

2014 EAST ASIA SUMMIT DECLARATION ON COMBATING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

Adopted in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 13 November 2014

WE, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, the People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Japan, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the Russian Federation and the United States of America on the occasion of the 9th East Asia Summit (EAS) held in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar;

REAFFIRMING our commitment to build an ASEAN Community by 2015, comprising three pillars, namely the ASEAN Political-Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community that are closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing;

REALIZING that ASEAN integration and the emergence of an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 will increase peace, stability and prosperity for ASEAN and its people;

AWARE that the EAS Member States are rich in biodiversity and home to many endangered species of wild fauna and flora;

RECOGNIZING that the illicit trafficking and illegal trade in specimens of species of wildlife are prejudicial to the planet's natural heritage and to the political, economic and social interests of the EAS;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the inadvertent or purposeful introduction of illicitly trafficked and illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products poses serious risks to the health and safety of human, plant, and animal populations due to the spread of pathogens and non-native invasive species, threatening economic development and prosperity;

NOTING that the increase in illicit trafficking and illegal trade of specimens of species wildlife and wildlife products including fauna and flora, and particularly of endangered species included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) necessitates increased cooperation and coordination, surveillance, investigative and enforcement measures amongst relevant authorities, including Wildlife, Forestry, Customs, Police, Judicial and Prosecutorial authorities, as well as their increased surveillance, investigative and enforcement measures;

RECOGNIZING that international and regional cooperation are essential to protect natural resources, wildlife habitats, and particularly, endangered species of wild fauna and flora;

RECOGNIZING the conservation actions and commitments that have already been made with respect to the species regulated by CITES through its Decisions and Resolutions;

ACKNOWLEDGING our commitment to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the access to and the utilization of genetic resources;

RECALLING the ASEAN Statement on CITES on the Occasion of the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in October 2004 and the adoption of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on CITES Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora (2011-2015), where ASEAN recognized the need to promote its objectives for CITES implementation through collaborative initiatives;

FURTHER RECALLING the ASEAN Statement on Launching of the ASEAN Wildlife Law Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) at the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for the Implementation of CITES in December 2005;

RECOGNIZING the unprecedented success of ASEAN Member States in combatting illegal trade in CITES wildlife and wildlife products through support of the ASEAN WEN as well as stronger coordination and linkages between national and regional agencies, such as CITES Management Authorities, customs, police, and other relevant law enforcement agencies, resulting in an exponential increase in arrests, seizures, and prosecution of cases of illicit wildlife trafficking and illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife products;

APPRECIATING the enormous value accrued from ASEAN-WEN workshops and training sessions on wildlife trade regulation, species identification, detection and investigation, protected areas enforcement, and wildlife forensics at both regional and national levels, and public awareness campaigns and activities aimed not only for the public at ports of entry and key border checkpoints, but also for members of the judiciary and prosecutors;

RECOGNIZING the progress the EAS participating countries have achieved in combatting illicit wildlife trafficking in East Asia, including the achievement of the “Operation Cobra” organized by China, US, ASEAN-WEN, SA-WEN, UNODC and other countries and organizations;

RECALLING our commitments made in the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability at the 13th ASEAN Summit in November 2007 which identified the need to strengthen efforts to implement the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora, through mechanisms such as the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network;

ACKNOWLEDGING the commitments to further strengthen ASEAN regional cooperation on biodiversity, as embodied in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint of the Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015);

RECALLING the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry Statement on “ASEAN and International Year of Forests 2011” in October 2011 recognizing the achievements and continuing efforts in addressing threats and challenges faced by the forestry sector in the region, such as through enhancing efforts in addressing international trade of endangered species and wildlife enforcement;

REFERENCING the Joint Statement of the ASEAN Environmental Ministers for the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in promoting the aim to ensure conservation and sustainable management of ASEAN biodiversity towards enhancing social, economic, and environmental well-being;

NOTING the September 2012 Resolution of the 33rd General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) on Strengthening Law Enforcement and Regional Cooperation to Combat Wildlife Crime, and the 2012 Joint Statement of the APEC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for the Environment;

FURTHER NOTING the 2013 APEC Economic Leaders' Declaration delivered in Bali, Indonesia on wildlife trafficking that recognizes the serious negative economic implications of environmental crime and acknowledges the important role that Wildlife Enforcement Networks play in effectively addressing this issue;

FURTHER NOTING the role of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in its function as an effective regional centre of excellence in promoting biodiversity conservation and management, and regional initiatives such as the Heart of Borneo, Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security, ASEAN Heritage Parks, and Greater Mekong Sub-Region in protecting and enhancing conservation of the region's biodiversity;

FURTHER NOTING progress being made to include environmental crime, which includes wildlife trafficking and wildlife-related crimes, as an additional priority under the ASEAN Plan of Action on Transnational Crime;

ACKNOWLEDGING the commitments of individual EAS countries to CITES and the CBD, and other relevant multi-lateral biodiversity-related environmental agreements;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the progress made against wildlife trafficking in the region through financial and technical support and assistance for the international community in helping countries in EAS countries to build resources, expertise and capacity to address the illegal exploitation and trade in wild fauna and flora;

DO HEREBY AGREE TO:

1. REAFFIRM our conservation actions and commitments that have already been made with respect to CITES and CBD and to other relevant multi-lateral biodiversity-related environmental agreements;
2. SUPPORT the ASEAN Regional Action Plan in CITES Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora which aims at effective regional cooperation on improved implementation of CITES, including law enforcement collaboration through ASEAN-WEN;
3. URGE all Parties to fully implement their obligations under CITES and also to urge ASEAN Member States to implement the ASEAN Regional Action Plan in CITES Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora;
4. PROMOTE action to further strengthen regional and international cooperation between source, transit and destination countries, including through additional support to wildlife law-enforcement networks;
5. INSTITUTIONALIZE the role of the ASEAN Secretariat as the coordinating and implementing body under which the ASEAN-WEN operates;
6. SUPPORT the financial sustainability and the strengthening of the ASEAN-WEN and its full integration within the ASEAN Secretariat in facilitating the concerted and coordinated joint actions and enforcement efforts, and increased cooperation between ASEAN Member States, to address the illegal exploitation and trade in CITES wild flora and fauna within the ASEAN region;

7. WELCOME the establishment of a budget line item under the ASEAN Secretariat to support ASEAN-WEN and associated collaborative funding activities to enable it to receive contributions from interested parties, to include direct budget support from ASEAN Member States and international and regional institutions and partners;
8. REQUEST the ASEAN Ministers' Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) to consider recognizing environmental crime as a serious transnational crime and include it as an area of cooperation in ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime;
9. FURTHER SPUR AND REINFORCE ASEAN'S commitment to operationalize and ensure the sustainability of ASEAN-WEN, and expand and nurture ASEAN Member States' cooperation and coordination in promoting regional wildlife law enforcement efforts;
10. URGE relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies to carry out steps to ensure effective networking and cooperation that strengthens efforts against illicit trafficking and illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife products at the national level and in collaboration with other related regional bodies and initiatives;
11. ENCOURAGE ASEAN Dialogue Partners, development partners, and relevant regional and international organizations to help develop a supportive environment that optimizes cooperation on crime prevention and criminal justice response to combat illicit trafficking and illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife products as well as implementation of CITES and biodiversity-related environment agreements such as through capacity building, information sharing and technical assistance;
12. IDENTIFY priority areas of engagement for collaboration with Dialogue Partners and development partners, such as capacity building, information sharing, technology transfer, technical assistance, and direct support for law enforcement operations;
13. PROMOTE regular dialogue among relevant ASEAN ministerial bodies to accelerate concerted efforts against CITES wildlife trafficking and related crimes and to realize the effective communication and development of ASEAN-WEN when appropriate;
14. SUPPORT ASEAN integration through the harmonization of environmental crime laws to combat transnational crime; including through the implementation of relevant international agreements to which ASEAN members are parties, such as the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the UN Convention Against Corruption;
15. ENCOURAGE harmonization of legal and administrative regulations to support the exchange of evidence and criminal prosecution of wildlife crime;
16. ENHANCE capacity building among EAS participating countries in the area of combatting illicit trafficking and illegal trade of wildlife and wildlife products;
17. URGE donors and partners to continue to support capacity building through regional, sub-regional and national workshops, trainings and meetings, and to support our efforts in combatting illegal wildlife trade;
18. ENCOURAGE national-level wildlife crime task forces, consistent with national circumstances;

19. ENCOURAGE effective public relations and educational campaigns to raise awareness of the important environmental heritage of ASEAN's indigenous flora and fauna and the threat posed by illicit trafficking and illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products;
20. DEVELOP measures to build upon public awareness and education initiatives to reduce the demand for and supply of illegal wildlife and wildlife products;
21. ENHANCE international cooperation by strengthening linkages between regional Wildlife Enforcement Networks (WENs), and supporting the development of other WENs around the world.

Adopted in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on the thirteenth day of November in the Year Two Thousand and Fourteen.