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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference
(London, 11-12 October 2018)
- Information from the United Kingdom delegation

Delegations will find in the [Annex](#) an information note from the [United Kingdom delegation](#) on the above subject, to be dealt with under 'Any other business' at the Council (Environment) meeting on 20 December 2018.

**Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference
(London, 11-12 October 2018)**

- Information from the United Kingdom delegation -

In October this year, the UK Government hosted the fourth international Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference. The London Conference was aimed at bringing together the different levers in the fight against the illegal wildlife trade (IWT), focusing on tackling IWT as a Serious and Organised Crime, building broader coalitions, and closing markets for illegally traded wildlife.

The event was the largest yet, attracting over 1,300 delegates representing over 70 countries and over 400 business, civil society, academia, and conservation organisations. The Conference tackled a wide range of issues and contributors ranged from scientists and social media commentators, to park rangers and activists.

The Conference took a wider perspective, going beyond the usual focus on charismatic megafauna to consider other fauna and flora. A greater number of countries also participated. For the first time in particular, there was comprehensive participation from Central and South American countries and Peru announced that it would hold a regional Conference on IWT in Lima in 2019, building on the London 2018 Conference.

Private sector engagement was another aspect that set the Conference apart from its predecessors. Transport, tourism, e-commerce and financial services coalitions are cutting IWT out of supply chains, taking down adverts from online marketplaces, clamping down on illicit financial flows, and sharing intelligence between ports, shipping and airlines. A Finance Taskforce will enable big banks to track illicit financial flows, the World Travel & Tourism Council is undertaking a major campaign to reach over a billion travellers, and the e-commerce coalition's action plan with Interpol and UNODC will help reduce IWT online by 80% by 2020. FaithInvest, a platform for faith-linked investment bodies worth £3.4 trillion, pledged to increase investment into environmentally sustainable projects.

64 countries have endorsed the London 2018 Declaration, reaffirming their commitment to countering IWT and agreeing to build on the four-pillar approach set out in the 2014 London Declaration whilst focusing action on the three priority areas of the 2018 conference - tackling IWT as a Serious and Organised Crime, building coalitions and closing markets. Many countries, including EU Member States, have also set out the further steps they will be taking to tackle all aspects of IWT.

Member States have been key in the progress made so far in tackling IWT across the globe. The Commission's recent review of the progress made in implementing the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking has highlighted the work that has been done and Member States' leadership in the global response to IWT, working in partnership with countries and organisations around the world. EU and Member States have also worked to promote action to prevent illegal wildlife trade in the context of global agreements such as CITES and the Bern Conventions and within the agendas of the United Nations, the G7 and G20 and other international bodies.

Our efforts have focused minds internationally on IWT and have energised global momentum. International collaboration is key to protecting our most threatened species, disrupting global supply chains and markets and helping communities find new ways to live sustainably, without destroying their local habitats and biodiversity.

In order to maintain momentum and build upon the progress already made it will be essential that we continue to work together and take coordinated action wherever possible to tackle this important issue. In continuing to act together, we have the best chance of thwarting IWT.