

A contribution to the global follow-up and review in the 2020 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the work of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

**ACCELERATED ACTION AND TRANSFORMATIVE PATHWAYS: REALIZING THE
DECADE OF ACTION AND DELIVERY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Background

This submission is made on behalf of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

The Earth is home to over 13,000 known species of mammals and birds, tens of thousands of reptiles, amphibians and fish, some 250,000 flowering plants, and millions of insects and other invertebrates. Together these wild animals and plants form an integral part of the natural ecosystem and are also of great economic value, ensuring human well-being by providing food, timber, fiber, fuel, pharmaceuticals, clothing, cosmetics, horticultural specimens and companion animals, amongst many other things.

As shown by the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, species are being adversely affected by changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species. Around 1 million species already face extinction, many within decades, unless action is taken to reduce the intensity of these drivers of biodiversity loss. The global rate of species extinction is at least tens to hundreds of times higher than it has averaged over the past 10 million years. The average abundance of native species in most major terrestrial biomes has fallen by at least 20 per cent, mostly since 1900, and may be accelerating.

Concerned about the over-exploitation of species as a result of unregulated international trade, governments adopted the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975 and it now has 183 Parties. The Convention places a joint responsibility on producer and consumer Parties for managing international wildlife trade sustainably and preventing illegal and unregulated trade in wildlife. CITES remains one of the world's most powerful tools for wildlife conservation through the regulation of international trade in over 36,000 species of wild animals and plants. CITES-listed species are used by people around the world in their daily lives for food, health care, furniture, housing, tourist souvenirs, cosmetics and fashion. CITES seeks to ensure that international trade in such species is sustainable, legal and traceable and contributes to both the livelihoods of the communities that live closest to them and to national economies for a healthy planet and prosperity, which supports achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The unsustainable use of wildlife is often driven by international trade, both legal and illegal, and has grown dramatically over the past few decades as improved transport systems have made it easier to ship wild animals and plants and their products anywhere in the world. Since CITES entered into force, the human population has virtually doubled, the global economy has grown nearly fourfold, global trade has grown tenfold and technology (including wildlife crime linked to the Internet) has developed enormously. Together these factors have driven up the demand for species used by humans.

CITES is addressing most sustainable developments goals, in particular goals 2, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

Contribution of CITES to accelerated action and transformative pathways and realizing the decade of action and delivery for achieving the 2030 Agenda

Given its mandate, CITES has a particular role in supporting global environmental commons through conserving, restoring and sustainably using natural resources and assessing environmental externalities and changing patterns of use through regulation and other mechanisms.

CITES Parties recently adopted a new Strategic Vision for the period 2021-2030.

The Strategic Vision recalls Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly on Transforming our World; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets contained therein and states the specific intent of the Parties to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

It recognizes that CITES Parties' efforts to implement the Convention may also provide benefit to, and draw strength from, efforts being undertaken in other fora, and highlights the linkages between CITES and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and targets relevant to CITES, including those for terrestrial and marine wildlife.

As the Convention stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development, the CITES Parties recognized the important contribution the Convention can make to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and adopted a strategic goal which aims to communicate this important contribution.

Parties equally recognize the need to draw lessons from the global debate on sustainable development. In particular, the Parties will be:

- supporting sustainable international wildlife trade policies, especially those that increase the capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities to pursue livelihoods; and
- staying informed of international actions for sustainable development that may have a bearing on achieving the Convention's objective.

Key policies and measures to ensure “accelerated action and transformative pathways” for realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development

Looking across the full range of its strategic objectives, CITES identifies the following as being of particular relevance to its mandate:

<p>Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture <i>In particular the following Targets:</i> 2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</p>
<p>Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all <i>In particular the following Targets:</i> 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products</p>
<p>Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns <i>In particular the following Targets:</i> 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature</p>
<p>Goal 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p>

In particular the following Targets:

14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of "The future we want"

14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism

Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

In particular the following Targets:

15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems

15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation

15.c 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

15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species

15.7 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

15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

Goal 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

In particular the following Targets:

16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

In particular the following Targets:

17.9 Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-North, South-South and triangular cooperation

17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development

17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

Aside from redoubling its own efforts to contribute to the achievements of the above goals and targets – armed with a newly agreed Strategic Vision specifically linked to delivering these, CITES would like to draw attention to the current negotiations for a post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to which CITES Parties and the Secretariat are contributing. This Framework, whilst being negotiated within the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity, is intended to have universal ownership

and to be adopted by the UN General Assembly. With a healthy biodiversity being critical to life on earth, the agreement of an ambitious and widely-supported Global Biodiversity Framework will be essential to realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.