

Contribution John Hontelez, FSC, on behalf of the Major Groups
To high level segment on illegal wildlife trade
26/6/14

My name is John Hontelez, and I work for the Forest Stewardship Council, FSC. The nine major groups here at the Assembly have presented a joint message this week on what are the essential barriers and actions needed to overcome these to effectively combat illegal wildlife trade.

In my contribution I focus on illegal harvesting and trade of timber, estimated to have an economic value of up to 100 billion USdollars a year. Illegal harvesting of timber is contributing to deforestation and forest degradation, it has serious negative social impacts, undermines the economies of the countries of harvest, and it is seriously undermining efforts to promote sustainable forest management. Part of illegal logging is purely domestic, driven by poverty and lack of alternatives. Then enforcement needs to be complemented with creating sustainably livelihoods, building upon the important role local communities can have as primary stewards of forests, and for example the promotion of agro-forestry. However, a large component is without doubt criminal and needs to be eradicated. It is also truly a global phenomenon, with all countries involved on the demand side. And tackling the demand side is essential. Raising consumer awareness is important, and governments at all levels have a role to play here, but illegal timber gets converted in ordinary products such as charcoal, paper, furniture, wall panels, construction wood, products that cannot be easily identified with crime.

Therefore it is essential that all governments in the world, and in particular also importing countries, together with the processing industry, act to prevent illegal timber from entering the supply chain. There are good examples in the EU Timber Regulation, the US Lacey Act, the coming Australian Illegal Logging Act. Where such laws exist, they however need much stronger enforcement. Both in the US and EU we see that is mostly environmental organizations that trigger legal action. That needs to change. We should be able to rely on the authorities to do their enforcement job: systematically and effectively. However, without involvement of the processing industry it will never be perfect. So industry needs to apply due diligence, and governments, at all levels, can stimulate that further by, in their public procurement policies, requiring legality verification or credible certification such as from FSC. [Denmark mentioned this as example tonight.] Recognising and supporting effective chain-of-custody certification schemes can help business indeed to contribute to the eradication of this important component of illegal wildlife trade. Legality is not equal to sustainability, but it is a first and indispensable step, so it certainly belongs to the responsibility of environmental ministers, in cooperation with their colleagues on social, trade and economic issues, to take determined action.

Additional contribution 1:
Peter Pueschel, Director International Environmental Agreements
IFAW – International Fund for Animal Welfare

Illegal Wildlife Trade Statement, focus enforcement

We applaud the decision to have today's Ministerial Dialogue focused on Illegal Trade in Wildlife, particularly at a time it seems most needed that future *successful conservation and sustainable development policies need to be guided by ecological and biological sustainability, the ethical treatment of wildlife and the [precautionary principle](#).*

Amongst the uncountable number of species today under threat are some of the most magnificent and most important keystone species, like Great Apes, tigers, sharks and elephants.

Just imagine that on average every 15 minutes one elephant gets brutally killed, only to steal his tusks for the illicit ivory market – that makes about 12 poached elephants just during our session here tonight.

Distinguished delegates, just like the intervention from the previous speaker from the NGOs, this following intervention is based on our joint statement of all 9 Major Groups present here at UNEA.

Unsustainable and illegal extraction and trade in wildlife, has major economic, social and environmental impacts. It leads to violations of human and environmental rights, the precautionary principle, contributes to damage of ecosystems and rural livelihoods, undermines good governance, accountability and the rule of law, threatens national security and devastates local communities and wildlife based business.

To combat and eradicate wildlife crime effectively, good compliance and enforcement measures must be top priority worldwide.

Therefore, we commend and support some great progress over the last years, achieved by international enforcement cooperation and partnerships, which we encourage you to expand on.

These including some already mentioned here, like

- ICCWC the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime.
- partnerships like LEAF and NEST, the National Environmental Security Task Forces, for which Interpol is in the lead,
- LATEF, the Lusaka Task Force Agreement,
- Regional Wildlife Enforcement Networks, like ASEAN or HAWEN, here at the Horn of Africa,
- and decisions, implementation and enforcement action from CITES, but also others, like the Convention on Migratory Species.

Just to mention a few.

Additionally we strongly recommend

- To further increase national, regional and international cooperation between relevant bodies, including local authorities, agencies, police, customs, environmental and other wildlife specialized agencies, prosecutors, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental partners.
- To identify where legislation is contradictory, insufficient or unnecessarily complex, and to undertake legal reform to overcome any such shortfalls.
- To harmonize legislation for the benefit of enforceability, in a way where trade and use of poached or illegally harvested materials shall by law be made illegal across the supply chain, not only in the country of origin, but as well in the transit and end-market countries.
- Last not least, we recommend stepping up international cooperation to investigate and uncover financial flows in relation to illicit wildlife trafficking, including illegal timber trade.

Distinguished delegates, many of you have rightly referred to the birth of UNEA as being a historic breakthrough reflecting the commitment of the global community to ecological sustainability in harmony with nature.

To make this real, we call on all governments here at UNEA to unite behind clear, far-reaching commitments, followed by effective compliance and enforcement action to eradicate illicit wildlife trade.

That would indeed make the 1st meeting of the United Nations Environmental Assembly a truly historic moment.

Additional contribution 2:

**INTERVENTION DE LAURENT M. SOME DURANT LE DIALOGUE MINISTERIEL SUR LE COMMERCE
ILLICITE DE LA FAUNE SAUVAGE DU 26 JUIN 2014**

C'est un honneur pour moi d'intervenir durant la première session de l'Assemblée des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement du Programme des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement (PNUE) sur ce sujet de préoccupation qu'est le trafic illégal de la faune sauvage.

A travers l'Afrique et ailleurs on peut très aisément voir et apprécier à leur juste valeurs les efforts des gouvernements en collaboration avec d'autres acteurs déploient pour lutter contre ce mal transnational, cette pieuvre qu'est le braconnage et le trafic illégal des espèces sauvages, avec le conglomerat d'organisations criminelles, de trafiquants de drogue, groupes armés militants et organisations terroristes de tout acabit. Il est accablant de constater que malheureusement ces activités criminelles ont enlevé la vie à bien de personnes, et la menace persiste hélas !

Face à cela, et pour contrer ce mal, il est réconfortant de voir comment la communauté se mobilise, en témoigne les discussions actuelles qui se mènent ici à Nairobi. L'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies a pris à bras le corps ce problème ; des sommets de haut niveaux ont été organisés. Cet appui politique au plus haut niveau de nos états doit être maintenu, enrichi, renforcé et traduit en des actions concrètes. Pour ce faire nous encourageons cette 1ère Assemblée des Nations Unies pour l'Environnement à :

- Adopter une résolution forte par l'UNEA. Dans ce sens, devons nous rester sourds à l'interpellation de la jeunesse, nos enfants, de ce matin ?
- Nous appelons de tous nos vœux une telle résolution soit le prélude à une Résolution par l'AGNU ;
- Considérer un 4ème Protocole sur le commerce illicite d'espèces de la faune et de la flore sauvage, sous la Convention des Nations Unies contre la criminalité transnationale organisée afin d'apporter de la clarté aux états membres sur la définition, les juridictions ainsi que les actions nécessaires à tous les niveaux.

Nous recommandons :

- La nomination d'un Représentant Spécial du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies
- Une collaboration engagée entre les pays origine, transit et destination;
- Une collaboration accrue entre les institutions au niveau régional, subrégional et international, et une coordination effective de ces efforts.

Je vous remercie.

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