16.40

12. At CoP16, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 16.39 and 16.40 on *Enforcement Matters*, as follows:

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.39 *At its 65th meeting, the Standing Committee shall initiate a process to assess implementation and enforcement of the Convention as it relates to the trade in species listed in Appendix I. The Committee shall report its findings at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.*

Directed to the Secretariat

16.40 *Subject to available resources, the Secretariat shall:*

- a) *in cooperation with partners in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, establish Wildlife Incident Support Teams (WISTs) consisting of enforcement staff or relevant experts. WISTs shall be dispatched at the request of a country that has been affected by significant poaching of CITES specimens, or that has made a large-scale seizure of such specimens, to assist it, and guide and facilitate appropriate follow-up actions in the immediate aftermath of such an incident. The Secretariat shall report on progress in this regard at the 65th or 66th meeting of the Standing Committee, as appropriate; and*
- b) *seek invitations from Parties that have carried out significant seizures of CITES specimens, for the Secretariat, or relevant experts, to conduct assessments of the circumstances of such seizures and the follow-up actions that were taken, so that lessons may be learned and disseminated. The Secretariat shall report its findings in this regard at the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

13. The Secretariat will participate in and contribute to any process initiated by the Standing Committee in accordance with the provisions of Decision 16.39, if required.
14. Decision 16.40, paragraph a), calls for a WIST to be dispatched to assist Parties affected by significant poaching of CITES specimens, or that has made a large-scale seizure of such specimens. The deployment of a WIST is subject to a formal request from a Party. At the request of Sri Lanka, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC)³² deployed its first WIST, led by INTERPOL on behalf the Consortium, in July 2013.³³ To assist national authorities in Sri Lanka to determine the origin of the ivory and potentially identify the criminal networks behind large-scale elephant poaching, a specialist INTERPOL team collected samples from 359 seized elephant tusks for forensic analysis. The deployment of the WIST was generously funded by the European Commission under a project managed by INTERPOL on behalf of ICWC. In document SC65 Doc. 48.1 on

³⁰ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/sc11268.doc.htm>

³¹ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2014/20140203_un_sanctions.php

³² <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/iccwc.php>

³³ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2013/20130725_icwc_wist_Srilanka.php

Malagasy ebonies (*Diospyros spp.*) and Malagasy rosewoods (*Dalbergia spp.*), prepared for the present meeting, the Secretariat also reports on the proposed deployment of a WIST that was offered to Madagascar³⁴ in response to large-scale illegal trade in rosewood from that country. Subject to available resources, the Secretariat will continue to work with ICCWC partner agencies, to establish and dispatch WISTs at the request of Parties.

15. As indicated in document SC65 Doc. 42.2 on *Illegal trade in elephants specimens* prepared for the present meeting, a manual on “Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis”, is currently under preparation by UNODC, on behalf of ICCWC.³⁵ This manual is being developed as a practical guide to best practices and logistical procedures and is intended for worldwide use in order to facilitate the use of wildlife forensics to the fullest extent possible to combat wildlife crime, and in particular illegal ivory trade. The Secretariat will report further on activities undertaken in support of the implementation of Decision 16.40, paragraph b), at the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Implementation of Decisions 16.41 and 16.42

16. At CoP16, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 16.41 and 16.42 on *Pangolins (Manis spp.)*, as follows:

Directed to the range States

- 16.41 *All range States for Asian pangolin species are requested to compile information on the conservation of and illegal trade in Asian pangolins, and their efforts to address such trade, and to report at the 65th meeting of Standing Committee, subject to available resources for the purpose.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 16.42 *The Standing Committee, at its 65th meeting, shall review the information provided by Asian pangolin range States and develop recommendations, as appropriate, to address the illegal trade in pangolin species and report at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

17. The Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2013/059 of 18 December 2013,³⁶ inviting range States of Asian pangolin species to submit their reports on this matter to the Secretariat. In response to the Notification, reports were received from China, Pakistan, Thailand and the EU. The Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to thank these Parties for these reports, which are attached to the present document, in the language received, as Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4.
18. The Secretariat is also making available a peer-reviewed letter published by the Ecological Society of America, entitled *Scaling up pangolin protection in China*, as an information document for the present meeting. The Secretariat would like to thank the Ecological Society of America for allowing this publication to be made available as an information document for the present meeting.
19. Information received by the Secretariat suggests that the illegal trade in pangolin specimens is escalating at an alarming rate. In April 2013, for example, the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific of the World Customs Organization reported the discovery of more than 10 tonnes of frozen pangolin on a Chinese fishing vessel that had ran aground as it was returning to China from Malaysia. Another example is the seizure of 6200 kg of frozen pangolin that originated from Indonesia, at the Hai Phong port in Viet Nam, on 12 August 2013. Further to this, 20 seizures of pangolin specimens were made in January 2014 during Operation COBRA II, a month-long global operation to combat illegal wildlife trade.³⁷ The majority of illegal consignments of pangolin specimens seized during Operation COBRA II originated in Uganda (six), followed by the Philippines (five), Nepal (three) and Ethiopia (three). China was the reported final destination country for the majority of these seizures. A number of other significant incidents of illegal trade in pangolin specimens are highlighted in the information document referred to above.

³⁴ <http://www.cites.org/eng/Madagascar-president-CITES-Secretary-General-call-for-international-support-to-halt-surge-in-illegal-timber-trade>

³⁵ <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2013/November/unodc-hosted-meeting-strengthens-measures-to-protect-elephants-killed-for-illegal-ivory-trade.html>

³⁶ <http://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2013-059.pdf>

³⁷ http://cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2014/20140210_operation_cobra_ii.php

20. Data reflect an increasing number of seizures of illegal consignments of pangolin specimens from Africa. Illegal trade in pangolin specimens is a growing international problem not only affecting Asian pangolin range States. The Annex 4 report received from the EU further confirms this and states that the majority of seizures carried out in EU Member States in 2012 and 2013 involved African species of pangolin rather than species from Asia, with 85 per cent of the seizures during this period involving pangolin specimens illegally exported from west and central Africa. It is further reported that over 80 per cent of specimens seized by EU Member States were destined for China.
21. It is encouraging to note from this EU report that, in response to the detection of a number of illegal shipments of pangolin specimens, controlled deliveries were initiated in cooperation with Hong Kong, China, which resulted in the imprisonment of at least four individuals. The detection, arrest and eventual imprisonment of these offenders through the use of controlled deliveries, demonstrates the value of this technique, which could have a significant impact on organized crime syndicates as it targets the entire crime chain. Parties are reminded of the provisions of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP16) on *Compliance and enforcement*, which in paragraph i) under *Regarding additional actions to promote enforcement* RECOMMENDS that Parties:
- i) *promote and increase the use of wildlife forensic technology and specialized investigation techniques, such as controlled deliveries, in the investigation of wildlife crime offences; . . .*
22. Enhanced enforcement efforts aimed at addressing illegal trade in pangolin specimens are urgently needed, and Parties are encouraged to take urgent action to implement measures to combat this growing threat. There also seem to be a lack of awareness of the conservation impact of illegal pangolin trade, and Parties are encouraged to engage in education and outreach efforts, similar to those highlighted in the report received from Pakistan.

Implementation of Decisions 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.139

23. At CoP16, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 15.87 (Rev. CoP16) and 16.139 on *Humphead wrasse* (*Cheilinus undulatus*), as follows:

Directed to Parties

16.139 *To implement effectively the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse, Parties should:*

- a) *use existing documents listed in paragraph 13 of document CoP16 Doc. 62 (Rev. 1) in their implementation of the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse; and*
- b) *investigate reported violations of the Convention and of related national laws in relation to trade in the humphead wrasse, and take appropriate enforcement actions in accordance with their national legislation; and*

In addition, range States and importing Parties should strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation, including intelligence exchange and enforcement actions.

Directed to the Standing Committee

15.87 (Rev. CoP16) *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *review the actions taken by relevant Parties to implement the Appendix-II listing of the humphead wrasse;*
- b) *consider whether it is necessary to ask range States and importing States to provide further information on their actions taken to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention regarding trade in this species;*
- c) *develop, as appropriate, recommendations for improving the regulation of international trade in the humphead wrasse, and the enforcement of controls, to ensure the effectiveness of the Appendix-II listing of the species; and*
- d) *report its conclusions and recommendations for any appropriate follow-up actions at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to IUCN

16.140 *The IUCN Groupers and Wrasses Specialist Group continue its support to Parties in achieving sustainable fishing of the humphead wrasse and in making non-detriment findings in compliance with CITES.*

24. The Secretariat stands ready to support the work of the Standing Committee in implementing the provisions of Decision 15.87 (Rev. CoP16), if required.

Other matters

25. On 20 December 2013, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 3 March as World Wildlife Day,³⁸ to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora. During the first ever World Wildlife Day celebrations on 3 March 2014,³⁹ the UN Secretary-General urged all sectors of society to end illegal wildlife trafficking and to commit to trading and using wild plants and animals in a sustainable and equitable manner.
26. On 31 July 2013, World Ranger Day, the Secretariat joined others in saluting park rangers, in recognition of their dedicated work to protect our natural resources and cultural heritage for current and future generations.⁴⁰ Many of these men and women lose their lives in their brave efforts on the frontline of conservation, and the Secretariat carries in its thoughts the park rangers who paid the ultimate price in the execution of their duties, as well as the families and friends they left behind. World Ranger Day was first observed in 2007, on the 15th anniversary of the founding of the International Ranger Federation (IRF). It honours park rangers across the world who have been injured or lost their lives in the line of duty, and also celebrates the role rangers play in protecting our natural resources, including wild animals and plants.

Final remarks

27. Wildlife crime threatens the survival of some of the world's most charismatic species, as well as many lesser-known species. To effectively combat wildlife crime and the organized crime groups behind it, national enforcement agencies must continue to enhance their collaborative efforts, and deploy the same techniques against it, as those used against other domestic and transnational organized crimes, such as the trafficking of narcotics, humans or arms.
28. The change in the scale and nature of wildlife crime has not gone unnoticed, and recent political attention has focused on the importance of recognizing wildlife crime as a serious organized crime, that accordingly demands a determined and coordinated response. Continued commitment from the highest political level to combat wildlife crime is essential. Strong political commitment sends a clear signal to perpetrators that this destructive crime will not be tolerated; it also sends a strong message to authorities to remind them of the need to work collaboratively to put an end to wildlife crime.
29. It is encouraging to see that good progress has been made, and that increasingly coordinated, cooperative and multi-disciplinary approaches are developing at global, regional and national levels, bringing together different players and agencies across the enforcement chain, and facilitating the development of collective responses across source, transit and destination States.
30. There has been great political momentum and buy-in over the past two years, but a lot of urgent work still needs to be done. It is only by persisting in efforts, and by continuing to work together to build support and investment to combat wildlife and forest crime, that we can put an end to the destruction of the world's natural and cultural heritage.

Recommendations

31. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee:
- a) encourage all Parties, in particular range States for African and Asian pangolin species, to take note of the concerns about the illegal trade in pangolins and their parts and derivatives, and to take urgent action to implement measures to combat it;

³⁸ <http://www.wildlifeday.org/>

³⁹ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2014/wild_for_wildlife-20140302.php

⁴⁰ http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sg/2013/20130731_wrd.php

- b) encourage Parties to engage in education and outreach efforts and to develop and implement strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness with regard to the growing nature and environmental impacts of illegal pangolin trade, and to encourage the general public to report illegal activities to appropriate authorities for further investigation.