



International Conference on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa

27-30 April 2015 BRAZZAVILLE

We, the governments,

Having met in Brazzaville, from 27 to 30 April 2015 at the International Conference on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa,

Recalling Decision EX.CL/ Dec.832 (XXV) of the Executive Council of the African Union, Decision on African Wild Flora and Fauna Conservation and Illegal Trade in Wildlife, made at its Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session 20 – 24 June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, welcoming the offer by the Republic of Congo to host the International Conference on Illegal Trade and Exploitation of Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa, and requesting the African Union Commission to collaborate with the Republic of Congo in the organization of the Conference,

Further recalling Decision EX.CL/ Dec.832 (XXV) of the Executive Council of the African Union, on Decision on African Wild Flora and Fauna Conservation and Illegal Trade in Wildlife made at its Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session 20 – 24 June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, requesting the African Union Commission, with the support of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL, the Taskforce of the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and relevant partners, to prepare an African Common Strategy on Combatting Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna

and Flora to be reported on during the June 2015 Ordinary Session of the Executive Council,

Recalling Resolution 1/3 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its first session on illegal trade in wildlife,

Recalling also the UN General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions that called on Member States to step up their responses to illicit trafficking of wild fauna and flora, including General Assembly Resolution 68/193 that called for coordinated action to eliminate corruption and disrupt the illicit networks that drive and enable trafficking in wild flora and fauna;

Recalling Decision 15/2 made at the 15th Session of AMCEN in Cairo, Egypt, on the African Common Strategy on Combatting Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora that agreed that the process that was embarked upon to develop the draft African Common Strategy on Combatting Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora should continue at The International Conference on Illegal Trade and Exploitation of Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa to be held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, and that the strategy should have a shared understanding of the key issues listed in the decisions;

Taking note of the Arusha Declaration on Regional Conservation and Combatting Wildlife/Environmental Crime of 2014 in Arusha, Tanzania; the commitment made in June 2012 in N'Djamena, Chad, by the Ministers of the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) on Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Action Plan (PAPECALF) and the South African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement agreed in 1999;

Taking note of the firm commitments agreed upon at the 2013 and 2015 African Elephant Summits (in Gaborone and Kasane, Botswana), the Elysée Summit on Peace and Security in Africa, in Paris, 5th December 2013, the 2014 London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in London, UK, and the 2015 Kasane International Conference on Illegal wildlife trade in Kasane, Botswana; and the 13th UN Congress on Crime in Doha April 2015 in Doha, Qatar;

Taking note of the joint declaration of the 7th College-to-College meeting between the European Commission and the African Union Commission made on 22 April 2015 in Brussels, Belgium, that includes, among others, a commitment on

cooperation to fight against illegal wildlife trafficking and to work to strengthen wildlife trade legislation and its enforcement, where necessary, to eliminate corruption associated with wildlife trafficking and to address the supply and demand for illegal wildlife products; and engage with one another on matters to be discussed at Conference of the Parties of international agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES);

Taking note of the availability of the analytical toolkit provided by the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to national governments, developed with the aim of assisting countries by enhancing the national capacity of the institutions involved in combatting the illegal trade in wild flora and fauna

Recognizing the initiatives of member countries of the Council of Ministers of the WAPO Complex (Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, and Togo) in adopting an urgent action programme to combat poaching during the period of 2014-2019;

Appreciating the support provided by all of the members of the international technical committee for its contribution to the process of organization of this international conference and preparation of the African Common Strategy on Combatting Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora,

We declare that we need a unifying strategy to help Africa combat illegal trade in wild flora and fauna, and we declare, as follows:

1. *Recommend* the Conference of Heads of States and Governments of the African Union Assembly to adopt the Strategy, once completed, as the blueprint and common guideline for Africa's response to illegal exploitation and illicit trade in wildlife;
2. *Request* the African Union Assembly to nominate 'Champions' at the Head of State level to advance the cause of combatting illegal wildlife trade and crime by engaging the issues in Africa and with transit and demand countries;

3. *Recommend* the African Union and its Member States to take leadership at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) by supporting Member States in introducing a resolution on Wildlife Crime with a strong reporting mechanism;
4. *Encourage* Member States of the African Union to integrate environmental crimes into the amendments to the Rome Statute, the statute that established the International Criminal Court;
5. *Request* the summit of the African Union to hold a joint conference with the transit and consumer countries with a view to agree on joint actions to be carried out to eliminate supply, demand, and trade in the illegal wild flora and fauna products in Africa;
6. *Recommend* that the next Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, Africa-China Summit, Africa-Japan Summit, Africa-India Summit, Africa-Arab Summit, and Africa-European Summit, as well as other relevant summits, include the issue of wildlife crime as a priority agenda item;
7. *Request* the African Union Summit to urge all African countries to reconsider the ratification/accession to existing continental instruments, such as the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, as well as the Maputo Convention, in order to strengthen cooperation in fighting crime in wild flora and fauna;
8. *Request* the Assembly of Heads and State and Governments to urge all African countries to review and amend national legislation, as necessary and appropriate, so that offences connected to wildlife and forest crime are treated as "predicate offences", as defined in the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, for the purposes of domestic money laundering offences, and are therefore actionable under domestic proceeds of criminal legislation;

9. *Urge* African states to formally engage in promoting good governance, transparency, and equity in the management of fauna and flora;
10. *Request* the African Union Summit to urge all African countries adopting or amending legislation, as necessary, to criminalise poaching and wildlife trafficking, and synthesize a coordinated effort in the enforcement of those laws, and their related crimes by ensuring such criminal offences are “serious crimes” within the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
11. *Urge* African Governments, as well as technical and financial partners, to continue to support the preparation and subsequent implementation of the strategy and action plan at national, regional, and continental levels;
12. *Commit* to ensuring that any measures taken to combat wildlife crime will comply with the obligations under international laws relating to human rights, international humanitarian law, and the rights of indigenous/marginalized populations;
13. *Encourage* Member States to recognize the rights and increasing the participation of indigenous populations and local communities in planning, management, and use of wildlife resources, promoting sustainable and alternative livelihoods, and in building their capacities to fight against wildlife crime;
14. *Request* government authorities in range, transit, and destination countries, UN agencies, Regional Economic Communities, Development Banks, non-governmental organizations, civil society, private sector, academia, and other relevant partners to provide the necessary technical, financial and logistical support in the implementation, reporting, and review/monitoring and evaluation for the strategy and action plan;
15. *Encourage* development partners, United Nations agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil

society, and media, to enhance and strengthen their active and joint collaboration with governments, parliamentarians, and regional economic communities for the implementation of the recommendations of this declaration;

Way Forward

16. *Further recommend* that local, national, regional, and continental consultations be carried out to ensure country and stakeholder ownership of the strategy and action plan when completed;
17. *Request* the African Union Commission to submit this Declaration and summary report to the African Union Assembly for consideration during its June 2015 Summit;
18. *Also request* the African Union Commission to establish an ad hoc committee, with two representatives from each of the five regions, in order to support the further development of the African Common Strategy;
19. *Urge* the African Union to include the illegal wild flora and fauna issues into their agenda during the upcoming Financing for Development Forum to be held in July 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;
20. *Extend* our appreciation to His Excellency, Denis SASSOU NGUESSO President of the Republic of Congo, the Government, and the People of Congo for successfully hosting this conference.

Done on this 30th day of April 2015 at Brazzaville, Republic of Congo.

