

LONDON  
CONFERENCE ON  
**THE ILLEGAL  
WILDLIFE TRADE**

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12-13 FEBRUARY 2014

**DECLARATION**

## **LONDON CONFERENCE ON THE ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE**

### **Declaration**

1. We, the representatives of Governments and Regional Economic Integration Organisations\*, gathered in London on 13th February 2014, recognising the significant scale and detrimental economic, social and environmental consequences of the illegal trade in wildlife, make the following political commitment and call upon the international community to act together to bring this to an end.

#### **The scale and consequences of the illegal trade in wildlife**

2. There is a serious threat to the survival of many species if action is not taken to tackle the illegal wildlife trade. Poaching and trafficking undermines the rule of law and good governance, and encourages corruption. It is an organised and widespread criminal activity, involving transnational networks. The proceeds are in some cases used to support other criminal activities, and have been linked to armed groups engaged in internal and cross border conflicts. Rangers and others dedicated to protecting wildlife are being killed or injured in significant numbers.
3. The illegal wildlife trade, and the poaching which feeds it, has in some places reached unprecedented levels. Serious poaching incidents are more frequent, are occurring in areas previously safe from such activity, and are more devastating in scale. Individual poachers or ad hoc gangs are being increasingly replaced by well-resourced and organised groups including transnational criminal networks.
4. The illegal wildlife trade robs States and communities of their natural capital and cultural heritage, with serious economic and social consequences. It undermines the livelihoods of natural resource dependent communities. It damages the health of the ecosystems they depend on, undermining sustainable economic development. The criminal activity and corruption associated with trafficking restricts the potential for sustainable investment and development which is needed in new economic activities and enterprises.
5. Decisive and urgent action is now needed to tackle the illegal wildlife trade in endangered fauna and flora. For many species, the illegal trade, and the poaching which fuels it, is an ongoing and growing problem. There has been a particularly dramatic escalation in the rate of poaching of elephants and rhinoceroses in some places in recent years. The severe threat posed to these iconic species is increasingly also a threat to regional security and sustainable development. Action to tackle the illegal trade in elephants and rhinoceroses will strengthen our effectiveness in

tackling the illegal trade in other endangered species. Such action will also support the sustainable utilisation of resources.

### **Building on the existing international framework for action**

6. “The Future We Want”, adopted at Rio+20 and endorsed by consensus of the UN General Assembly, *“recognised the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife, where firm and strengthened action needs to be taken on both the supply and demand sides”* and also recognised the *“important role of CITES, an intergovernmental agreement that stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development”*.
7. We welcome the attention being given to this issue through the United Nations system, including in the Security Council and the General Assembly, which demonstrates the wider security, economic, social and development implications of the illegal wildlife trade; and further welcome the UN General Assembly decision to proclaim 3 March as World Wildlife Day reaffirming the intrinsic value of wildlife and its various contributions - including ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic - to sustainable development and human well-being.
8. We welcome the actions taken under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and in particular the Decisions relating to elephants, rhinoceroses and big cats adopted at previous meetings of the Conferences of the Parties. We recommit ourselves to the full and effective implementation of relevant CITES Resolutions and Decisions and to making further efforts to eradicate the illegal wildlife trade within the CITES framework.
9. We welcome the important action already being taken by Governments and others at local, national, regional and global level. Commitments to combat the illegal wildlife trade in particular species have been made in a number of other meetings, and we stress the urgent need for their full implementation. We note the particular importance of: The African Elephant Action Plan and the urgent measures endorsed at the African Elephant Summit in Gaborone; The St Petersburg Tiger Declaration on Tiger Conservation; the Global Tiger Recovery Programme and the Thimpu Nine Point Action Agenda; The Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of the Snow Leopard and, those listed in Annex A.
10. The illegal wildlife trade has many inter-related dimensions, and can only be effectively tackled with the involvement of Ministries and agencies beyond the wildlife conservation sector. Action needs to be taken at all points in the illegal

supply chain in source, transit and destination countries. International co-operation is essential, with full engagement by Governments in relevant bilateral, regional and international mechanisms.

11. Effective international co-operation demands the active participation of partners that support Governments in different sectors, in particular: the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; INTERPOL; the World Customs Organization; the World Bank; and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (which together comprise the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime); the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the UN Convention against Corruption; the United Nations Environment Programme; the United Nations Development Programme; the African Development Bank; the Asian Development Bank; the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and regional Wildlife Enforcement Networks. We recognise the efforts made and urge all these entities, and all States who participate in them, to make the eradication of the illegal wildlife trade a priority.
12. We recognise the importance of engaging communities living with wildlife as active partners in conservation, by reducing human-wildlife conflict and supporting community efforts to advance their rights and capacity to manage and benefit from wildlife and their habitats.
13. We recognise the important role that non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and the private sector can play in actions against the illegal wildlife trade.
14. To this end we, the Governments and Regional Economic Integration Organisations represented in London, commit ourselves and call upon the international community to providing the political leadership and practical support needed to take the following essential actions.

## ACTIONS

### A. Eradicating the market for illegal wildlife products

15. The economic, social, and environmental impacts of the illegal wildlife trade can only be effectively tackled if we eradicate both the demand and supply sides for illegal products wherever in the world this occurs. To this end, we commit ourselves and call upon the international community to take the following action, to:

- I. **Support, and where appropriate undertake, effectively targeted actions to eradicate demand and supply for illegal wildlife products**, including but not limited to, raising awareness and changing behaviour. Government support is important to ensure demand and supply side reduction efforts are implemented on the scale and in the time-frame needed to have a meaningful impact. Governments should work in partnership with relevant stakeholders, including civil society, sectoral experts and key influencers, including business. Actions should be scientific and clearly evidence based, building on research into users' values and behaviour, and form part of coherent demand and supply side reduction strategies.
- II. **Endorse the action of Governments which have destroyed seized wildlife products being traded illegally**; and encourage those Governments that have stockpiles of illegal products, particularly of high value items such as rhino horn or elephant ivory, to destroy them and to carry out policy research on measures which will benefit conservation. Independent audits, or other means of ensuring transparent management, should be carried out prior to destruction.
- III. **Renounce, as part of any Government procurement or related activity, the use of products from species threatened with extinction**, except for the purposes of bona fide scientific research, law enforcement, public education and other non-commercial purposes in line with national approaches and legislation.
- IV. **Take measures to ensure that the private sector acts responsibly, to source legally any wildlife products used within their sectors; and urge the private sector to adopt zero tolerance policies on corporate gifting or accepting of species threatened with extinction or products made from them.**
- V. **Recognising the authority of the CITES Conference of the Parties, support the existing provisions of CITES prohibiting commercial international trade in elephant ivory until the CITES Conference of the Parties determines, informed by scientific analysis, that the survival of elephants in the wild is no longer threatened by poaching.**

- VI. **Welcome the action already underway and urge those Governments that allow trade in legally acquired endangered wildlife products to implement measures, including labelling and wider traceability measures, to ensure that this trade does not allow any illegal wildlife products to enter these markets.**
- VII. **Minimise speculation in endangered wildlife products by opposing the use of misleading, exaggerated or inaccurate information, where this could stimulate poaching, trafficking or demand.**

**B. Ensuring Effective Legal Frameworks and Deterrents.**

- 16. To curb the illegal wildlife trade it is important to ensure that the criminals involved, in particular those 'kingpins' who control the trade, are prosecuted and penalised to provide an effective deterrent. To this end, we commit ourselves, and call upon the international community, to take the following action, to:

- VIII. **Address the problem of the illegal wildlife trade by adopting or amending legislation, as necessary, to criminalise poaching and wildlife trafficking, and related crimes including by ensuring such criminal offences are "serious crimes" within the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as called for in Resolution 2013/40 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and by making maximum use of the UNTOC to facilitate international cooperation in appropriate cases. For criminal offences relating to poaching and illicit trafficking, the UNTOC is a valuable tool that can serve as the basis of international cooperation, including extradition and mutual legal assistance, where the offense is transnational in nature, involves an organised criminal group, and is punishable by a maximum deprivation of liberty of at least four years . We urge all States to become parties to, and implement, the UN Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime, and ensure that their domestic offences involving wildlife trafficking fall within the definition of "serious crime" in Article 2 of the Convention.**
- IX. **Address the serious problem of corruption and money-laundering facilitating wildlife trafficking and related offences by adopting or amending legislation, as necessary, criminalising corruption and bribery facilitating poaching, wildlife trafficking, and related offences, and to institute measures to establish and promote effective practices aimed at the prevention of corruption and detection of money-laundering, particularly in cases involving wildlife trafficking. We urge all governments to become parties to, and implement, the UN Convention against Corruption, which can be a valuable tool to prevent corruption and foster international cooperation in corruption cases, including extradition, mutual legal assistance and asset recovery.**

- X. Strengthen the legal framework and facilitate law enforcement** to combat the illegal wildlife trade and assist prosecution and the imposition of penalties that are an effective deterrent. As part of this, support the use of the full range of existing legislation and law enforcement deployed against other forms of organised crime. This should include, but not be limited to, the enforcement of legislation on money laundering, tax offences and asset recovery, corruption and illicit trafficking in other commodities such as narcotic drugs and firearms. Effective multidisciplinary enforcement should be used to ensure effective investigations and prosecutions, and to secure sentences that act as an effective deterrent.
- XI. Strengthen the ability to achieve successful prosecutions and deterrent sanctions** by raising awareness in the judicial sector about the seriousness, impact and potential profits of wildlife crime. Dedicated training and increased capacity building are essential tools to achieve this goal.
- XII. Adopt a zero tolerance policy on corruption associated with the illegal wildlife trade**, recognising with great concern that corruption is an important factor facilitating the criminal activities associated with the illegal wildlife trade.

**C. Strengthening law enforcement**

17. Successfully tackling the illegal wildlife trade demands a strong and co-ordinated enforcement response, at the site, national and international levels, and in source, transit and destination countries, using the fullest capacity of institutions and available tools and techniques. To this end, we commit ourselves and call upon the international community to take the following action to:
- XIII. Invest in capacity building to strengthen law enforcement to protect key populations of species threatened by poaching.** Effective law enforcement requires an increase in the number of well-equipped and well-trained law enforcement officers at key sites, using appropriate tools and techniques.
- XIV. Establish and maintain national cross-agency mechanisms** to develop, resource and implement co-ordinated national and local action plans and strategies, and oversee the implementation of actions against wildlife crime; to strengthen enforcement systems for a stronger preventive and reactive response to wildlife crime by, inter alia, using the ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit.
- XV. Provide the necessary conditions for, and further support, including through international co-operation to share expertise, the use of the full range of investigative techniques and tools already deployed against other forms of**

**domestic and transnational organised crime.** This should include, but is not limited to: criminal intelligence; controlled deliveries; traceability systems; risk profiling detector dog's; ballistic analysis and the use of existing forensic technology, including the further development of such technologies.

**XVI. Strengthen cross-border and regional co-operation, through better co-ordination, and through full support for regional wildlife law enforcement networks.** This should include the sharing of operational intelligence and information, sharing information on forensic research and collaborating with relevant forensic research institutions, collaboration on enforcement activity (such as joint operations) and joint capacity building initiatives (such as training activities, trans-border communication equipment and sharing of enforcement expertise and resources).

**D. Sustainable livelihoods and economic development**

18. The illegal wildlife trade is a major barrier to sustainable, inclusive and balanced economic development. It contributes to damage to ecosystems, undermines good governance and the rule of law, threatens security, and reduces the revenue earned from economic activities such as wildlife-based tourism and the sustainable utilisation and legal trade of wildlife, which can make a significant contribution to local livelihoods and national economic development. Recognising that sustainable livelihoods will be best achieved with the engagement of those communities surrounding protected areas, we commit ourselves and call upon the international community to take action, to:

**XVII. Recognise the negative impact of illegal wildlife trade on sustainable livelihoods and economic development.** This impact needs to be better understood and quantified and should form part of the assessment set out in Action XXIV.

**XVIII. Increase capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities and eradicate poverty.** This includes promoting innovative partnerships for conserving wildlife through shared management responsibilities such as community conservancies, public-private partnerships, sustainable tourism, revenue-sharing agreements and other income sources such as sustainable agriculture. Governments should integrate measures to address illegal wildlife trade into development policy and planning, and the programming of development cooperation activities.

**XIX. Initiate or strengthen collaborative partnerships among local, regional, national and international development and conservation agencies to enhance support for community led wildlife conservation** and to promote retention of benefits by local



communities for the conservation and sustainable management of wildlife, including actions to reduce illegal use of fauna and flora.

**XX. Work with, and include local communities in, establishing monitoring and law enforcement networks in areas surrounding wildlife.**

**E. The Way Forward**

19. Successfully tackling the illegal wildlife trade and its impacts will need concerted political leadership, community engagement and international cooperation over a sustained period. To support these efforts further research is needed into the scale of the environmental, political, social and economic implications of the trade, as well as an improved understanding of the illegal trade itself and the impact of measures taken to prevent and combat it. To this end, we:

**XXI. Welcome the resources provided to date to support action to prevent and combat the illegal wildlife trade, including implementation of existing action plans and declarations. Urge all donors to provide resources, support and technical assistance, as appropriate, for the implementation of the political commitments contained in this Declaration.**

**XXII. Recognise and appreciate the ongoing support provided by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to address the poaching crisis in Africa and the associated illegal wildlife trade and would welcome the prioritisation of the issue in the GEF-6 (2014-2018) biodiversity strategy.**

**XXIII. Welcome the establishment within the UN of the 'Group of Friends' against illegal wildlife trafficking and take note of the suggestion made at the High Level Event on Illicit Wildlife Trafficking hosted by Germany and Gabon in New York in September 2013, to establish a Special Representative to the Secretary General to further the fight against illicit wildlife trafficking, and for this to be requested by the UN General Assembly in a formal resolution (ref doc A/68/553).**

**XXIV. Will undertake further assessment, initially over the next twelve months, building on existing assessments and collaborative work, of the markets and dynamics of the illegal wildlife trade, and the progress made in combatting it.** This should address the links between wildlife crime and other organised crime and corruption, explore links to terrorism, and investigate the underlying causes and implications of trade, including on regional stability and security, the environment, socio-economic development, and on international relations. It should report on progress on actions and political commitments to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, building on existing

assessments and working collaboratively with other organisations already engaged on this issue.

**XXV. Welcome the offer of Botswana to host another high-level conference to review progress in early 2015.**

## **Annex A**

- The Paris round table and declaration against poaching and illegal trade of threatened species, December 2013
- The African Elephant Summit, Gaborone, December 2013
- The Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of the Snow Leopard, October 2013
- APEC Bali Declaration, October 2013
- 1<sup>st</sup> Asian Rhino Range States Meeting, and the Bandar Lampung Declaration, October 2013
- UN General Assembly high level side event hosted by Gabon and Germany on Poaching and Illicit Wildlife Trafficking, September 2013
- Kunming Consensus on Transboundary Conservation and Combatting Illegal Wildlife Trade, July 2013
- G8 Leaders Communiqué, June 2013
- The African Development Bank's Marrakech Declaration, May 2013
- Sumatran Rhino Crisis Summit, April 2013
- Crime Commission 2013
- Yaoundé Declaration on the Fight against Poaching in Central African States, March 2013
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Asian Ministerial Meeting on Tiger Conservation, and the Thimpu Nine Point Action Agenda October 2012
- APEC Vladivostok Declaration, October 2012
- The St Petersburg Tiger Declaration on Tiger Conservation, November 2010
- The African Elephant Action Plan, March 2010

**\* Annex B The following countries and regional economic integration organisations participated in the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade.**

Angola  
Australia  
Bangladesh  
Botswana  
Brazil  
Cameroon  
Canada  
Chad  
China  
Colombia  
Congo  
Democratic Republic of Congo  
Ethiopia  
France  
Gabon  
Germany  
Indonesia  
Italy  
Japan  
Kenya  
Laos  
Malawi  
Malaysia  
Mexico  
Mozambique  
Myanmar  
Namibia  
Nepal  
Netherlands  
Philippines  
Russia  
Rwanda  
Sri Lanka  
Tanzania  
Togo  
UAE  
Uganda  
United States  
Vietnam  
Zambia  
The European Union