

High-level thematic discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day, including on the protection of wild flora and fauna and on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife

UNITED NATIONS, New York, 2 March 2017 — In accordance with UN General Assembly resolution 70/301, the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Peter Thomson, will convene a high-level thematic discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day, including on the protection of wild flora and fauna and on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife, in UNHQ New York, on 3 March 2017. Although overall illicit trafficking numbers are difficult to estimate given the nature of the practice, experts at CITES estimate that illicit trafficking in wildlife is a multi-billion dollar business which perpetuates the irreversible damage to and extinction of the earth's flora and fauna.

The half-day High-Level meeting will aim to maintain momentum of the on-going actions, review the progress made so far by various stakeholders, and discuss the challenges in our collective efforts to fight illicit wildlife trafficking. It will also address the World Wildlife Day 2017 theme, "Listen to the young voices", which encourages youth around the world to rally together to address ongoing major threats to wildlife, including habitat change, over-exploitation and illicit trafficking. The meeting will support efforts towards the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 15, target C to "enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities".

Opening remarks will be made by President Thomson; the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Amina Mohammed; the Minister of Environmental Affairs of South Africa H.E. Edna Molewa; the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), H.E. Yuri Fedotov; and Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Mr. John E. Scanlon.

Two interactive panels, on "Tackling illicit trafficking of wildlife and protecting wild fauna and flora" and "Listen to the young voices – presentations on role of the youth in protecting wildlife", will be followed by the presentation of a certificate to the grand prize winner of WWD2017 photo competition - "Through young eyes".

WHAT Half-day high-level thematic discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day, including on the protection of wild flora and fauna and on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife, convened by the President of the General Assembly

WHEN 3 March, 10:00am-1:00pm

WHERE Trusteeship Council Chamber, **United Nations HQ, New York**

Hashtags #WorldWildlifeDay; #Youth4Wildlife

Watch live at webtv.un.org

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