

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



Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November – 1 December 2017

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT AND OTHER AREAS OF COOPERATION

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* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted to the sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Convention) pursuant to the memorandum of understanding between the Standing Committee of the Convention and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (the Environment Programme), concerning secretariat services to and support of the Convention. The report provides an update on programmatic support provided by the Environment Programme for the implementation of the relevant outcomes of the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.
2. Pursuant to resolution 2/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the Environment Programme, the Environment Programme is setting the stage for a more coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and providing links to other global environmental goals and strategies through the medium-term strategy for 2018–2021 and the programme of work for 2016–2017. With regard to the environmental issues of the Agenda for Sustainable Development, the ecosystem management subprogramme is closely aligned with the priorities of this and other biodiversity-related conventions. Sustainable Development Goals 6, 13, 14 and 15 are at the heart of the work conducted by the Environment Programme in such cross-cutting areas as poverty reduction, food, water and energy security, employment and gender equality.
3. As the custodian agency for 26 of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, the Environment Programme is working to ensure that countries are well equipped and able to track their progress through the open-access platform. The Environment Programme is engaging with some 48 United Nations agencies on a system-wide framework on environmental strategies, with the aim of aligning their strategies to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the long run, this process is designed to support the Convention in delivering on Sustainable Development Goal 15, target 7, on urgent action to end the poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both the demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

A. Tackling illegal trade in wildlife

1. Progress pursuant to United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/14 on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products

4. In response to Environment Assembly resolution 2/14, on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, the Environment Programme has submitted a progress report for the Environment Assembly at its third session. The report includes a thorough assessment of best practices in local community involvement in wildlife management, drawing from diverse examples from around the world and presenting lessons learned from various approaches as a means of tackling the unsustainable use and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products. The assessment is available at <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/21968>.
5. Through the national legislation project and in cooperation with the Convention secretariat, the Environment Programme is supporting the development and implementation of national legislation related to illegal trade in wildlife in four countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Plans are under way to extend technical legal assistance to seven other countries. With regard to prosecutors, a study on the status, trends and gaps in the prosecution of environmental crimes in Latin America has been prepared. In addition, the Environment Programme has co-sponsored the development and roll-out of a rapid reference guide and standard operating procedures by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for investigators and prosecutors of wildlife crimes in the United Republic of Tanzania (see section F below).
6. In June 2017, the Environment Programme and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute launched an expert process designed to examine institutional models and approaches for combating crimes that have serious impact on the environment. Following contributions from national focal points designated by member States under Environment Assembly resolution 2/19, on the midterm review of the Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environment Law (“Montevideo Programme IV”) – the Montevideo focal points – the draft report on crimes that have a serious impact on the environment was the subject of discussions with experts in a meeting held from 13 to 15 September 2017 in Rome.
7. The Environment Programme is currently working on the first global report on environmental rule of law. The report identifies trends in the development of environmental rule of law and its fundamental elements, along with effective environmental laws and institutions. Within this context, the Environment Programme intends to facilitate an expert process designed to ascertain and document the current status of knowledge of crimes that have serious impact on the environment, including illegal trade in wildlife, in particular in terms of their environmental impact, and to identify links between those crimes.

8. The United Nations Secretary-General's Policy Committee, at its meeting on 3 February 2015, adopted decision PC/2015/1 on Illicit Trade in Wildlife and Forest Products. The decision included a request for the Environment Programme, along with the Convention, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, Department of Public Information, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in consultation with United Nations regional presences and the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, to develop a robust evidence base, shared analysis and consequent recommendations for an effective and coherent United Nations response to the security, political, economic, environmental and social aspects of the illicit trade in wildlife and forest products, to be submitted to the Secretary-General. In April 2016, the Environment Programme, on behalf of the eight United Nations entities concerned, made a submission to the Secretary-General.

9. In December 2016, in order to strengthen the operational capacity necessary to support a coherent response in line with the proposal by the Secretary-General, the Environment Programme, along with the seven other United Nations entities concerned, agreed to establish a task force, with all eight United Nations entities as core members, and to formally launch it in New York on 3 March 2017, on the occasion of World Wildlife Day. The overall purpose of the task force is to respond to the call of the Secretary-General and States Members of the United Nations for an integrated and holistic response to the rapid increase in poaching, and the illicit trade in wildlife and forest products. The objective of the task force is to further support the implementation of the activities of the relevant United Nations entities in the prevention and tackling of illicit trade in wildlife and forest products in an holistic manner. The Environment Programme is the chair of the task force for 2017, while the United Nations Development Programme provides its secretariat. The task force has held regular coordination meetings and, as a result of its work, there has been collaboration in the organization of such events as the Africa-Asia-Pacific Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime, held in Bangkok from 4-5 July 2017.

3. African Elephant Fund and its contribution to implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan

10. United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/14, on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, requested the Executive Director of the Environment Programme, among other actions, to continue to collaborate with the Convention and other partners of the international consortium on combating wildlife crime, and with other United Nations entities, to support member States in implementing their commitments, including by continuing to support the activities of the African Elephant Action Plan, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

11. Key achievements in implementing the African Elephant Action Plan, with support from the African Elephant Fund, include the review of wildlife legislation and strict enforcement of sentencing for prosecuted poachers and traffickers in Ethiopia, the elimination of crop raiding and measures to prevent elephants moving outside the Thurma Forest Reserve in Malawi, and the strengthened capacity of over 300 enforcement personnel in Ethiopia and Ghana in the conduct of anti-poaching missions and the identification, collection and handling of wildlife products.

12. The Environment Programme, as the entity providing secretariat services for the Fund, supported the eighth meeting of the Fund's steering committee, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 5 October 2016, immediately after the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The steering committee considered, among other matters, a resolution for adoption at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. If approved, the resolution would strengthen collaboration between parties to the Convention on Migratory Species and the African elephant range States on the management of cross-border elephant populations.

13. The secretariat of the African Elephant Fund is developing a publication which will explore the ways in which the strategies of the African Elephant Fund are being transformed into action. The publication will increase awareness of the contribution made by the Fund to implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan in the range States and, it is hoped, will bolster donor contributions. The publication puts the spotlight on project achievements to date, challenges hindering conservation efforts for the African elephant, and strategies for improving implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan in range States.

4. Illegal trade in wildlife and forest products Communication Handbook

14. In response to Convention resolution Conf.17.4, on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in the CITES-listed species, the Secretariat of the Environment Programme has built on the awareness raised and the momentum generated by the Wild for Life campaign to assist member States and other stakeholders in launching their own communication programmes to raise awareness and change behaviour at the local and national levels with regard to consumption of wildlife products from illegal trade. For that purpose, the Environment Programme has developed a handbook for national

communication planners, to help them to develop communication activities designed to reduce demand for wildlife and forest products.

15. The effectiveness of the handbook was tested at an initial workshop held in Viet Nam in October 2017. The workshop was co-hosted by the CITES Management Authority in Viet Nam and the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The main outcome of the workshop is the creation of a network of communication officers from the Government of Viet Nam. The CITES Management Authority in Vietnam will host a follow-up meeting with all the participants to formalize the network and agree on the way forward for the communication initiatives. In addition, the Environment Programme is planning to conduct a second pilot activity in Malawi (a country supplying wildlife products) by the end of 2017, before scaling up to regional workshops in West Africa and East Africa in 2018. These activities all form part of the efforts by the Environment Programme to support implementation of Convention resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev. CoP17), on trade in elephant specimens, through public awareness campaigns.

5. Tackling illegal trade in wildlife through projects funded by the Global Environment Facility

16. The Environment Programme, as a designated implementing agency, has been supporting implementation of two projects funded by the Global Environment Facility at the regional level: strengthening law enforcement capabilities to combat wildlife crime for conservation and sustainable use of species in South Africa (targeting the rhinoceros); and engaging policymakers and the judiciary to address poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Africa.

17. In addition, it will support implementation of the following projects, once they are cleared: strengthening institutions, information management and monitoring to reduce the rate of illegal wildlife trade in South Africa, under the Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development; capacity development in reducing illegal wildlife trade and improving protected area management effectiveness in South Sudan; and enhancing legislative, policy, and criminal justice frameworks for combating poaching and illegal trade in Africa (Gabon, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia), which will contribute to improved protection and conservation of targeted species.

B. Support for strengthening cooperation, coordination and synergies between the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and other biodiversity-related conventions

18. In Environment Assembly resolution 2/17, on enhancing the work of the Environment Programme in facilitating cooperation, collaboration and synergies among biodiversity-related conventions, the Assembly recognized the benefits to be gained by implementing the biodiversity-related conventions in a synergistic and coherent manner. The resolution requested the Executive Director to undertake further efforts to enhance synergies. The Environment Programme is implementing the resolution through a new project developed in close consultation with the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

C. Technical and scientific support from the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre

19. Since the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, all new listings and nomenclature changes resulting from the adoption of the 49 proposals for amendment of the Appendices and the adoption of new Convention standard references, as per Resolution Conf. 12. 11 (Rev. CoP17), have been incorporated into Species+, a centralized portal for access to key information on species of global concern, and the online Convention Checklist of CITES Species.

20. The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) maintains and continually updates Species+ and the Convention Checklist of CITES Species. The two online platforms were developed by UNEP-WCMC in conjunction with the Convention secretariat and other partners, and provide Parties with information related to key species required for implementation of the Convention. Species+ contains taxonomic, listing and distribution information on all species listed in the Convention Appendices; it also provides details on the quotas and trade restrictions and now includes a document search facility for a selection of Convention documents (primarily relating to listing proposals and the Review of Significant Trade). The database underpinning the Convention Checklist is linked with Species+ and, as designated by Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP17), serves as the official checklist of the Convention's species. Since its launch in 2013, Species+ has had over 770,000 visits from approximately 450,000 users, and the Convention Checklist has had over 455,000 visits from over 300,000 users. Both sites have global coverage, with users from over 200 countries and territories.

21. Data in Species+, the Convention Checklist and the trade database of the Convention are available publicly and via the web. In addition, UNEP-WCMC also maintains an application programming interface designed to support the integration of the Convention Checklist and Species+ with national information

systems. The interface, developed in collaboration with Belgium, France and Switzerland, provides a mechanism enabling national databases to link to and easily extract data from Species+ (including species names, Convention appendices and distributions) and to download them onto national platforms, with a view to assisting Parties with the implementation of the Convention and thereby reducing duplication of data maintenance work and improving data quality and consistency of species information (see Convention notification no. 2015/056). Parties are encouraged to contact UNEP-WCMC for further information about the feature (species@unep-wcmc.org).

22. In support of the implementation of the Convention, and on behalf of its secretariat, UNEP-WCMC produced several documents to inform discussion at the scientific committee meetings relating to key processes such as the Review of Significant Trade, the Periodic Review and a new process relating to captive-bred specimens. The reports were discussed by the Animals and Plants Committees at their twenty-ninth and twenty-third meetings respectively held in Geneva in July 2017.

23. Under the Review of Significant Trade process, UNEP-WCMC produced detailed reviews of 25 animal and 11 plant species-country combinations that were selected for review following the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.¹ UNEP-WCMC also produced an extended analysis of the trade data from the Convention to facilitate the selection of animal and plant species for inclusion in the Review of Significant Trade following the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties;² the selection process applied the new methods reflected in the revisions to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev.CoP17), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth meeting.

24. Where captive breeding is concerned, and to support the implementation of the new process launched with the adoption of Resolution Conf. 17.7 at the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, UNEP-WCMC worked closely with the Convention secretariat to produce two outputs of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity. The first output was an analysis of six criteria (defined in Resolution Conf. 17.7) to identify species for which captive-bred and ranched trade may merit further scrutiny.³

25. The methodology for the analysis was developed by UNEP-WCMC with advice from the secretariat, taking into consideration the guidance provided by the representative selection of parties and members of the Animals Committee that participated in the consultation workshop co-hosted by the Convention secretariat and UNEP-WCMC in Cambridge, United Kingdom in March 2017.

26. UNEP-WCMC also produced a second output of all trade in captive produced and ranched sources for the period 2011–2015, to enable parties to scrutinize trade levels for any species, including taxa that did not meet the selection criteria in the analysis.⁴ Those two outputs assisted members of the Animals Committee with their work in selecting a limited number of species-country combinations of potential concern; in total, at its twenty-ninth meeting, the Committee selected 18 species-country combinations for inclusion in the review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity in accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.7.

27. In addition, UNEP-WCMC also supported the Convention secretariat through the production of outputs relating to the selection of species for the Periodic Review process for both animals and plants.⁵ For the Standing Committee, UNEP-WCMC compiled an overview of trade in elephant specimens as

¹ See annex 1 to Convention document AC29 Doc. 13.2 (Report on species/country combinations selected for review by the Animals Committee following CoP16: CITES Project No. A-498), and available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/29/E-AC29-13-02-A1.pdf>; and Convention document PC23 Doc. 15.2 (Review of significant trade in specimens of Appendix-II species), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/pc/23/E-PC23-15-02.pdf>.

² See annex 2 (Rev. 1) to Convention document AC29 Doc. 13.3 (Selection of species for inclusion in the Review of Significant Trade following CoP17), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/29/E-AC29-13-03-A2-R1.pdf>; and annex 2 to Convention document PC23 Doc. 15.3 (Species selected following CoP17), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/pc/23/E-PC23-15-03.pdf>.

³ See the annex to Convention document AC29 doc. 14.1 (Selection of species for inclusion in the review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity following CoP17: CITES Project No. A-498), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/29/E-AC29-14-01.pdf>.

⁴ See the Excel version of Convention document AC29 Inf. 3 (Full summary of trade during 2011–2015 using source codes C, D, F or R reported by parties), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/29/inf/E-AC29-Inf-03.pdf>.

⁵ See annex 1 to Convention document AC29 Doc. 33.1 (Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II – Animals), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/29/E-AC29-33-01.pdf>; and Convention document PC23 Doc. 29.2 (Selection of species for the Periodic Review), available from <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/pc/23/E-PC23-29-02.pdf>.

recorded in the Convention trade database for incorporation into a joint report on elephants in line with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17), on trade in elephant species.

28. The Convention secretariat has sought advice from UNEP-WCMC on levels and trends in trade, and on scientific and technical matters, such as the distribution of species and nomenclature, together with support on issues relating to reporting, information management, capacity-building and training. UNEP-WCMC provided substantial input to the revision of the guidelines for the preparation and submission of the annual reports of the Convention (see Guidelines for the preparation and submission of annual reports in Convention notification no. 2017/006).

29. In early 2017, a comprehensive regional overview of international trade of the species listed under the Convention was conducted by UNEP-WCMC for the Amazon region, in partnership with the German Agency for International Cooperation and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization. The overview incorporated insights into the trade provided by member countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, as set out in the 2017 report *Wildlife Trade in Amazon Countries: an Analysis of Trade in CITES-Listed Species*.⁶ A workshop to discuss the results with the region was held in February 2017, and the full report was launched at the twenty-ninth meeting of the Animals Committee in July 2017.

30. Both the Southern Africa and the Amazon regional reports provide baselines of information on trade levels and trends for the ten-year period 2005–2014, with a view to informing future trade management in countries in those regions. UNEP-WCMC also provides continuing support to the European Union and its member States through the production of in-depth species assessments and an annual analysis of European Union wildlife trade; the most recent European Union trade analysis focused on 2015 European Union annual reports to the Convention and was produced in September 2017.

2. Multilateral Environmental Agreements Information and Knowledge Management Initiative

31. The Multilateral Environmental Agreements Information and Knowledge Management Initiative is co-chaired by the Convention Secretary-General and facilitated and supported by the Environment Programme. The aim of the initiative⁷ is to assist parties in fulfilling their obligations under various environmental conventions through interoperable information systems that adhere to global standards and open-source technology. The project for the development of the United Nations information portal on multilateral environmental agreements⁸ is steered by this initiative. Thanks to contributions by the Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements, users are now able to search 10,000 governing body decisions, 5,000 national reports and 500 implementation plans, as well as news, events, ratification information and national focal points. The free e-learning portal caters for over 3,000 learners from 175 countries and its law and environment ontology provides definitions and relationships for key concepts to help users navigate the terminology of multilateral environmental agreements.

32. Further development will take place during phase II of the project for the development of the multilateral environmental agreements information portal, including a library of publications by multilateral environmental agreements and partners, improvements to the e-learning tool, regional sections on the portal and sections on internationally agreed goals (the Sustainable Development Goals, Aichi Biodiversity Targets and global environmental goals) and the ways in which they relate to the provisions of the multilateral environmental agreements.

33. A further endeavour is the development of voluntary standard filters for national reports submitted to biodiversity-related conventions so that different stakeholders can easily access reports according to their particular point of interest, whether that be species or family name, different themes or topics, internationally-agreed goals, specific geographical areas or particular environmental institutions.

3. Communication activities and World Wildlife Day 2017

34. In its sustained campaign to strengthen international efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife, the Environment Programme launched the United Nations “Wild for Life” campaign (*#WildforLife*) at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with the aim of raising awareness and reducing the demand for illegal wildlife products. The Wild for Life initiative was launched in all six United Nations official languages, as well as Vietnamese and Portuguese. The initiative is aimed at promoting collaboration, policy implementation and grassroots participation to raise awareness among communities in source and destination countries of the war on poaching.

⁶ Available from: <https://www.unep-wcmc.org/resources-and-data/wildlife-trade-in-amazon-countries--an-analysis-of-trade-in-cites-listed-species>.

⁷ <https://www.informea.org/en/about>.

⁸ www.informea.org.

35. In its first year, the campaign reached over 1 billion people across the world; the *#WildforLife* hashtag gathered more than 300 million views in China alone; the campaign generated 4.5 million social media reactions; engaged 35 celebrity voices with a combined social media reach of 400 million; attracted 25 partners; inspired 15,000 pledges by individuals to take action by using their own sphere of influence; and 40,000 people have chosen a kindred species and shared it on social media.

36. The Wild for Life World Pangolin video has broken the viewership records of the Environment Programme, with 15 million views in China alone in 48 hours. The 14 endangered species for which the campaign raises awareness are the helmeted hornbill, sawfish, sea turtle, orangutan, tiger, rhino, pangolin, elephant, Tibetan antelope, vaquita, sun bear, jaguar, hyacinth macaw and the rosewood. From October 2017 onwards, those endangered species will be joined by the snow leopard.

37. In compliance with Convention decision Conf. 17.1 and General Assembly resolution 68/205 on World Wildlife Day, the Environment Programme celebrated World Wildlife Day on 3 March 2017, primarily through its campaign *#WildforLife*, with a focus on “Listening to Young Voices”. For that occasion, the Environment Programme secured the support of four new celebrities representing different regions of the world – the Mexican actor and director Gael García Bernal, the American actor Adrian Grenier, the Indonesian actor Hamish Daud and the Nickelodeon youth actor Aidan Gallagher – to highlight five new threatened species. At its headquarters in Nairobi, the Environment Programme launched a new partnership with Kenya Airways, designed to help tackle the trade in illegal wildlife products by using the airline’s touch points to educate its passengers.

38. In China, the Environment Programme worked in partnership with the Nature Conservancy, the International Foundation for Animal Welfare and the celebrity agency Cosmic Bliss on an event which galvanized 30 youth celebrities to raise awareness of the day. According to the Chinese social media platform Sina Weibo, participation in the campaign was unprecedented, estimated at over 400 million.

39. In all, 3.8 million users made contact with the Environment Programme on World Wildlife Day, using a variety of platforms and languages. There were 2.8 million users on the Chinese platforms alone. At the time of writing the present report, the videos produced for World Wildlife Day had been viewed a total of 125,498 times. The extent of the public response on traditional media is clearly demonstrated by the following figures: 2,720 articles mentioning World Wildlife Day; 235 articles mentioning the Environment Programme, the Wild for Life campaign or the partnership with Kenya Airways; of those 235 articles, 74 per cent were in China and 9 per cent in Mexico; and the top sources were Xinhua News Agency, Televisa and Capital FM.

4. Technical support for strengthening national laws under the national legislation project

40. The Environment Programme and the Convention continued to collaborate with a view to strengthening national legislation and ensuring that the Convention was effectively implemented by its parties. Particular attention was given to countries identified as requiring priority attention under the national legislation project.

41. On 13 and 14 February 2017, the Environment Programme and the Convention secretariat organized an assessment meeting on legislative needs for African countries in Abidjan. The primary objectives of the meeting were to provide participants with a better understanding of the essential legal and institutional requirements for strengthening national legislation for the implementation of the Convention at the national level; help parties to ascertain their needs for assistance; and enable them to draw up a realistic but ambitious workplan for the legislative process, indicating the kinds of assistance required and the timing of such assistance. The workshop also provided an effective platform for participants to share views on how best they could strengthen their legal and institutional frameworks to implement the Convention.

42. A small-scale funding agreement has already been signed with Eritrea, to enable that country to finalize its draft legislation. Similarly, a small-scale funding agreement has been signed for the provision of assistance to the Somali Wildlife Directorate for the development of implementing legislation for the Convention. In Angola, national regulations for the implementation of the Convention have been adopted.

43. In July 2017, senior officials from 22 countries in Africa and the Asia-Pacific regions attended the Africa-Asia-Pacific Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime, held in Bangkok, at which they advanced their common understanding of the key elements and provisions needed for effective legal frameworks and coordinated efforts to dismantle criminal networks involved in the illegal trade in wildlife and forest products. The symposium was the first major event convened by the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Illicit Trade in Wildlife and Forest Products. The participants identified and recommended key elements that should be included in national legal frameworks to prevent

and combat wildlife crime.⁹ The symposium provided a valuable opportunity for collaboration between the two regions, with the aim of strengthening legal frameworks and cooperation to address the illicit trade in wildlife and forest products.

⁹ See the portal at <https://cites.org/legislation>.