



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2023/125

Geneva, 9 November 2023

CONCERNING:

Secretary-General's Certificate of Commendation

1. In 2002 the Secretariat advised the Parties of the introduction of certificates of commendation that would be issued, at the Secretary-General's discretion, to recognize exemplary actions related to enforcement.
2. In 2008 the Secretariat posted on the CITES website information on the factors taken into account in awarding a certificate of commendation.
3. The latest such certificate was awarded to the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL) in recognition of exemplary interagency coordination and operational activities undertaken during the October 2022 to June 2023 edition of Operation LAKE.
4. The operation marked a new record as the most successful yet in addressing international glass eel trafficking. Working closely with countries from both within and outside the European Union, EUROPOL's activities included hosting a virtual command post; facilitating information exchange; providing analytical and forensic support to national law enforcement authorities; deploying experts to identified hot spots to cross-check operational information in real time against EUROPOL's databases and providing leads to investigators in the field.
5. The Secretariat believes that the case represents an excellent example of exemplary interagency coordination and collaboration at the local, regional or international levels, and of supporting activities that significantly contribute to the general enforcement of the Convention.
6. The certificate was presented during the 77th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee on 9 November 2023 in Geneva, Switzerland.