



**STATEMENT BY
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“The Convention on Biological Diversity as a tool to achieve the SDG’s and its collaboration with and links to CITES”

ON THE OCCASION OF

**THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD
FAUNA AND FLORA (CITES)**

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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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**Honorable Minister Molewa,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure and honour to address the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). As you may be aware, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) attaches great importance to the need to protect biodiversity from unsustainable use.

Biodiversity and sustainable development are inextricably linked. Biodiversity, at the level of ecosystems, species and genes, forms the foundation of the Earth's life support systems and provides the ecosystem services that underpin human lives, livelihood and prosperity. Our social and economic well-being depends on biodiversity, as does our future. Biodiversity is at the centre of many economic activities, particularly those related to agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture and tourism and all industries that use components derived from biodiversity in their products, as well as in the provision of water and health. Nearly half of the world's population is directly dependent on natural resources for its livelihood, and many of the most vulnerable people depend directly on biodiversity to fulfil their daily subsistence needs.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, adopted in 2010 under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has been recognized as setting the global framework for priority actions on biodiversity. Agreed by 192 governments in 2010 and further reaffirmed in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2012, the Strategic Plan has been recognized as a United Nations-wide framework for action on biodiversity.

CITES' legal framework, , has also been recognized in resolution 69/314, on 'Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife', adopted in 2015 by the UN General Assembly. The resolution calls upon United Nations organizations to continue to support member states such as through capacity-building and by supporting alternative livelihoods.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, agreed in 2015 by the 193 Member States of the United Nations, sets out an ambitious framework of universal goals and targets to address a range of global societal challenges. Given its importance for sustainability and human well-being, it is not surprising that biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, including aquatic and terrestrial wildlife and genetic resources, feature prominently in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets of the 2030 Agenda, including in poverty eradication (which is not only about incomes but also access to public services and ecosystem services), food security and sustainable agriculture, sustainable water management, economic growth, cities and human settlements, sustainable consumption and production, and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. We were pleased to work closely with the CITES and other biodiversity convention secretariats to help support this result. In particular, biodiversity is directly captured SDGs 14 and 15 on ocean and terrestrial ecosystems, respectively ,including with specific targets - , on combatting poaches and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna.

Cases from CBD national reports have demonstrated how the engagement and involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in wildlife management can help to increase wildlife populations and reduce illegal wildlife use. If people have ownership of wildlife and their rights to access natural resources respected they are more likely to invest in it which in turn also prevents areas from being converted into agriculture. Like the CBD, CITES recognizes that rural communities depend heavily on wild species for their livelihoods and that implementation of policy decisions is best achieved with the engagement of rural communities (Resolution Conf. 16.6).

The 2030 Agenda was developed carefully to ensure consistency with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, as well as other existing international commitments. All 20 Aichi Targets individually or collectively are related to the 17 SDGs and they are mutually supportive and reinforcing, such that the implementation of each will contribute to the achievement of the other. Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at national level provides tremendous opportunities to mainstream biodiversity and its values into key national priorities and to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including the 16 targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, and the Strategic Plan for Biosafety 2011-2020.

CBD and CITES always shared a common goal and vision and their implementation mutually enhance each other at national level. Parties of both the CBD and CITES, as well as other biodiversity-related conventions and international bodies, have expressed a strong desire to see greater synergies in implementation efforts both at the national and international levels. Significant achievements have been realized, including the endorsement by CITES and other conventions of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPS) can serve as the single instrument at the national level to implement these and related conventions.

Target 4.3 of CBD's earlier Strategic Plan called for "no species of wild flora and fauna to be endangered by international trade". I am quite pleased to acknowledge that you welcomed the inclusion of that target at your thirteenth meeting, and that you noted its full consistency with the CITES strategic plan. CBD's new Strategic Plan 2011-2020 provided further opportunity for further the synergy, including Targets 11 (No species of wild flora endangered by international trade) and 12 (All wild harvested plant-based products sourced sustainably) of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. I am quite pleased to note that at its 16th meeting the CITES COP extended the validity of its Strategic Vision and Action Plan to 2020 and included amendments to contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Target. Revised mapping of the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2020 vis-a-vis the Aichi Targets and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 provides the linkages between the 20 Aichi targets and relevant objectives of CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2020. Some examples *inter alia* are Objectives 1.4., 1.6, 1.7, 3.3 and 3.4, and 4 of CITES Strategic Vision particularly address Aichi Targets 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18 and 19.

At the 66th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee in Geneva, Switzerland, in January 2016, the Committee reviewed Resolution Conf. 13.11 on Bush meat, taking into consideration the decisions and guidance developed under the CBD, as well as the outcomes of the joint CITES/CBD meeting on bush meat. The establishment by CBD of the Collaborative Partnership on Wildlife Management (CPW) was also welcomed, recommending that the CITES Secretariat continue to work with CPW partners to ensure that the harvest of and international trade in bush meat products derived from CITES-listed species is legal, sustainable and traceable. As members of the Collaborative Partnership on Wildlife, CITES and the CBD have worked to leverage attention and enhance policy coherence to promote sustainable wildlife management practices, through joint workshops enabling developing country Parties to participate and discuss issues of shared concern

CITES and CBD signed their first memorandum of cooperation in 1996, which demonstrates the early willingness of the conventions to promote cooperation and synergies. Both Secretariats were part of the establishment of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) in 2004, which now includes the seven main global biodiversity-related conventions, and have been collectively promoting effective synergies among themselves.

The BLG mechanism has grown increasingly effective over the years, and has led to collaboration among the seven secretariats in a number of areas, including on joint communications, as well as in supporting the inclusion of biodiversity in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

In another recent example of collaboration, the CITES secretariat and standing committee, contributed to a Party-led process, established through CBD decision XII/6, on improving synergies among the seven major global biodiversity-related conventions.

Most recently, the CBD Secretariat worked with CITES Secretariat to facilitate four regional joint preparatory meetings to support Parties in preparing for CITES COP 17 and the CBD's forthcoming COP 13 and concurrent meetings of its Protocols. Our gratitude goes to the CITES Secretariat for the initiative and to European Union for the financial support for the four meetings, held in August 2016 in Asia, the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, which brought together 112 CITES delegates and 115 CDB delegates, representing 104 Parties.

The meetings not only contributed the preparation of the Parties for our respective COPs but also helped delegates to build better understanding of opportunities for joint practical implementation of CITES and CBD. Delegates discussed practical case studies and/or ideas to enhance synergies, with a focus on coordination and networking mechanisms at national, regional and/or international levels. Delegates also reiterated the importance of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and their national biodiversity strategies and action plans as their entry points for synergies, and directed attention to areas that can benefit from more integrated approaches such as resource mobilization and reporting and monitoring. Talking about practical implementation, I would like to urge governments and business to make more use of DNA Barcoding and other modern technics to enable quick and precise identification of species and provenances.

All of the biodiversity-related conventions work through partnerships and initiatives with a range of other UN agencies and other entities, many of which focus on economic and social development, natural resource management, trade, security and other areas. Parties have clearly recognized that in order to achieve the goals of these conventions, biodiversity needs to be mainstreamed into other sectors.

This seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, will adopt decisions on regulating access to and trade in wildlife resources, combating illicit trafficking in wildlife, enhancing collaboration with other sectors (e.g. development, trade, transport and tourism) and making more visible the Convention's contribution to achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. At the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2016, Parties and stakeholders will have the opportunity to consider concrete means to mainstream biodiversity across a variety of sectors and areas including in particular agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism as well as health, and to address next steps related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is expected that CBD COP 13 will invite the governing bodies of all the main global biodiversity-related conventions, including CITES, to consider adopting decisions on further improving synergies among the seven major biodiversity-related conventions.

An important area where we are making progress on synergies is with respect to GEF funding. In addition to any other action that the CITES COP might wish to take in this regard, I want to draw your attention to the decision taken by the CBD COP at its twelfth meeting, which invited the governing bodies of other biodiversity-related conventions to provide advice regarding the funding of national priorities

within their mandates, so that such advice may be referred to the GEF through the CBD Conference of Parties. Of course such priorities would need to be in accordance with the mandate of the GEF as well as aimed at implementing a commitment of the CBD and its Strategic Plan 2011-2020. As our next COP will take place in just three months' time in Cancun, Mexico, this provides an excellent opportunity for CITES

As all countries embark on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must ensure that our work is truly transformative and puts new integrated approaches into action. The global challenges we face are cross-cutting issues that will require us to work with our various partners and stakeholders, across different entities, governments and sectors. The decisions taken by Parties to our conventions represent a ready-made foundation upon which a rapid response to the challenges of sustainable development can be made.

CITES is a key partner in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the SDGs. We continue to attach great importance to the close cooperation with CITES in pursuing our common goals.

I look forward to further collaboration between CITES and CBD Parties, our two Secretariats, and our respective partners, in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other areas of common interest. By working together, we can achieve the future we want.

I wish you every success in your deliberations in the coming days.

Thank you for your kind attention.