

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Strategic matters

UNITED NATIONS WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. The United Nations General Assembly, at its 68th session on 20 December 2013, adopted [Resolution A/RES/68/205](#) proclaiming 3 March as the United Nations World Wildlife Day and requested the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to facilitate the observance of World Wildlife Day.
3. [Resolution Conf. 17.1 \(Rev. CoP18\) on World Wildlife Day](#), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), requests the Secretariat to liaise with relevant United Nations system organizations to seek their support in the observance of World Wildlife Day and, when appropriate, invite them to act as the main partner of the global celebrations, including the organization of high-level events. At the international level, the celebration of World Wildlife Day has become an annual UN event with involvement of the Office of the UN Secretary General, the President of the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Development Programme as well as a number of other partners. The CITES Secretariat is maintaining a dedicated [website](#) for the World Wildlife Day, which is updated each year with new materials and resources related to the theme of the year. Posters in UN languages, outreach videos, action cards, social media kit, news items and a map for online submission of events are made available on the website each year. The World Wildlife Day also has a dedicated [YouTube Channel](#) containing videos and messages of heads of international organizations since 2015. The site also has the full streaming of the online events held in 2020 and 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Details of celebrations of each of the three years since CoP18 are included below.
4. In addition to the global events facilitated by the CITES Secretariat and carried out in collaboration with a number of partners, the celebration of the World Wildlife Day has also gained momentum at the national level, with events and celebrations taking place across the world. Event organizers are invited to inform the Secretariat of their activities and to promote these through the World Wildlife Day official website and social media channels.
5. The Resolution also requests the Standing Committee to continue to work with the Secretariat to recommend the theme for each year's observance of World Wildlife Day. At its 18th meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 18.38 on *World Wildlife Day*, as follows:

***Directed to the Standing Committee***

**18.38** *The Standing Committee shall consider designating a future World Wildlife Day to be focused on livelihoods of indigenous peoples and rural and local communities.*

World Wildlife Day 2020

6. Keeping in mind Decision 18.38, the Secretariat, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee agreed on the theme of "Sustaining all Life on Earth" for World Wildlife Day 2020, highlighting the unique place of

wild fauna and flora as essential components of the world's biodiversity, as well as a key pillar of livelihoods for people, particularly among communities that live close to nature. The Secretariat announced the theme through a [press release](#) issued on 19 November 2019 and [Notification to the Parties No. 2020/008 of 24 January 2020](#).

7. In accordance with the [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/205](#) and paragraph 8 of Resolution Conf. 17.1 (Rev. CoP18), the Secretariat also reached out to UN Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and interested individuals. The Secretariat invited them to observe and raise awareness of the theme for World Wildlife Day 2020 in an appropriate manner and to associate World Wildlife Day celebrations to relevant major national, regional and international events.
8. The Secretariat worked closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the President of UN General Assembly to organize a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York on 3 March 2020. The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Ambassador of India to the United Nations in New York, the CITES Secretary-General, the President of the Wildlife Conservation Society, and a representative of rural communities in Colombia provided opening remarks at the event at the UN Headquarters in New York, stressing the significance of the Day and of the year's theme.
9. A panel composed of expert speakers that included representatives of the UN missions of Costa Rica and Germany, as well as representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Sustainable use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), speakers representing youth and the private sector, engaged in discussions on the challenges that lay ahead in finding the right balance between use of wildlife and the need to conserve biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems.



Poster for World Wildlife Day 2020 by Peter George

10. In collaboration with the Geneva Environment Network, the CITES Secretariat also organized a roundtable discussion and celebration at the United Nations Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives of Colombia and Costa Rica as well as experts from IUCN and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the UN Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment and a private sector representative engaged in the roundtable discussion.
11. In addition to high-level events, the Secretariat continued to further mobilize countries and people around the world to embrace and celebrate World Wildlife Day through the [World Wildlife Day film showcase competition](#) organized in partnership with Jackson Wild and the World Wildlife Day Youth Art Competition, organized with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).
12. As in previous years, the United Nations Postal Administration issued the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the UN Endangered Species Stamps featuring 12 stamps showcasing CITES-listed migratory species, included in the Appendices of CITES and of the Convention on Migratory Species.

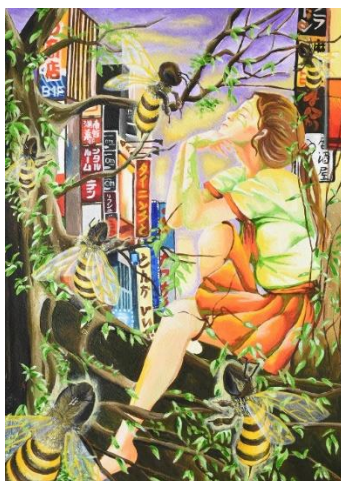
## World Wildlife Day 2021

- Following consultations with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee and in keeping with the Decision 18.38, the theme of “Forests and livelihoods: sustaining people and planet” was chosen as the theme for World Wildlife Day 2021. The theme was chosen to shed light on the links between the state of our planet’s forests and woodlands and the preservation of the millions of livelihoods that depend directly on them, with a particular attention to the traditional knowledge of the communities who have managed forest ecosystems and its wildlife for centuries. The theme was also chosen to bring out the relationship between people and nature that has come to the fore during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The theme was announced in a [press release](#) issued by the CITES Secretariat on 23 November 2020. Parties and other stakeholders were invited to mark the World Wildlife Day through [Notification to the Parties No. 2021/019 of 10 February 2021](#)



World Wildlife Day 2021 poster by Gabe Wong

- Given the continued COVID-19 pandemic in March 2021, the international celebration of the Day was held entirely online and streamed through YouTube, where it can still be watched: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnzfseoxfv8>. The event was co-organized and co-hosted with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In her opening remarks, the Secretary-General of CITES underlined the importance of this year’s celebration, with its focus on the communities that rely on forests and their wildlife and who have historically acted as their primary custodians. She said the aim of the event was to give a voice to these important stakeholders by sharing their forest conservation knowledge and experiences to inspire the establishment of truly sustainable models of interaction with the planet’s ecosystems and wildlife. Ms. Fawn Sharp, President of the Quinault Indian Nation and President of the National Congress of American Indians, spoke of the efforts of indigenous peoples and local communities to preserve the knowledge that has sustained them for millennia. In her remarks, Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention for Biological Diversity, said that recognizing the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities ensures participatory environmental governance for the protection of forests and wildlife. Mr. António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, expressed a heartfelt plea to governments, businesses and people everywhere to scale up efforts to conserve forests and forest species, and to support and listen to the voices of forest communities. He called this an urgent step towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Two panel discussions brought together experts from around the world. The first panel explored the role of the livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities in the conservation and sustainable use of forests. The second panel looked at the opportunities for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and employment through the sustainable use of forests.
- For the sixth year running, Jackson Wild™, the CITES Secretariat and UNDP teamed up for the film showcase based on the theme. The contest attracted nearly 300 entries which brought to life a wide array of compelling stories about the work of communities involved in conserving forests and sustaining themselves through the essential ecosystem services provided by forests and wildlife. Eleven winning films were unveiled by Ms. Lisa Samford, Executive Director of Jackson Wild™, and the CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero. The celebration was also marked by the announcement of the winner of the third World Wildlife Day Youth Art Contest, organized by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), the CITES Secretariat, and UNDP. With over 500 entries, the contest saw school-age children and young artists from over 50 countries produce some truly inspirational works of art, illustrating the deep relationship between people, forests and forest wildlife.



The winner of the 2021 Youth Art Contest, Ka Yi Su

16. The United Nations Postal Administration issued [the 28<sup>th</sup> edition of the UN Endangered Species Stamps](#) in collaboration with the Secretariat. The stamps highlighted species of wild fauna and flora that only occur in unique and limited geographical regions. Created by Cuban American artist Juan Carlos Alonso, the 2021 stamps showcase 12 species, including six mammals, three plants, two birds and one reptile, all exclusively found in specific ranges.
17. In addition to high-level events, the Secretariat continued to further mobilize countries and people around the world to embrace and celebrate World Wildlife Day. Countries in all continents celebrated World Wildlife Day 2021 in the form of conferences, street parades, television talk shows, street banners, brochures, exhibitions, competitions, massive social media campaigns as well as education programmes.

#### World Wildlife Day 2022

18. Following consultations with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee, World Wildlife Day 2022 was celebrated under the theme “Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration”. The theme was intended to draw attention to the critical role that keystone species of plants and animals play in ensuring ecosystem health, as well as the imperative need to reverse the fate of the most critically endangered species, to support the restoration of their habitats and ecosystems and to promote their sustainable use by humans. The theme was also chosen to mark the [UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030](#), focusing on preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.
19. The CITES Secretariat announced the theme through a [press release](#) and [Notification to the Parties No. 2022/010](#) respectively on 15 November 2021 and 10 February 2022.



Main visual of WWD2022

20. The CITES Secretariat, UNDP and other UN system organizations, Member States, biodiversity-related conventions, and private sector and civil society actors, unrolled a series of global activities around World Wildlife Day 2022. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these activities were mostly held online, with 118 events submitted to the World Wildlife Day website from over 40 different countries. The [UN World Wildlife Day 2022 event](#) focused on stories around species recovery and ecosystem restoration from around the world. Following opening remarks by the President of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Abdulla Shahid; the Minister of Environment of Panama, host of the current meeting, Mr. Milciades Concepción; the Administrator of UNDP, Mr Achim Steiner; and Ms. Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the event featured live testimonies from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Nepal, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



21. Also in 2022, the Secretariat and UNDP teamed up with Jackson Wild and IFAW to organize a World Wildlife Day film showcase and an international youth art competition echoing the year's theme, broadcast during the event.



Winner of the 2022 Youth Art Competition, Yanjun Mao, China

22. On 3 March 2022, the [29th annual edition of the UN Endangered Species Stamps series](#) issued by the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) and the CITES Secretariat were launched, seeking to highlight species native to the Central and South American and Caribbean region.

#### Considerations for future World Wildlife Day celebrations and their organization

23. The organization of World Wildlife Day has been successful in the past years. It covers the conservation of species and ecosystems, sustainable use of wild animals and plants and the importance for livelihoods. The celebration of the Day has become a major undertaking for the Secretariat, relying upon existing in-house capacity and the support of many partners. There is a risk, therefore, that we may be missing a huge opportunity for CITES and partners to communicate around themes associated with CITES. Further, next year will be particularly important as the Convention will celebrate 50 years since its adoption.
24. As indicated in Resolution Conf. 17.1 (Rev. CoP18), the Secretariat and the celebrations would benefit from financial or in-kind support from more Parties and organizations to ensure the continued success of future celebrations of World Wildlife Day. In addition, the Secretariat considers that additional extrabudgetary resources are required for the Secretariat to ensure full attention to the themes each year, as set out in the Annex to the present document.
25. In line with the provisions of the Resolution, the Secretariat will be consulting each year with the Standing Committee on the theme of the forthcoming World Wildlife Day.

#### Recommendations

26. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:
- a) take note of the present document; and
  - b) delete Decision 18.38 on *World Wildlife Day* as it has been implemented.

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

In Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decides that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding for the implementation of the Conf. 17.1 (CoP18).

Secretariat:

The workload associated with facilitating the global celebration of World Wildlife Day has become considerable over the past years and requires the support of a dedicated staff/consultant over a five-months period each year. In addition the maintenance of the World Wildlife Day website and cost of travel to organize and attend events outside Switzerland also need extrabudgetary resources.

<b>mandate</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Source</b>
Res. Conf. 17.1 (Rev. CoP18)	Coordination consultant	75,000	Extrabudgetary
	Travel	6,000	Extrabudgetary
	<b>Total</b>	<b>81,000</b>	