



Submission to High-Level Political Forum 2025

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

The CITES Secretariat's assessment of the impacts of the multiple and interconnected crises on the implementation of SDGs 3, 5, 8, 14 and 17

The three planetary crises of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution, compounded by the current economic uncertainty, have had profound effects particularly on the implementation of SDGs 3, 8, 14 and 17 as they specifically relate to the regulation of wildlife trade, which is under the mandate of CITES.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages: The COVID-19 pandemic, the recent H5N1 bird flu outbreak, and other global/regional zoonoses transmissions have highlighted the critical need for monitoring and regulating wildlife trade to prevent and mitigate the risk of pathogen spillover and transmission emanating from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains. CITES collaborates with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and other partners under the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Management of Wildlife (CPW).

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all: The livelihoods of many, especially in indigenous and local communities, are highly dependent on viable populations of wild animals and plants. The crises may impact those who depend on wildlife products for food, feed, medicines, building materials, etc. CITES promotes legal and sustainable trade practices that support economic resilience and job creation, while curbing demand that promotes illegal trade in wildlife.

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development: Overexploitation and illegal fishing activities, exacerbated by climate change and economic shocks, threaten marine biodiversity. Changes in seasonal and geographical availability of marine resources, as well as the general decrease in fish stocks are driving more fisheries to go further afield into the high seas. CITES ensures better marine

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resource management in its listed species, including fishery activities conducted in the high seas.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development: Global crises can disrupt international cooperation and reduce funding for conservation. This undermines multilateralism and CITES' work ensuring that international trade in wildlife is legal, sustainable and traceable. The effectiveness of global cooperation and its benefits to each partner is being tested – it underscores the importance of international partnerships, also for effective wildlife trade regulation and sustainable development.

Three key areas where sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for achieving the SDGs and leaving no one behind are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2025, also bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.

1) Science-driven policies: Utilizing scientific data to prepare sustainability assessments to inform policy decisions regarding wildlife trade, ensuring that they are based on the best available science to effectively conserve biodiversity and support sustainable use and promoting decent livelihoods.

2) Regulatory compliance and enforcement: Strengthening the compliance and enforcement mechanisms of CITES to address challenges in complying with the requirements of the Convention and contribute to better multilateral governance, combatting wildlife crime and supporting sustainable economic development for all.

3) Community engagement: Promoting community-centered approaches that integrate indigenous peoples and local communities in wildlife management, thereby supporting livelihoods and enhancing policy effectiveness across multiple SDGs.

Three examples of measures to accelerate progress towards SDGs through well-coordinated actions in key transitions to bring progress to scale (food security, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity, education, jobs and social protection, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), building on interlinkages between SDGs to ensure cohesive progress.

1) Biodiversity, food security and food safety: Promoting sustainable practices in wildlife trade can ensure the conservation of species that are critical for global food security and economic stability, while preventing and mitigating the risk of pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains.

2) Climate change-biodiversity linkage: Enhancing the conservation of CITES-listed trees contributes directly to sustainable forest resource management and preventing forest degradation and deforestation, crucial in mitigating climate change. CITES helps better management of forests, which are vital carbon sinks, and supports the economies and livelihoods of those who depend on them.

3) Digital Tools for Monitoring: The implementation of eCITES, an electronic system for managing CITES trade permits, and its integration into single window systems are critical steps in allowing streamlined, transparent trade transactions and better coordination among trade and environmental entities, leading to more efficient legal transactions and effective enforcement to stamp out illegal activities.

Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration and the outcomes of the 2024 Summit of the Future, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

CITES contributes to addressing the intersection of wildlife trade and public health to prevent zoonotic disease transmission. The objective is to support national and international efforts to reduce the risk of zoonotic pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains and advance a 'One Health' approach. The CITES Secretariat is working closely with the Quadripartite collaborators and other expert international organizations for information-sharing and collaborative action.

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

CITES regulates international trade in marine species and promotes sustainable and legal fisheries practices for conservation of marine biodiversity. Partnering with national fisheries agencies, the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and Regional Fishery Bodies (RFBs), aims to ensure that CITES' regulatory framework contributes to preventing overexploitation and sustainable fisheries management. CITES' scientific sustainability assessment guidance for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction and the "Introduction from the Sea" provisions are directly relevant to BBNJ. This integrated approach is essential for promoting a cohesive, impactful and non-duplicative international strategy for marine conservation.

Recommendations and key messages to be considered for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2025 HLPF.

Call for policies that integrate wildlife conservation with broader economic and social development goals.

Support for strengthened multilateral cooperation to tackle global environmental challenges, including sustainable and legal wildlife trade and biodiversity conservation.

Enhance sustainable financing mechanisms that integrate the real value of biodiversity/wildlife conservation in investment and trust fund schemes.