

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



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 January 2016

Strategic matters

World Wildlife Day

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON WORLD WILDLIFE DAY 2015

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. The Conference of the Parties, at its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), unanimously adopted [Resolution Conf. 16.1](#) which called on the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to proclaim 3 March, the day of the adoption of CITES, as World Wildlife Day. This call was duly noted by the United Nations General Assembly when, at its 68th session, on 20 December 2013, it adopted [Resolution A/RES/68/205](#) on the proclamation of World Wildlife Day.
3. UNGA Resolution 68/205 requested the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to facilitate the implementation of World Wildlife Day.

Preparatory activities to commemorate World Wildlife Day 2015

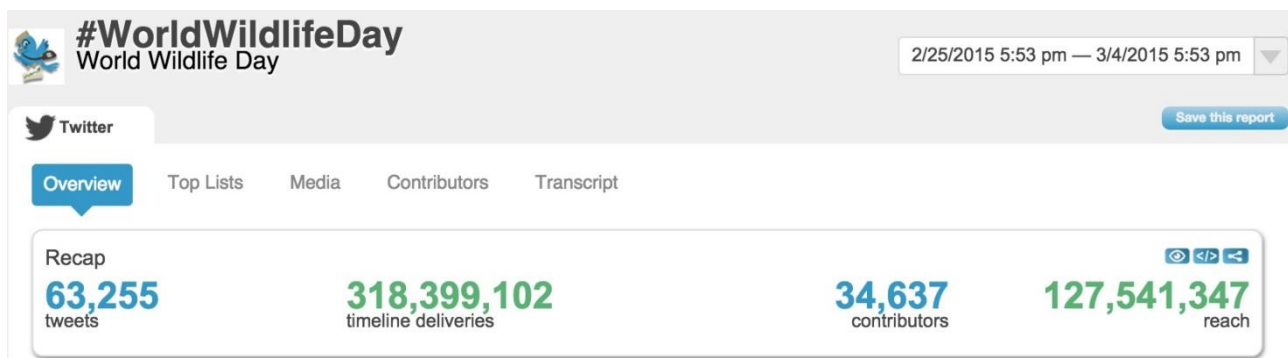
4. During the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, July 2014), a World Wildlife Day Working Group was established in order to "identify, compile and formulate ideas on how best to celebrate future editions".
5. The members of the Working Group are: Bahrain, Botswana (Chair), Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guyana, Italy, Kuwait, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, United States of America, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Species Survival Network (SSN), TRAFFIC and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). Two additional United Nations organizations have expressed interest and joined the Working Group, namely the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
6. A survey aimed at gathering inputs to finalize organisational steps for the celebration of World Wildlife Day 2015, was sent to the members of the Working Group on 21 October 2014. Each member of the Working Group was requested to provide a focal point. The CITES Secretariat received responses from: Botswana, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Italy, Kuwait, Peru, South Africa, Thailand, United States, UNEP, UNODC, IFAW, SSN and WCS. UNDP and UNWTO also provided comments.
7. The Secretariat in 2014 created a dedicated World Wildlife Day website at www.wildlifeday.org as the official platform to celebrate the Day, together with a Twitter account @WildlifeDay and a Facebook page to share news and stories of the Day, which can be followed at: <https://www.facebook.com/WorldWildlifeDay>. Each of these platforms are managed by the Secretariat and they are used for each World Wildlife Day.
8. The Working Group was in favour of keeping the existing logo for branding purposes and consistency for 2015. The logo was created in 2014 and exists in the 6 official languages of the United Nations, i.e. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. It is also available in Portuguese. A high resolution

version of the logo can be downloaded from the World Wildlife Day website:
<http://wildlifeday.org/content/outreach-material>

Theme for World Wildlife Day 2015

9. On this second observance of the Day, the CITES Working Group chaired by Botswana, the UN system, its Member States and a wide range of partners from around the world highlighted the simple yet firm message that “It’s time to get serious about wildlife crime”. Hashtag: #SeriousAboutWildlifeCrime. Additional hashtags: #WorldWildlifeDay #WildlifeCrime. Website: <http://www.wildlifeday.org>
10. The Working Group also agreed to highlight the positive role that local communities can play in helping to curb illegal wildlife trade. The theme for 2015 was complemented by ‘Wildlife and sustainable tourism’ and ‘The role of local communities in conservation’ as innovative solutions to the challenges posed by wildlife crime in certain regions of the world.
11. UNODC generously offered to develop a full social media campaign to raise awareness of the scope and severity of wildlife crime in close cooperation with the CITES Secretariat and the Working Group. The UNODC proposal was made available on the World Wildlife Day website.
12. UNWTO agreed to take the lead on the sustainable tourism aspects. UNDP and the Chair of the Working Group agreed to lead on aspects related to wildlife crime and the role played by local communities.
13. The Working Group invited all Parties to CITES, all member States and organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations and all interested individuals, to observe and raise awareness of the theme for World Wildlife Day in an appropriate manner, in accordance with national priorities via Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/007](#) of 3 February 2015.

Social media campaign



14. The social media campaign was launched under the leadership of UNODC on February 9 and the social media pack was taken up with great success from mid-February through to March 3rd and beyond with participation from UN partners, UN Goodwill Ambassadors and most importantly, the general public. A series of targeted messages and social media assets were created and shared with UN partners, NGOs, Goodwill Ambassadors and other potential influencers for use in the weeks building up to March 3 and on the day itself. In addition to the posts and images, action posters were created for people to print and pose with, then sharing the photos through social media.
15. With a combined reach through Twitter and Facebook of close to 190 million people, the social media campaign was the cornerstone of awareness-raising efforts in the build-up to World Wildlife Day 2015. The social media campaign centered around a Thunderclap which launched a simultaneous message at 3pm CET on 3 March: “It’s time to get #SeriousAboutWildlifeCrime: let’s take a stand against organized wildlife crime before it’s too late <http://thndr.it/1bShOGO>”
16. The success of the Thunderclap exceeded our targets achieving an impressive 435% of our goal support and a massive reach of 14,048,813 people.
17. As well as the millions of individual Twitter and Facebook users who joined the social media campaign, many influential groups and organizations used and shared WWD 2015 material and joined the Thunderclap including WWF, IFAW, African Wildlife Foundation, United for Wildlife and many others.

18. Twitter was the primary platform for this campaign. From February 26 to March 4, 23,612 individual tweets were posted using the hashtag #SeriousAboutWildlifecrime from 14,634 individual accounts, reaching a total of 60,395,474 Twitter users. During this same period 63,255 individual tweets were posted using the hashtag #WorldWildlifeDay from 34,637 individual accounts, reaching a total of 127,541,347 Twitter users (see figure above).
19. The use of Facebook made it possible to reach a wider audience, as reflected in the 43,000 followers registered on the WWD Facebook page.
20. The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon provided a message for WWD that was posted on the WWD website and shared widely. The Secretary-General of CITES recorded a short video message, which was subsequently broadcast during several conferences held on 3 March and was featured on the World Wildlife Day website and Youtube channel. He also carried out a number of interviews for the press, and radio interviews for World Radio Switzerland and UN Radio.
21. On 3 March 2015, the CITES Secretariat in collaboration with the relevant organizations of the United Nations system issued a [joint press release](#) on World Wildlife Day. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted in his statement for the day that: "Illegal wildlife trade undermines the rule of law and threatens national security; it degrades ecosystems and is a major obstacle to the efforts of rural communities and indigenous peoples striving to sustainably manage their natural resources. Combatting this crime is not only essential for conservation efforts and sustainable development, it will contribute to achieving peace and security in troubled regions where conflicts are fuelled by these illegal activities."

Events and observances around the world

22. To commemorate World Wildlife Day 2015, a series of global and national events and social media activities were planned around the world, including in New York at a General Assembly morning session and at the WCS Central Park Zoo, as well as an event at the Geneva Airport, and national celebrations in Austria, Bhutan, Botswana, China, Egypt, Guyana, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Montenegro, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa and the United States of America.
23. Other observances were held around the world, including at the Berlin Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB).

New York

24. The President of the General Assembly, Sam Kahamba Kutesa, hosted a special World Wildlife Day Commemorative session on 4 March 2015, where Member States and the global community examined the challenges to and opportunities for stepping up international efforts to combat wildlife crime at a global scale. The proposed General Assembly event was designed as a "celebration in the context of paragraph 2 of GA resolution 68/205 which "invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations, as well as other relevant stakeholders". There was an opening Panel session, which included speeches by President Kutesa, UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, Ms Chelsea Clinton, Ms. Nadya Hutagalung, and the CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon. Many Member States also made interventions.
25. UNGA Resolution 69/314 on 'Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife' adopted on 30 July 2015 welcomed the international observance of the Day in 2014 and 2015 in order to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora, which also helped to pave the way for the adoption of Resolution 69/314.
26. In addition to the UN General Assembly session, the Permanent Missions of Gabon, Germany and Thailand to the United Nations, in collaboration with CITES, UNDP, UNEP, the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), UNODC, the World Bank (WB), and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) gathered at the WCS Central Park Zoo on 3 March for a high-level panel discussion on the issue.
27. The discussion highlighted the importance of international coordination aimed at both the supply and demand sides of illegal poaching and trade. Panellists reviewed strategies to combat illegal wildlife trade, such as curbing international demand, improving intelligence and border control, strengthening regional law enforcement and prosecution capabilities, and facilitating community-based natural resource management approaches that give local communities greater voice and control in protecting resources.

28. The WCS Central Park Zoo event was attended by over 100 representatives from Member States, development organizations, civil society, the private sector, and media. The event included high-level speaker remarks and a moderated, interview-style panel and interactive dialogue. Welcoming remarks were provided by Nik Sekhran, Director of the Sustainable Development Cluster at UNDP and Cristián Samper, President and CEO of WCS. Joint remarks were offered by Ambassador Marianne Bibalou, Chargée d'affaires of Gabon, Ambassador Harald Braun, Permanent Representative of Germany, and Ambassador Chayapan Bamrungphong, Chargé d'affaires of Thailand. Opening remarks were also shared by John Scanlon, CITES Secretary-General, and Oyun Sanjaasuren, President of the UN Environment Assembly.
29. Moderated by Dan Harris, Nightline Anchor at ABC News, a panel discussion explored the "Links between Illegal Wildlife Trade, Crime, and Sustainable Development" and included Aldo Lale-Demoz, Deputy Executive Director at UNODC; Nik Sekhran, Director of the Sustainable Development Cluster at UNDP; Doug Cress, Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Programme Coordinator at UNEP; Sue Lieberman, Vice President of International Policy at WCS, and Ambassador William Brownfield, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs at the US State Department.
30. Mr. Karmenu Vella, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, offered a video statement to recognize the importance of addressing wildlife crime. Several public service announcements demonstrated the power of celebrity voices and highlighted the plights of elephants, great apes, and other species. Among the videos showcased were a mini-documentary on elephants and ivory poaching featuring UNEP Goodwill Ambassador and actress Li Bingbing; the WCS public service announcement "An Elephant's Tale: The Matriarch"; the UNODC public service announcement "Wildlife Crime: Don't Be Part of It"; the GRASP public service announcement "The Illicit Trade in Great Apes"; and a video on UNDP Equator Prize winner "Northern Rangelands Trust", featuring community champion Josephine Ekiro from northern Kenya.
31. An open dialogue followed, including thought-provoking comments by Valerie Hickey, WB Environment Practice Manager; Benito Perez, Strategic and Operational Advisor, Environmental Security Sub-Directorate, INTERPOL; Michael Casey, Science and Technology Editor, CBSNews.com; Bryan Arroyo, Assistant Director for International Affairs, US Fish and Wildlife Service; and Crawford Allan, Senior Director, TRAFFIC. Closing remarks were provided by Aldo Lale-Demoz, UNODC.
32. A reception followed the high-level panel, with welcoming remarks by Patricia Beneke, Regional Director of UNEP Regional Office for North America and Nadya Hutagalung, the new GRASP Ambassador. An impressive exhibit of confiscated wildlife products was organized by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, New York District.
33. The participants also discussed the importance of raising public awareness to reduce demand, including the World Wildlife Day global social media campaign, which reached over 15 million followers around this year's theme.

Geneva

34. The CITES Secretariat in association with the Geneva Environment Network (GEN), International Geneva of the Republic and State of Geneva, Geneva Airport, the Geneva Natural History Museum and the Newspaper *Le Temps* and with the generous support of the Swiss Confederation, notably through the CITES Management Authority of Switzerland and the Swiss Customs Administration, and the Embassy of the United States, organized a Symposium on the occasion of the World Wildlife Day held at Geneva Airport under the theme: "Wild and precious : conservation in the 21st century". For copies of the presentations, photos and more details visit: <http://www.environmenthouse.ch/?q=en/events/wild-and-precious-conservation-21st-century>.

Bhutan

35. The 2nd World Wildlife Day was celebrated in Bhutan in the Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park. Organized jointly by Wildlife Conservation Division and Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park of the Department of Forests and Park Services, the day was celebrated with the theme "Partnering with Local Communities to Combat Wildlife Crime". As a part of celebration, a drawing competition amongst the students of Jangbi Community Primary School was held on the theme: "Forests and My Village".

Botswana

36. The World Wildlife Day was celebrated in Kasane, Botswana where the International Illegal Wildlife Trade Conferences and the African Elephant summit follow-up meeting were held. This commemoration engaged communities, stakeholders and the Department of Wildlife & National Parks.

Brazil

37. Two Spix's macaws arrived at 6 a.m. in Sao Paulo, Brazil, that day as part of a programme to return this species to its original Brazilian habitat.

China

38. The CITES Management Authority of China hosted a symposium on 3 March in Beijing to commemorate the second World Wildlife Day. Representatives from relevant government departments, foreign embassies and international organizations participated in the event. Seventeen courier companies signed a zero tolerance appeal at the event and committed to not allowing the transport of illegal wildlife products. The World Wildlife Day was also celebrated in many provinces across China.

Guyana

39. Guyana celebrated World Wildlife Day 2015 through awareness-raising activities on wildlife crime and legislation dealing with wildlife management.
40. The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment coordinated a National Stakeholders Forum on Sustainable Management and Conservation of Guyana's wildlife which took place on 3 March 2015. The forum aimed to raise awareness among the stakeholders on the legal framework dealing with sustainable management and conservation of wildlife in Guyana. Participants at the forum included several governmental and non-governmental organisations as well as local wildlife dealers including fishermen, wildlife exporters and hunters.
41. The Wildlife Management Authority of Guyana, in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency, held a poster competition among grade seven students (11-12 years old). Students from twenty-four schools, across four administrative regions, were invited to create posters centered on the World Wildlife Day theme. A total of 150 entries were received.

Kenya

42. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in the hope of strengthening the international fight against poaching on 3 March 2015 set fire to more than 15 tonnes of elephant ivory tusks during a ceremony at the Nairobi National Park. The event was hosted by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) to celebrate the World Wildlife Day.

Republic of Korea

43. The Ministry of Environment and the National Institute of Biological Resources hosted an exhibition and an educational seminar on the topic of illegal wildlife trade and threatened species restoration at the National Institute of Biological Resources.

Montenegro

44. Montenegro celebrated the World Wildlife Day by organizing several activities: participation of officers in various national television programmes; educational activities regarding World Wildlife Day in schools; and design and distribution of brochures for educational purposes.

Pakistan

45. World Wildlife Day 2015 was celebrated in Pakistan by the disabled and physically challenged children with the support of collaborators, supporters and sponsors such as Geo-Agri Tourism, World Wildlife Fund, Agri-Tourism Development Corporation, Pakistan Peoples with Disability Organization, Pepsico International and the Wildlife Research Institute. The day was also celebrated in the capital city Islamabad in the Pakistan Museum of Natural History, as well as remote areas such as Gojal.

South Africa

46. The South African Department of Environmental Affairs and South African National Parks (SANParks) held the 2nd World Wildlife Day celebration at Skukuza in the Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga, on 3 March 2015. The programme included a field visit to the carcass of a rhino that was poached.

United States of America

47. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service hosted a live question-and-answer session and behind-the-scenes look at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildlife Forensics Laboratory - the first and only full-service wildlife forensics lab in the world. Assistant Attorney General John C. Cruden of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division, together with Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Robert G. Dreher, held a pen and pad briefing on ongoing efforts to fight the domestic and international trade in endangered wildlife. U.S. Department of State hosted a World Wildlife Day Google + Hangout featuring Under Secretary of State Catherine Novelli and key partners from WildAid, Wildlife Direct, CHANGE, and the International Fund for Animal Welfare.
48. The CITES Secretariat expresses its sincere appreciation to all Parties, United Nations organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector representatives and individuals who contributed to the success of the second celebration of the World Wildlife Day in 2015.

Recommendations

49. The Standing Committee is invited to note the present document.
50. The Standing Committee may also encourage Parties and other interested stakeholders to make voluntary contributions to secure the organization of World Wildlife Day 2016, in accordance with Resolution 68/205 requirements.