

**Side event of the
2015 ECOSOC Integration Segment**

“The Illegal Wildlife Trade and Decent Work”

**Tuesday, March 31, 2015, from
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**

**Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations
New York**

Background

The increasing illegal wildlife trade has a damaging impact on the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. Economically, wildlife represents a source of national income for countries, decent jobs and poverty reduction, particularly from the tourism sector. Tourism is critical for many economies, representing for some as much as 12-15% of GDP. The tourism sector creates many new job opportunities and spurs growth in areas where other economic opportunities may not exist, especially more remote rural areas. Tourism generates many decent jobs which will no longer be present in the future if the wildlife species that tourists want to see disappear and if security issues due to poaching and illegal wildlife trade are prevalent.

Socially, wildlife represents an integral aspect of national cultural identity and pride, as well as being a global good.

Environmentally, wildlife forms a crucial element of sustainable ecosystems. When wildlife is threatened by poaching and trafficking, crucial ecosystems and their processes are undermined, and ecosystem services are also disrupted especially for the poor and most vulnerable.

Despite all efforts undertaken at national, regional and international levels to stop poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking, the illegal wildlife trade has grown steadily. It now represents the fourth largest global illegal trade, estimated at up to \$20 billion per year. This has massive negative impacts on society, depriving nations of their wealth, and local communities of sustainable livelihoods. It further threatens social cohesion by undermining the rule of law through the presence of national and international crime and corruption and, in some contexts, it poses a serious threat to local, national and regional security and stability.

The promotion of decent work and social protection offers a practical framework for addressing the supply side of wildlife trafficking.

Addressing the issue requires governments and the international community to ensure greater investment in wildlife protection. The proposed Sustainable Development Goals recognize the importance of protecting and preserving terrestrial ecosystems. Target 15.7 calls for, “urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and

fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products”. The Secretary-General’s Synthesis Report calls for a “Change in our relationship with our one and only planet” and that “We must protect wildlife”.

Overview

The event will discuss the linkages between the illegal wildlife trade and decent work and how this trade undermines sustainable development. It will do so by highlighting the linkages between wildlife and the environment, as well as economic and social issues. It will also identify key policy interventions that could potentially end poaching and the illegal trafficking of wildlife which would, in turn, lead to the generation of additional decent jobs and social protection floors.

DRAFT PROGRAMME

1:15 – 1:25 Opening Remarks

H.E. Mr. Harald Braun, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

Short video

1:25– 2:00 Panel Discussion

Moderator: Ms. Adriana Dinu, Executive Coordinator and Director, a.i., Global Environment Finance (GEF), UNDP

H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations (TBC)

H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations (TBC)

Dr. John Robinson, Executive Vice-President, Conservation and Science, Wildlife Conservation Society

Mr. Aeneas Chapinga Chuma, Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, ILO

Discussant: H.E. Mrs. Marianne Odette Bibalou, Ambassador, Chargée d’Affaires, Permanent Mission of Gabon

2:00-2:40 Questions and answers/ interactive dialogue

Moderator: Ms. Adriana Dinu, Executive Coordinator and Director, a.i., Global Environment Finance (GEF), UNDP

2:40–2:45 Wrap-up and Closing: H.E. Mrs. Marianne Odette Bibalou, Ambassador, Chargée d’Affaires, Permanent Mission of Gabon (TBC)