

## Inputs to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2024

### Inputs from functional commissions of ECOSOC, other intergovernmental bodies and forums to the 2024 HLPF

#### Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

##### **Impacts of multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 from the vantage point of your intergovernmental body.**

The multiple planetary environmental crises related to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution have had a significant impact on the implementation of SDGs, including SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17. As the sole multilateral environmental agreement whose mandate is on the regulation of international trade in wild species of animals and plants, the impacts of the multiple crises have also been significant on the work of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), its Parties and partners.

More than anything else, from the vantage point of CITES, the impacts of the multiple crises have highlighted the importance of the core work of the Convention implemented by its Parties at the national level. CITES is the regulatory instrument that allows Parties to trade in wildlife, thus bringing economic benefits contributing to end poverty and to livelihoods of communities living with and adjacent to wildlife, while at the same time ensuring that this does not lead to biodiversity loss and endanger the survival of the species in the wild. This is what CITES Parties do when they make a non-detriment finding.

A non-detriment finding is a conclusion by a Scientific Authority that the export of specimens of a particular species will not impact negatively on the survival of that species in the wild. Non-detriment findings for wild specimens is a risk assessment which may include consideration of species biology and life-history characteristics; species range (historical and current); population structure, status and trends (in the harvested area, nationally and internationally); threats; historical and current species-specific levels and patterns of harvest and mortality (e.g. age, sex) from all sources combined; management measures currently in place and proposed, and conservation status.

At its core, with non-detriment findings, Parties identify those wildlife species that are most at risk and should not be traded, while at the same time allowing trade and thus providing sustainable economic benefits and incentives contributing to the conservation of the species and to ending poverty and hunger. Sustainable, legal and traceable wildlife trade as implemented by CITES Parties can limit the impacts of the multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17.

**Three key areas where sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for achieving the SDGs are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2024, bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.**

1. The science-policy interface has been strengthened to address emerging and emergency issues. The following three specific examples come to mind. All quotas in the examples below have been established based on a non-detriment finding.

a. The recovery of the vicuña population in Peru and other Andean countries highlights the importance of ensuring that local people have a strong incentive for conservation. Granting communities the right to capture, shear and sell the fibre from wild vicuñas generates five times the value of hunting and killing the animals (USD 300-500 per kilogram). In 2021, 5,503,094 kg of fibre was exported – 40% by community associations and 60% by intermediaries and textile companies. In 1975, this species was at the brink of extinction.

b. An estimated 190,000 Indonesians are involved in the python skin trade (from hunters to tanneries and exporters). The total value of exported skins is around USD 15 million per year, with around 50% of this value accruing in rural areas. Harvesters earn on average USD 25-30 per python. Python meat and fat provide a cheap and readily available source of nutrient dense food and medicine. The harvest is managed using a quota system (currently allowing the collection of 168,548 pythons annually), minimum harvest size limits (only snakes larger than 240cm snout-vent length), skin size limits, and annual harvest monitoring at processing facilities.

c. *Prunus africana*, the African cherry, is a large tree that can grow more than 40m in height and 1m in diameter. The African cherry is used locally in traditional medicines and exported internationally for the pharmaceutical industry and for timber. In Cameroon, community forests cover a total area of about 15,000 ha for an annual exploitation quota of 100 t of dry bark or 200,000 kg of wet bark per year, generating approximately USD 90,0000 per year for the communities involved. This money has been allocated to community projects such as schools, wells and so on.

2. The partnerships surrounding the 'One Health' approach have been advanced, including the discussion on the role of international trade in wildlife. Thanks to partnerships, the 'One Health' approach was expanded to include the human-animal interface approach, and consider the links between human, animal and ecosystem health. Activities are being implemented to reduce the risk and mitigate the impact of future emergence of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases, endemic and emerging, infectious and non-communicable diseases, with a focus on emerging zoonoses that have epidemic or pandemic potential.

3. A rapid move for an increasing number of Parties to consider the introduction of electronic business processing in CITES trade transactions.

**Three examples of specific actions, policies and measures that are most urgently needed to effectively deliver sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, building on interlinkages and transformative pathways for achieving the SDGs.**

1. While technological advancements have significantly improved various aspects of wildlife conservation, including research, communication, tracking, and DNA analysis, challenges such as uneven access, environmental pollution, and unsustainable technology use impede achieving universal digital inclusion by 2030. Digital innovation at the service of wildlife conservation is

celebrated by the theme of the 2024 World Wildlife Day – Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation that recognizes the impact of digital interventions on ecosystems and communities in an increasingly connected world.

2. Technical support and mobilization of financial resources to support countries in the implementation of the Convention, specifically in the making of non-detriment findings
3. Innovative and sustainable financing for wildlife conservation, especially for those Parties that are range States for endemic species and are challenged by human-wildlife conflict and whose national revenues and livelihoods are dependent on wildlife tourism

**Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit.**

Follow-up actions and measures to support implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit are embedded in the CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030 that recalls Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly on Transforming our World and states the specific intent of the Parties to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The Convention stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development; CITES Parties have 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 have equally recognized the need to draw lessons from the global debate on sustainable development, as highlighted in the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit. In particular, CITES 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' objective.

Answering the call to action to commit to continuous, transformative and urgent actions by all stakeholders to overcome the multiple crises and achieve the 2030 Agenda, CITES Parties play their part for biodiversity conservation, environmental sustainability and sustainable development.

Furthermore, Parties have committed to strengthen synergies among biodiversity multilateral environmental agreements at the national level by, among others, improving coordination and cooperation between national focal points and strengthening capacity-building activities. The CITES Standing Committee is also exploring options consistent with the CITES Strategic Vision to strengthen cooperation, collaboration and synergies at all relevant levels between CITES and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. This should involve the members of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions, and, as appropriate, engagement with other relevant organizations and processes, including processes under the Rio Conventions.

## **Recommendations and key messages for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 HLPF.**

The Ministerial Declaration should focus on the following recommendations:

- A commitment to support with stable and consistent investments in wildlife conservation, the populations who are living in close proximity to wild animals and plants, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and governments who must invest in the maintenance of habitats and well-being of wildlife.
- A call for governments and intergovernmental bodies to promote scientific and technological innovation to bridge the digital divide in order to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and to address the multiple crises.
- A pledge to seek new partnerships to provide technical assistance and scientific advice to governments to help them regulate, manage and monitor harvesting, trade and use of wildlife to ensure it is safe, sustainable and legal, thus contributing to Goals 1 and 2 as well as SDG 14, 15 and 17.

