

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Colombo (Sri Lanka), 23 May – 3 June 2019

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 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 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 17.49 on *World Wildlife Day*, as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

17.49 *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.*

World Wildlife Day 2017

5. Shortly after CoP17, the Secretariat consulted the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on the theme of World Wildlife Day 2017. Youth engagement was chosen as the theme which echoed [Resolution Conf. 17.5](#) on *Youth Engagement*. "Listen to the young voices" was subsequently chosen as the slogan. The Secretariat announced the theme and slogan through a [press release](#) and Notification to the Parties [No. 2017/001](#) of 10 January 2017.
6. In line with [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/205](#), the Secretariat also reached out to all UN Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other global, regional and sub-regional

organizations, non-governmental organizations and all interested individuals, and invited them to observe and raise awareness of the theme for World Wildlife Day 2017 in an appropriate manner and to associate World Wildlife Day celebrations to major national, regional and international conservation events.

7. In accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution [A/RES/70/301](#), the Secretariat worked closely with the Office of the President of UN General Assembly to organize a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York on 3 March. The event was chaired by the President of UN General Assembly. Over 400 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 both wildlife and people in the wider context of sustainable development and the importance of youth engagement.
8. In addition to high-level events, the Secretariat continued to make robust efforts to further mobilize countries and people around the world to embrace and celebrate World Wildlife Day. Over 90 countries organized events in various forms to celebrate World Wildlife Day 2017. More than 300 events were registered through the World Wildlife Day website. Organizers of the events ranged from national governments to small businesses, schools and individuals, in the forms of major conferences, street parades, television talk shows, street banners, brochures, exhibitions, competitions, massive social media campaigns, as well as education programmes.



Map of the events organized for WWD2017

9. In an effort to inspire the youth across the globe to add their visions, as well as to use their artistic talents to galvanize other youth and citizens in wildlife conservation, the Secretariat launched a [photo competition](#) entitled 'Through young eyes'. The 'Through young eyes' photo competition brought in a total of 600 entries from youth across every continent. A judging panel narrowed down the entries to 10 photos as finalists. The winner was announced during the event at UN Headquarters on 3 March. The Secretariat expresses its appreciation to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for its generous financial support to the photo competition.
10. A new interface of the [World Wildlife Day website](#) was launched one month before 3 March, with information on the background and theme of World Wildlife Day 2017, suggestions on various ways to get involved, messages from the UN Secretary General, and heads of other organizations, as well as youth representatives. 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.
11. Reaction and support on social media to World Wildlife Day has kept growing. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in China alone, 30 youth celebrities led to almost 500 million engagements on social media. A series of short awareness videos were viewed a total of 250 million times.

World Wildlife Day 2018

12. Following consultations 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](#) published by the CITES Secretariat on 24 November 2017, i.e. 100 days before 3 March 2018.

13. The Secretariat worked closely with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the organization of a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York on 2 March 2018 to celebrate World Wildlife Day 2018. 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 the CITES Secretary-General. The high level speeches were followed by the presentation of the 25th edition of the [UN Endangered Species Stamps](#) featuring 12 species included in the CITES Appendices in the past 25 years. The third segment of the event was a moderated dialogue on challenges and ongoing global efforts to save big cats.
14. 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. 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.
15. A new interface of the [World Wildlife Day website](#) 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 representatives. Posters in all six UN languages, outreach videos, action cards, social media kit, news items and a map for online submission of events were made available on the website.



Poster of WWD 2018

16. The Secretariat and the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival teamed up again and organized an international film festival on big cats to raise global awareness of the critical challenges facing these iconic species. Winners of the film festival were announced at the end of the high-level event at UN Headquarters with film trailers showcasing each film.
17. In order to promote the theme of World Wildlife Day 2018 with visual materials, the Secretariat recruited professionals to design posters, action cards and social media banners on a *pro bono* basis. One of the posters, with links to further information about the day, was used for the home page of the [UN website](#). The short video created with the generous support of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to promote the Day has been viewed over 180,000 times after 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 and on the World Wildlife Day website. Key hashtags proposed were #BigCats, #PredatorsUnderThreat, #WWD2018 and #WorldWildlifeDay. Celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio supported the campaign on social media. Many major UN system organizations and conservation organizations joined the social media campaign.

World Wildlife Day 2019

19. Following consultations with the CITES Standing Committee working group on World Wildlife Day as well as the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee, marine species was agreed as the theme for World Wildlife Day 2019 which aligns with goal 14 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals – *Life below water*. The Secretariat announced the theme and slogan “Life below water: for people and planet” in a joint [press release](#) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on 19 November 2018.
20. The Secretariat and UNDP are working together to organize a high-level event at UN Headquarters in New York on Friday 1 March to observe World Wildlife Day 2019.

21. The Secretariat, UNDP and Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival are teaming up to organize a World Wildlife Day Living Oceans Showcase to echo the theme of World Wildlife Day 2019. Winning films will raise global awareness of the importance of life below water to our everyday lives, explore the critical challenges facing marine ecosystems, which comprise two-thirds of our planet, and highlight inspiring solutions in addressing these challenges.

Considerations for future World Wildlife Day celebrations and their organization

22. The organization of World Wildlife Day has been successful in the past few years. However, the Secretariat has facilitated the celebrations of the day without allocated 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 financial or in-kind support from Parties and organizations to ensure the continued success of future celebrations of World Wildlife Day.
23. Based on experiences of other conventions in organizing global celebrations of international days, the Secretariat believes that the observance of World Wildlife Day at national level would benefit from having a focal point for each Party to further mobilize activities at national and local levels.
24. World Wildlife Day is not only about CITES issues. It covers the conservation and sustainable use of wild animals and plants in general. In recognition of this fact and considering the Secretariat's limited capacity, the Secretariat suggests that while it continues its role as facilitator for the celebration of World Wildlife Day, as requested by the United Nations General Assembly, the main partner of the international event rotates among relevant organizations in the UN system. The Standing Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, maintains the responsibility for the selection of the theme each year.

Recommendations

25. The Conference of the Parties is invited to adopt the draft amendment to Resolution Conf. 17.1 on *World Wildlife Day* contained in Annex 1 to the present document, which has taken into account the comments in paragraphs 22 and 23.
26. The Secretariat believes that Decision 17.49 on *World Wildlife Day* has been implemented and recommends that it be repealed.

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.1 on 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 act as the main partner of the global celebrations, including the organization of high-level events, the development of promotional materials, social media package so that World Wildlife Day is prepared 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*.

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 with the proposed amendments.

Secretariat:

The Secretariat's inputs in facilitating the global celebration of World Wildlife Day could be accommodated within the daily work of existing Secretariat staff, with the exception of the maintenance of the World Wildlife Day website and cost of travel to organize and attend events outside Switzerland (see "Direct costs" section below).

Direct costs:

- The hiring of a consultant to renew and maintain the World Wildlife Day website. The cost for this is estimated at USD 10,000 per year.
- The cost of travel of the Secretariat staff to organize and attend events outside Switzerland. The cost for this is estimated at USD 5,000 per year.