

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



Seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Rosa Khutor, Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018

Strategic matters

UNITED NATIONS WORLD WILDLIFE DAY:  
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

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 United Nations World Wildlife Day and requested the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to facilitate the implementation of World Wildlife Day.
3. Resolution Conf. 17.1 on *World Wildlife Day*, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), requests the Standing Committee to continue to work with the Secretariat to recommend the theme for each year's observance of World Wildlife Day.
4. At its 17th meeting, the Conference of the Parties also adopted Decision 17.27 on *Youth engagement*, as follows:

***Directed to the Secretariat***

***17.27 The Secretariat shall:***

- a) liaise with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) and other relevant organizations and associations, to seek their support in making the observance of World Wildlife Day a regular event for kindergartens, educational institutions, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, nature reserves, national parks and all wildlife-related facilities around the world.
- b) report at each meeting of the Standing Committee on the celebrations of each World Wildlife Day.
- c) inform the United Nations General Assembly about the celebration of World Wildlife Day, inter alia, elaborating on the evaluation of the day, as requested.

Theme of World Wildlife Day 2018

5. Following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee, the conservation of big cats was agreed as the theme for World Wildlife Day 2018. "Big cats: predators under threat" was announced as the slogan of World Wildlife Day 2018 through a [press release](#)<sup>1</sup> published by the CITES Secretariat on 24

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<sup>1</sup> [Press release: 100 days until UN World Wildlife Day 2018](#)

November 2017, i.e. 100 days before 3 March 2018. The Secretariat also issued a [press release](#)<sup>2</sup> on 3 September, i.e. six months before 3 March 2018, to announce the theme of World Wildlife Day 2018 in order to allow all Parties and organisations sufficient time to prepare for the Day.

6. In line with the UNGA Resolution A/RES/68/205, the Secretariat called on all CITES Parties, all member States and organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and sub-regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and all interested individuals, to observe and raise awareness of the theme for World Wildlife Day 2018 in an appropriate manner; associate the celebrations with major national and international conservation events, where appropriate; and organize campaigns to reduce the demand for illegal wildlife and their products using targeted strategies in order to influence the consumer.

#### High-level event at UN Headquarters

7. The Secretariat worked closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the organization of a high-level event at the UN Headquarters in New York on 2 March 2018 to celebrate World Wildlife Day 2018.
8. Over 300 participants representing Member States, the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations, civil society and the youth gathered at the event to celebrate the Day and to address the various challenges confronting big cats. The event was moderated by CITES Secretary-General.
9. The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations attended and opened the event. The Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, the Executive Director of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Senior Vice-President of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) also provided opening remarks.
10. The high level speeches were followed by the presentation of the 25th edition of the [UN Endangered Species Stamps](#)<sup>3</sup> featuring 12 species that have been included in the CITES Appendices in the past 25 years.
11. The third segment of the event was a moderated dialogue on challenges and ongoing global efforts to save big cats. Panellists included representatives from the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of Kyrgyzstan, the United Nations Development Programme, World Wildlife Fund-US, Panthera, African Parks and Youth for Wildlife Conservation.
12. Winners of the International Film Festival for Big Cats were announced at the end of the event, with film trailers showcasing each film. The film festival was co-organized by the CITES Secretariat and Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival as part of the global celebration of World Wildlife Day 2018.

#### National celebrations

13. In addition to high-level events, the Secretariat continued to make efforts to further mobilize countries and people around the world to embrace and celebrate World Wildlife Day.
14. Countries in all continents celebrated World Wildlife Day 2018 in the form of conferences, street parades, television talk shows, street banners, brochures, exhibitions, competitions, massive social media campaigns as well as education programmes. Initiatives were taken by many countries to hold national level events, including through the efforts of CITES Management Authorities. A notable example was the billboards placed across the United States, including at Times Square in New York City, through the generous support of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America.

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<sup>2</sup> [Press release: Protecting big cats is the call of next year's World Wildlife Day, 3 March 2018](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Press release: UN issues 25th edition of endangered species stamps highlighting species protected under CITES](#)



Map of WWD 2018 events

15. The Secretariat participated in events in Geneva and in Bern, which were organized by the Geneva Environment Network and by the CITES Management Authority of Switzerland, respectively.

### Outreach

16. A new interface of the [World Wildlife Day website](http://www.wildlifeday.org)<sup>4</sup> was launched one month before 3 March, with information on the background and theme of World Wildlife Day 2018, suggestions on various ways to get involved, information on each big cat species, messages from the UN Secretary-General, heads of other organizations as well as youth representative. A section of the World Wildlife Day 2018 website was dedicated to a message board, featuring messages from a range of prominent personalities and partners of the Day, including the UN Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UNODC, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Director General of the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Director General of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). Posters in all six UN languages, outreach videos, action cards, social media kit, news items and a map that allows online submission of events were made available on the website.



Poster of WWD 2018

17. In order to promote the theme of this year's World Wildlife Day with visual materials, the Secretariat recruited three professional designers to design posters, action cards and social media banners all on *pro bono* basis. One of the posters was used on the home page of United Nations for a few days with links to further information about the day on the [UN website](http://www.un.org).<sup>5</sup> The short video created with the generous support of WCS to promote the Day has been viewed over 180,000 times with a single post on Twitter.
18. A social media kit with suggested messages for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram was prepared in-house and shared with all partners as well as on the World Wildlife Day website. Key hashtags proposed were #BigCats, #PredatorsUnderThreat, #WWD2018 and #WorldWildlifeDay.
19. Celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio supported the campaign on social media. Many major UN system organizations and conservation organizations joined the social media campaign, including the UN

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.wildlifeday.org>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/events/wildlifeday>

Secretariat, UNDP, UNEP, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNODC, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), IUCN, WCS, WWF and various multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

#### Future World Wildlife Day celebrations and their organization

20. Although the organization of World Wildlife Day has been successful in the past few years, the Secretariat has facilitated the celebrations of the day with no additional financial resources and has relied upon existing in-house capacity and the support of many partners. As indicated in Resolution Conf. 17.1, the Secretariat and the celebrations will benefit from any additional financial or in-kind support from Parties and organizations to ensure the ongoing success of future celebrations of World Wildlife Day.
21. World Wildlife Day is not merely about CITES and covers all issues surrounding the conservation of wild animals and plants. In recognition of this fact and considering the Secretariat's current capacity, the Secretariat suggests that its facilitation of World Wildlife Day, as requested by the United Nations General Assembly, could involve in the future delegation of day-to-day responsibility to other relevant organizations in the UN system, while the Standing Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, can maintain responsibility for the selection of the theme for each year.
22. The Standing Committee's intersessional working group on World Wildlife Day has accepted the Secretariat's proposal to use marine species as the theme of World Wildlife Day 2019 and to align it with goal 14 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals -- "Life below water".

#### Recommendations

23. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to:
  - a) note the report in the present document;
  - b) comment on the draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.1 in the Annex to the present document, which the Secretariat intends to present for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 18th meeting.

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.1

World Wildlife Day

(new text is underlined; deleted text appears in ~~strikeout~~)

RECALLING that Resolution Conf. 16.1 adopted at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, 2013) declares 3 March, the day of signing of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as World Wildlife Day;

WELCOMING resolution A/RES/68/205, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its 68th session on 20 December 2013, proclaiming 3 March as the United Nations World Wildlife Day;

NOTING that the United Nations General Assembly invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and subregional organizations, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, non-governmental organizations and individuals, to observe and raise awareness of World Wildlife Day in an appropriate manner, in accordance with national priorities;

NOTING also that the United Nations General Assembly requests the CITES Secretariat, in collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system, to facilitate the implementation of World Wildlife Day;

RECOGNIZING that, for the purpose of World Wildlife Day, “wildlife” means wild animals and plants;

ACKNOWLEDGING the efforts of the CITES Secretariat in facilitating the implementation of World Wildlife Day, in collaboration with relevant organizations of the United Nations system and others, with no additional financial resources;

~~FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the Standing Committee, at its 65th meeting (Geneva, July 2014), established a World Wildlife Day Working Group which, *inter alia*, is mandated to recommend the theme of each year's World Wildlife Day;~~

RECOGNIZING that World Wildlife Day provides a unique opportunity to, *inter alia*, mobilize people around the world to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora, demonstrate the multitude of benefits that wildlife provides to people, and raise awareness of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime which has wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts; and

WELCOMING the tremendous support generated by World Wildlife Day for the conservation of wildlife, and the ever growing level of participation across the world in the observance of the day;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. CALLS upon all Parties to use World Wildlife Day as an opportunity to celebrate and raise the awareness of the general public regarding the world's wild animals and plants; to enhance efforts to enforce wildlife protection laws and to reduce demand for illegally traded wild animals and plants; and to recognize the contribution of wildlife to the livelihoods of poor rural communities in various ways;
2. INVITES all Parties and non-party States, national and international organizations with an interest in wildlife conservation, to associate celebrations of World Wildlife Day to national, regional and international conservation events, where appropriate, and to communicate the planned activities to the Secretariat in advance;
3. ENCOURAGES all Parties to follow the theme adopted for each observance of World Wildlife Day and, where appropriate, to adapt it to the focus of species or issues of national priority, and to use the World Wildlife Day logo and other promotional materials as widely as possible, including on websites and social media;

4. INVITES all Parties and non-party States to designate one lead person for coordinating the celebration of World Wildlife Day in the country and as focal point of communication with the Secretariat;
5. ENCOURAGES all Parties, through their national ministries of education or other relevant authorities responsible for education, to consider making the observance of World Wildlife Day a regular event on the calendars of kindergartens, schools and universities, and to invite zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums, nature reserves, national parks, and all other wildlife-related facilities to observe the day on a regular basis;
6. REQUESTS the Secretariat to continue to facilitate the global celebration of World Wildlife Day, to maintain the website and social media platforms of World Wildlife Day, to produce promotional materials and to work with partner organizations on social media campaigns for World Wildlife Day each year;
7. REQUESTS the Standing Committee to ~~continue to~~ work with the Secretariat to, *inter alia*, recommend the theme for each year's observance of World Wildlife Day;
8. 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 lead the global celebrations, including the organization of high level events, the development of promotional materials, social media package and the update and revamp of the World Wildlife Day in accordance with the selected theme;
9. APPEALS to all Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations and to the private sector interested in wildlife conservation and in promoting World Wildlife Day, to make voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to the Secretariat in order to allow it to better facilitate the global observance of the Day; and
10. REPEALS Resolution Conf. 16.1 (Bangkok, 2013) – *World Wildlife Day*.