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Your reference:

Mr. Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological
Diversity
413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal QC H2Y 1N9
CANADA

Geneva, 01 February 2016

SUBJECT: Advice on CITES priorities for the Global Environment Facility

Dear Mr. ~~Dias~~, *Bráulio*

As was agreed at our Skype meeting in November last year, I am hereby transmitting the outcomes of the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES SC66, Geneva, 11-15 January 2016), with regard to the issue of access to the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The agenda item on access to GEF was discussed within the CITES SC budget and finance sub-committee, where the ongoing work of the CBD external experts' preparation of the funding needs assessment report was described. Unfortunately, information was not available on the current status of the assessment process, nor on the timeline of the review and finalization of the report. The Standing Committee was therefore not able to provide specific inputs to the CBD's assessment exercise, and gave the following directions to the Secretariat on the agenda item on access to GEF:

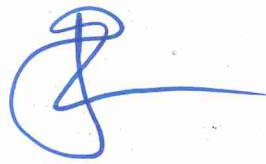
- i) *Invite the GEF Secretariat to the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to give awareness raising and guidance to Parties on accessing GEF funding;*
- ii) *Report on progress on its findings at the SC67 for consideration of the risks, benefits, necessity and implications, in order to get further guidance in preparation for the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;*
- iii) *Convey Resolution Conf. 16.2 and Decision 16.2 to the GEF Council, through the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the GEF;*
- iv) *Continue, in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat, to explore a closer working relationship with the GEF to enhance its biodiversity strategy in GEF-6 by strengthening the species-based component; and*
- v) *Convey CITES priorities to the GEF for it to take them into account when developing the biodiversity strategy in GEF-7, consistent with the mandate of the GEF.*

As you may already be aware, the CITES Secretariat has already elaborated the funding priorities for CITES for GEF programming in implementation of Resolution Conf.16.2 and Decision 16.2, as well as in the elaboration of the revised CITES Strategic Vision which was reported in SC65 Doc.17. Furthermore, the establishment of the GEF Global Wildlife Program seems to provide a coordinated programmatic framework to the current GEF projects addressing illegal wildlife trade, including those of CITES-listed species.

I would like to thank you for your consideration and support, and look forward to our cooperation in this regard.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'S' followed by a horizontal line.

John E. Scanlon

Secretary-General