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UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME
2022 Expert Discussions on preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice
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Thematic Session 1: “Preventing Crimes that Affect the Environment”

Contribution from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity:

Excellencies,

Distinguished Experts and participants,

The Convention on biological diversity was adopted in 1992 with the objectives to promote the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. It is the first international treaty to take a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. It is a framework instrument laying down broad goals, key objectives and general rules and principles that are intended to guide national or local strategies and actions. The Convention has contributed to the development of legal frameworks promoting - the safe use of modern biotechnology by providing procedures for the transboundary movements of genetically modified organisms through its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, on the one hand, and by providing rules that regulate commercial bio-prospecting and utilization of genetic resources through its Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their Utilization, on the other.

Among other specific matters that the Convention deals with, issues related to demand for *bushmeat* which is driven in most developing countries by the need for food and livelihood and its impact on conservation, and *alien invasive species*, the spread of which is, to some extent, exacerbated by the illegal trans-border movement of wildlife, are relevant to the subject under consideration.

The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety requires each Party to adopt appropriate measures aimed at preventing and penalizing illegal transboundary movements of living modified organisms.

Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on the other hand are required to take compliance measures to monitor and to enhance transparency about the utilization of genetic resources.

Crimes that directly affect biodiversity include wildlife crimes, illegal fishing and illegal logging. Most of these issues fall under other international instruments such as CITES. However, these crimes have direct and adverse consequences on the implementation and effectiveness of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols. They undermine the efforts of Governments, communities and environmental defenders in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as provided in their policies, national biodiversity strategies and action plans. That is why, the secretariat of the Convention, under the guidance of the Conference

of the Parties to the Convention and the meetings of the Parties to the Protocols, works closely with other biodiversity-related conventions and organizations, including the World Customs Organization and the Interpol, using forums such as the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the Green Customs Initiative.

Since 2018, the international community has embarked on, under the auspices of the CBD, the preparation of a new global biodiversity framework which is rooted in the recognition of a fundamental need for urgent policy action globally, regionally and nationally with the aim to transform economic, social and financial models so that the trends that have exacerbated biodiversity loss will stabilize in the next several years, specifically by 2030 and allow for the recovery of natural ecosystems in the following 20 years, with net improvements by 2050 to achieve the vision “living in harmony with nature by 2050”, a vision that Parties have set back in 2010. In that context one of the targets which is currently under consideration aims to “eliminate unsustainable, illegal and unsafe harvesting, trade and use of wild species” by the end of the decade. The negotiations on the global biodiversity framework are underway and the new framework is expected to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its upcoming second part of its fifteenth meeting, which is scheduled to be held in Kunming, China.

The Secretariat would like to invite and kindly encourage everyone participating in this meeting to be also engaged in this important process of developing, adopting, and implementing a global biodiversity framework in the coming months and years, so that the world will have one more instrument in its pursuit to preventing crimes that affect the environment.

Thank you

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