

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

CHIANG MAI STATEMENT OF ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR
CITES AND WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT ON ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

This document has been submitted by Thailand in relation to agenda item 32.¹

* *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.*



**THE SPECIAL ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING
ON ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE**

21–22 March 2019, Chiang Mai, Thailand

**CHIANG MAI STATEMENT OF ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR CITES AND
WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT ON ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE**

1. We, the ASEAN Ministers responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, held our Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade on 21-22 March 2019 in Chiang Mai, Thailand, under the chairmanship of H.E. General Surasak Karnjanarat, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Kingdom of Thailand.
2. We recognize the Southeast Asia as a sub-region with the one of the global mega-biodiversity that is home to many iconic species that need to be preserved for our future generation and essential to the sustainable livelihood of local communities.
3. We note with concern that illegal trade in wildlife remains an ever-present ASEAN issue, which contributes to the continuously dramatic decrease in populations of wild animals and plants species, such as elephants, tigers, rhinos, pangolins, and rosewood.
4. We recognize that demands for illegal live specimens, parts and products of wildlife is one of the main contributor to the decreasing wildlife population in conjunction with other pressures such as increasing human populations, habitat loss, land-use change, wildlife overexploitation, invasive alien species, climate change, pollution and urbanization.
5. We acknowledge that unsustainable use and illegal trade of wildlife are among the greatest challenges of ASEAN as the economic, social and environmental repercussions are severe and widespread in scale. They hampers opportunities for economic growth and take resources away from government revenues that could be utilized in other areas that would benefit the regional communities.
6. We will step up our efforts to take continuous and concrete steps to strengthen cooperation in addressing the illegal wildlife trade in ASEAN. Toward this goal, extensive collaboration with international organisations, private sector, academia and civil society is crucial to ensure the effectiveness of our efforts in combating wildlife trafficking.
7. We emphasize the importance of developing cooperation at all levels to eradicate wildlife poaching and trafficking. In this regard, we approach our cooperation

strategically, and constantly aim to move our cooperation forward firmly in the following key aspects: global and regional wildlife trade policy, demand reduction, law enforcement, and wildlife cybercrime.

Global and Regional Wildlife Trade Policy

8. We reaffirm our commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal.15 Targets 15.7, and to quote *“Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products”*. We likewise reaffirm our commitment in 15.c of the said agenda and to quote *“Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities”*.
9. We recognize the important role of international agreements, in particular the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that stand at the intersection between conservation and sustainable use of wild animals and plants.
10. We are committed to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, 2016-2020. We also noted the progress of SOMTC Working Group on Illegal Timber and Wildlife Trafficking towards better coordination of wildlife crime information sharing and investigation.

Demand Reduction

11. We acknowledged the collaborative efforts to reduce demand for illegal wildlife products being given importance among ASEAN Member States and the increase in scale of existing events such as World Wildlife Day.
12. We look forward to enhance our communication, education and public awareness program to promote greater awareness and legal literacy among local communities whose livelihoods are dependent on the goods and services provided by wildlife.
13. We acknowledge that domestic wildlife markets need to be regulated and enforced thoroughly to prevent over exploitation and ensure the sustainable population of endangered species.
14. We recognize the importance and needs for research to understand market drivers and specific species and/or products, which are undertaking that would require for greater investment in tools, data analysis and funding.

Law Enforcement

15. We reaffirm our commitment to strengthen regional actions to tackle the illicit financial flow associated with illegal wildlife trade in accordance with domestic law and international agreement to combat corruption and money-laundering activities
16. We will enhance related domestic legislations to give deterrence effect to wildlife offences and strengthen our enforcement efforts in fighting against these transnational organized crimes.

17. We are committed to combat illegal wildlife trade in the region by ensuring continued efforts and perseverance through the region's knowledge sharing, cross-border coordination, regulations and enforcement network.
18. We recognize the importance of continuous capacity building for better wildlife management and enforcement. In this regard, we welcome collaboration with other partners to strengthen our efforts in tackling the illegal wildlife trade such as establishing enforcement coordination mechanisms, closing domestic wildlife markets where they contribute to poaching and the illegal trade, providing equipment and training and joint international enforcement operations.
19. We welcome the development of the ASEAN Guidelines for Detecting and Preventing Wildlife Trafficking, including ASEAN wildlife crime database to develop effective regional mechanisms on detecting and preventing wildlife trafficking and enhance collaboration among relevant enforcement officers in dealing with wildlife enforcement issues.

Wildlife Cybercrime

20. We acknowledge the contribution by governments in fighting against wildlife cybercrime by allocating enforcement resources to identify and prosecute wildlife cybercriminals, and for online marketplaces and social media platforms to join the Global Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online and ensure wildlife traffickers do not utilize their sites.
 21. We welcome the increased recognition of wildlife cybercrime through CITES with the adoption of a strong Resolution and Decision on wildlife cybercrime alongside the creation of an International Wildlife Cybercrime Working Group, and encourage ASEAN Member States to create or enhance national level specialized task force to monitor the online illegal wildlife trade.
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