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TEXTS ADOPTED

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**Key objectives for the CITES CoP19 meeting in Panama**

**European Parliament resolution of 5 October 2022 on the EU strategic objectives for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in Panama from 14 to 25 November 2022 (2022/2681(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the 2019 global assessment report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) on biodiversity and ecosystem services,
- having regard to the 2020 report of the UN Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization entitled ‘State of the World’s Forests 2020’, which underlines the key role of forests in providing a habitat for more than 80 % of the world’s terrestrial biodiversity, offering countless ecosystem services and ensuring a livelihood for many communities, including indigenous people,
- having regard to marine and coastal biodiversity,
- having regard to the forthcoming 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held from 14 to 25 November 2022 in Panama (CoP19),
- having regard to UN General Assembly resolution 75/311 of 26 July 2021 on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife,
- having regard to CITES Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev.CoP15) on registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes,
- having regard to CITES Decisions 18.226 and 18.227 on trade in Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*),
- having regard to CITES Decisions 18.81-18.85 on wildlife crime linked to the internet,

- having regard to the Commission communication of 20 May 2020 entitled ‘EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 – Bringing nature back into our lives’ (COM(2020)0380), and to the European Parliament resolution of 9 June 2021 thereon<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora<sup>2</sup>, which aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity and forms the cornerstone of the EU’s nature conservation policy,
  - having regard to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, to be held from 7 to 19 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada,
  - having regard to the Commission proposal for a directive of the European Parliament of the Council on the protection of the environment through criminal law and replacing Directive 2008/99/EC (COM(2021)0851),
  - having regard to the questions to the Council and to the Commission on key objectives for the Conference of the Parties to CITES in Panama from 14 to 25 November 2022 (O-000038/2022 – B9-0023/2022 and O-000039/2022 – B9-0024/2022),
  - having regard to Rules 136(5) and 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the unprecedented global decline in biodiversity, which is currently occurring at a rate tens to hundreds of times faster than the natural rate of species extinction, is the direct result of human activity and is threatening around 1 million animal and plant species with extinction; whereas available evidence suggests that it is not too late to halt and reverse current trends in biodiversity loss;
  - B. whereas biodiversity contributes positively to the health of the human population; whereas up to 80 % of medicines used by humans are of natural origin;
  - C. whereas the oceans, which represent 95 % of the biosphere, are one of the most important carbon sinks, as they regulate the climate and absorb CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere;
  - D. whereas it is important to protect marine and coastal biodiversity and tackle the threats posed to it by the unregulated or poorly regulated use of living marine resources; whereas it is also important to protect freshwater biodiversity, which is declining to a greater extent than marine and terrestrial ecosystems, with freshwater populations declining 83 % between 1970 and 2014;
  - E. whereas the vast majority of species subject to trade are not protected by CITES; whereas international trade in such species remains unregulated and contributes significantly to driving wild populations towards extinction;
  - F. whereas CITES is the largest global wildlife conservation agreement, with 184 signatory parties, including the EU and its 27 Member States; whereas it recognises that

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 67, 8.2.2022, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

wild fauna and flora in their many unique and varied forms are an irreplaceable part of the natural systems of the Earth that must be protected for generations to come;

- G. whereas the aim of CITES is to ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants does not pose a threat to the survival of the species in the wild;
- H. whereas both the illegal and legal trade in and the use of wildlife and the destruction of natural habitats contribute significantly to biodiversity decline, undermine global efforts in the fight against climate change and are both a cause and a consequence of corruption;
- I. whereas Appendix I of CITES includes all species threatened with extinction that are or may be affected by trade; whereas Appendix II includes all species that may become threatened with extinction unless trade in specimens of such species is subject to strict regulation to avoid utilisation incompatible with their survival and unless trade in these species is brought under effective control;
- J. whereas wildlife trade increases contact between humans and wildlife and creates a potentially high risk that zoonoses will emerge and spread; whereas as 70 % of all emerging infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic, wildlife trade poses serious risks to the health of both animals and humans; whereas there is a need for better and more exhaustive control of the meat trade and the trade in live animals; whereas experts advise limiting zoonotic risks by addressing markets with live animals and by developing a ‘positive list’ of animal species that may be transported internationally, taking into account zoonotic risks and other considerations such as animal welfare, conservation status and population trends;
- K. whereas the cost of global strategies to prevent pandemics through reducing the illegal wildlife trade, avoiding land-use changes and increasing surveillance is estimated to be between USD 22 billion and USD 31 billion<sup>1</sup>, only a small fraction of the cost incurred by a pandemic;
- L. whereas 19 Member States have supported the Cypriot Government’s position paper on a new EU legislative framework for an EU-wide positive list of animals allowed as pets, which was presented at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting of 24 May 2022;
- M. whereas the EU is a major hub, transit point and destination for legally and illegally sourced specimens of wild fauna and flora, whether living or dead, body parts or products thereof; whereas in 2019, reported import transactions of CITES-protected wildlife into the EU accounted for 36 % of the total volume of imports;
- N. whereas between 2014 and 2018, the EU imported the second-most hunting trophies from CITES-listed wildlife species, following only the United States; whereas an increasing number of European countries are taking or considering steps to ban imports of hunting trophies;
- O. whereas international trade in wild fauna and flora amounts to billions of euros each year and involves millions of such plants and wildlife; whereas wildlife trafficking has

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<sup>1</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization, ‘The State of the World’s Forests 2022 – Forest pathways for green recovery and building inclusive, resilient and sustainable economies’, Rome, 2022.

- become the fourth largest black market, after the drug, people and arms markets; whereas wildlife trafficking offences are often not punished severely enough to act as a deterrent and whereas middle-to-high level actors are rarely prosecuted;
- P. whereas the internet plays a key role in facilitating wildlife trafficking;
- Q. whereas increased efforts to improve transparency and the effective participation of civil society in decision-making are essential;
- R. whereas the EU has a clear role to play to set up constructive collaborations and exchanges between governmental and non-governmental sanctuaries and rescue centres to secure long-term and species-appropriate solutions for seized wildlife;
- S. whereas traditional medicines are among the main CITES-related commodity seizures reported by Member States; whereas the use of wild animals in traditional medicines damages biodiversity, especially when red-listed species are concerned; whereas demand for traditional medicines with animal ingredients is leading to increased illegal trade in wild animals;
- T. whereas pelagic shark populations have dropped by 71 % since 1970, more than 50 % of shark species are threatened or near threatened with extinction<sup>1</sup>, and hunting them for trade in their body parts is one of the main causes of this decline; whereas 20 % of reef shark populations have been found to be functionally extinct; whereas in 2020, EU Member States were the source of over 45 % of all shark fin-related products imported into three major trading centres: Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan;
- U. whereas following population declines across Africa by more than 60 % for African savannah elephants (*Loxodonta africana*) and 86 % for African forest elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) within three generations, in 2021, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) raised the threat level for the African savannah elephant from vulnerable to endangered and separately listed African forest elephants as critically endangered<sup>2</sup>;
- V. whereas poaching for the ivory trade is the main driver of population declines in African elephants; whereas the illegal ivory trade harms economic development, fosters organised crime, promotes corruption and fuels conflicts; whereas ivory trafficking has increased significantly following the introduction of legal sales;
- W. whereas it is forbidden to trade wild tigers; whereas EU wildlife trade regulations nonetheless fail to prevent the trade of captive-bred tigers and their body parts, even though CITES Decision 14.69 on captive-bred and ranched specimens opposes the commercial breeding and trade in tigers for their parts; whereas Member States continue to import and export live tigers and tiger parts registered under the CITES code of commercial trade;

## ***Introduction***

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<sup>1</sup> International Fund for Animal Welfare, ‘Supply and demand: the EU’s role in the global shark trade’, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> IUCN, ‘African elephant species now Endangered and Critically Endangered – IUCN Red List’, 25 March 2021.

1. Underlines the clear need for a more precautionary approach to the protection of wildlife given the continued threat posed by the wildlife trade to individual animals, species, human and animal health and the environment;
2. Calls for increased alignment between CITES and the CBD, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and other biodiversity-related treaties and agreements to effectively achieve international commitments regarding biodiversity conservation;
3. Is concerned that the market for exotic pets and the range of affected species are growing both within the EU and internationally;
4. Stresses that the environmental footprint of the EU's production and consumption should urgently be reduced in order to stay within planetary limits;
5. Underlines that the ecosystem services and resources that forests provide are essential to people around the world; calls for the EU and the Member States to push for the adoption of a CITES resolution on forests at CoP19 to ensure that CITES-listed tree species are properly protected and that any trade in them is only conducted when it is legal, sustainable and traceable;
6. Stresses that engaging women in wildlife conservation is a win-win for gender equality and environmental sustainability and allows more targeted and effective actions to fight against wildlife trafficking; calls on the Commission to partner with the CITES Secretariat to bring gender mainstreaming into CITES and to support gender-sensitive initiatives to influence and address criminal behaviours related to wildlife and wildlife conservation; considers that CITES enforcement, decision-making and implementation should promote gender equality and calls for the EU and the Member States to push for a gender action plan for CITES, which could be introduced through a resolution;

### ***Implementation, compliance and enforcement***

7. Highlights that the 2019 global assessment report of the IPBES on biodiversity and ecosystem services identifies a series of weaknesses in CITES, such as compliance, enforcement, the need for science-based quotas, funding, combating corruption and demand reduction; underlines that these weaknesses should be tackled in order to better implement the convention and urges all parties to work to address these issues thoroughly;
8. Regrets the inadequate enforcement of bans and restrictions on the trade in protected species due to a lack of capacity and resources dedicated by the parties; calls on all parties to step up their enforcement of the convention;
9. Expresses concern that the parties to CITES are not being held accountable for failing to effectively implement the provisions of the convention, including the requirement to base import and export permits on scientifically robust advice that such imports or exports will not be detrimental to the survival of the species (non-detriment findings);
10. Calls for the consistent and impartial application of the instruments provided for in CITES and the decisions taken under it to promote compliance with the convention, including the Compliance Assistance Programme; calls for the EU and all parties to develop measures to ensure adequate and timely compliance with the convention,

including by dedicating the necessary resources to it and by adopting effective national legislation to implement decisions and resolutions adopted in the framework of the convention; calls for mutual cooperation between the parties and for the sharing of best practices;

11. Calls furthermore for the EU and its Member States to adopt strict measures, including dissuasive sanctions, in cases of non-compliance when it is found that a party is undermining the effectiveness of the convention and is not effectively stopping illegal or unsustainable exploitation and trade, and, as a last resort, to suspend trade with the offending party;
12. Calls on all parties to work to ensure protection for whistleblowers, journalists, wildlife rangers and environmental and human rights defenders, who play an essential part in protecting the environment and in putting a stop to the illegal wildlife trade;
13. Insists that transnational wildlife crime should be recognised by all parties as serious organised crime that should be reflected in the allocation of resources and entail the active involvement of specialised police and customs investigation agencies;
14. Underlines the key role of police and customs and urges all EU Member States to establish specialised units focusing on wildlife crime at the national level with mandates covering the whole territory of the state and not limited to certain regions or to any other territorial units; calls on the Member States to mandate that these specialised units actively engage in international cooperation and coordination; stresses that cooperation with the relevant authorities in the Member States on illegal wildlife trade issues could be further revised and strengthened through the EU Enforcement Group, which gathers law enforcement officers from all EU Member States, as well as the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), Eurojust, Interpol, the World Customs Organization and the CITES Secretariat; calls for the EU and its Member States to strengthen law enforcement training on the wildlife trade;
15. Highlights the need for a database of experts in biology and/or ecology, both to identify species and prosecute wildlife crimes, such as poaching, trafficking and illegal exploitation, and to provide law enforcement bodies at local, regional, national and international level with a better understanding of the phenomenon;
16. Stresses the benefits of a database of law enforcement management information systems in the fight against organised crime and the illegal wildlife trade; urges the Commission and the Member States to create an EU-wide database of court cases on environmental crimes, including wildlife crimes, and on the actions carried out in the field of environmental crimes by law enforcement bodies; believes that such a database should allow the centralised collection of data and increase the level of digitalisation and knowledge; notes that reviewing historical cases can be useful for authorities, agencies and organisations in the field;
17. Recalls its resolution of 9 June 2021 entitled ‘EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives’, which called on the Commission to facilitate capacity building, including knowledge transfers, technology sharing and skills training for beneficiary countries to implement CITES and other conventions and agreements essential to the protection of biodiversity under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe and the World Trade

Organization's Aid for Trade initiative; insists on the need to strengthen cooperation programmes with non-EU countries for the conservation of their native biodiversity, including inter-parliamentary dialogue, and to assist developing countries in implementing these programmes;

18. Regrets that the EU is not implementing the CITES recommendations set out in Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev.CoP15) on registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes; is concerned that this creates loopholes and facilitates illegal trade; calls on Member States to fully implement this resolution and register all relevant breeding facilities for these species providing complete and accurate registration applications to both the Commission and the CITES Secretariat; urges the Commission and Member States to oppose any efforts to weaken the system for registration of captive-breeding operations for Appendix-I species;
19. Encourages and supports the implementation of modern and innovative methods to label and track CITES-listed species or derived products in order to allow the differentiation between captive-bred and wild-caught individuals and derivatives;

#### ***Decision-making, transparency and reporting***

20. Welcomes the annual illegal trade reports as a significant step towards developing a better understanding of wildlife trafficking and urges the EU and all parties to submit them in a timely manner; highlights that these reports should include information on permits and certificates granted, quantities and types of specimens and names of species as included in Appendices I, II and III;
21. Urges all parties and the EU to ensure transparency in the CITES Secretariat's non-sensitive activities and operations, including by making the annual illegal trade reports publicly available, and to guarantee that data is uploaded in a timely manner to the CITES trade database, including information on the commissioning of reports, the development of terms of reference and the selection of consultants; urges all parties to make further efforts to ensure that discrepancies in export and import permits are minimised;
22. Considers that more transparency in the commercial trade of Appendix-I species, including captive-bred animals, is key to fighting corruption and the illegal trade, trafficking and laundering of specimens;
23. Calls for better record-keeping for Appendix I, including on specimens bred and kept in captivity and on the development of risk indicators in relation to environmental, security and husbandry practices, such as greater detail on how records are kept, data is managed and reporting is done, how the stock/inventory system is run and how it is audited and secured in terms of transport, storage and disposal;
24. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the Member States to lead efforts to end the commercial trade in endangered species and their parts and its call for the full and immediate ban at European level of the commercial trade, export or re-export of ivory within the EU and to destinations outside the EU, including 'pre-convention' ivory, while pointing out that limited exceptions should remain possible for scientific imports and exports and musical instruments legally acquired before 1975, and for trade in artefacts and antiques produced before 1947, provided that they are accompanied by a

valid certificate; asks for similar restrictions for other endangered species, such as tigers and rhinos; calls for the implementation of such a ban without further delay;

25. Welcomes the amendments to Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006<sup>1</sup> and the revised guidance document on the EU regime governing trade in ivory and urges the Commission to strictly monitor the implementation of the revised regulation by the Member States; calls on the Commission and the Member States to transform these rules into legally binding legislation and to close any remaining loopholes;

### ***Funding***

26. Notes with concern that many CoP18 decisions remain unfunded; calls on all parties to guarantee sufficient funding for the proper implementation of the entire convention, including its enforcement; calls on the Commission and the Member States to increase financial and other support for the implementation of CITES decisions;
27. Highlights that the implementation of many of the CITES decisions is subject to the availability of external funding; calls for the EU and all parties to the convention to explore mechanisms for ensuring that external funding for CITES decisions is consistent with the priorities of their work programmes and that development support granted by the EU to recipient countries does not threaten the viability of wild species, biodiversity, natural habitats, ecosystems and the services they provide;
28. Expresses concern about the increasing workload of the CITES Secretariat, the Conferences of the Parties and the committees in relation to their available resources; calls for the EU to show leadership in addressing this issue; urges, inter alia, all parties to support the robust implementation of draft decisions and recommendations emerging from the CITES Standing Committee;

### ***CITES 2021-2030 strategic vision***

29. Welcomes the recognition of the interlinkages between CITES and the Sustainable Development Goals, the CBD and the IPBES's findings;
30. Believes that the review of the CITES strategic vision should be addressed at CoP19, in the light of the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) to be adopted this year, to ensure that CITES contributes to the implementation of the GBF;
31. Urges the parties to achieve the aim of having only legal and ecologically sustainable trade in wild fauna and flora by 2025; emphasises that the goal should be to eliminate illegal trade in CITES-listed wildlife species, including captive-bred species, not only to reduce it;
32. Stresses that decisions adopted by CITES bodies should be based on scientific criteria aimed at the conservation of species, on the best available scientific information and on the precautionary principle;

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 of 4 May 2006 laying down detailed rules concerning the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein (OJ L 166, 19.6.2006, p. 1).



33. Regrets the omission of the critical issue of animal welfare in the vision statement, calls on the Commission and the Member States and all other parties to address this omission;

***Strengthening the EU's role in the global fight against wildlife trafficking***

34. Regrets the implementation gaps in the EU wildlife trade regulations, as they do not cover all critical species and do not provide the same level of protection for captive-bred animals; urges the Commission to review and expand the existing legislation regulating the wildlife trade to ensure that the import, trans-shipment, export, purchase, sale or transport of wild animals or plants that are taken, possessed, transported or sold in violation of the law of the country of origin or transit is prohibited;
35. Reiterates its call on the Commission and the Member States to lead efforts to end the commercial trade in endangered species and their parts; stresses the importance of developing SMART (spatial monitoring and reporting tool) targets to this end;
36. Emphasises that there should be systemic inclusion of illegal wildlife trade and sustainable consumption in EU trade policy; reiterates its call to the Council to consider the CBD an essential element of free-trade agreements (FTAs) provided that mandatory mechanisms for reviewing national targets are agreed upon<sup>1</sup>; asks the Council to also make CITES and the Paris Agreement essential components of FTAs, and to urge for their effective implementation; highlights the importance of the upcoming reform of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences Regulation<sup>2</sup> in providing for effective implementation of multilateral conventions on climate and environmental aspects covered by the regulation, including the CBD;
37. Urges the Commission to adapt the European TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System) database in order to collect and make publicly available accurate information on the species, volume and origin of all marine ornamental fish in trade and thus monitor this currently unregulated and often unsustainable trade for which the EU is a major import market;
38. Reiterates its call for the EU Member States to establish a science-based EU-wide positive list of animals allowed as pets, under appropriate welfare conditions, without harm to populations in the wild and to European biodiversity; stresses, in this regard, the need for a Commission study to facilitate the adoption of this list, which should be based, among other inputs, on the existing experience of Member States and lessons learned;
39. Urges the Commission and the Member States to take immediate effective action in the framework of its commitments outlined in the EU biodiversity strategy to ban the import of hunting trophies derived from CITES-listed species;
40. Welcomes the EU's efforts to provide development support to anti-wildlife trafficking efforts in developing countries; calls on the Commission to support the efforts of partner countries that are sources of wildlife and wildlife products, transit points, and/or

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 67, 8.2.2022, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) No 978/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 applying a scheme of generalised tariff preferences and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 732/2008 (OJ L 303, 31.10.2012, p. 1).

destinations for sellers and buyers to develop viable economic alternatives for the livelihoods and sustainability of local communities;

***EU action plan against wildlife trafficking***

41. Welcomes the revision and continuation of the EU action plan against wildlife trafficking; calls on the Commission to publish an ambitious EU action plan without delay;
42. Stresses however, that the success of the future EU action plan against wildlife trafficking will largely depend on the allocation of resources; calls therefore on the EU and its Member States to earmark specific budgetary allocations for its implementation;
43. Is of the opinion that the action plan has not provided sufficient impetus to tackle the role of EU citizens in driving demand for illegal wildlife products both at home and in the EU's neighbourhood and believes the EU action plan should be strengthened; calls on the Commission to implement evidence-based demand reduction initiatives in key consumer countries, including those within the EU;
44. Stresses that the EU action plan against wildlife trafficking should receive adequate funding, including assistance to non-EU countries and to wildlife rescue centres and sanctuaries;
45. Believes that the new EU action plan should pave the way for better law enforcement and inspection activities by relevant authorities across the Union, and towards improved data collection and data access, which will enable better trend assessments and risk analysis; calls on the Commission and Member States to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to implement the action plan, and to invest in capacity building and training of enforcement and judicial authorities; underlines that sharing and deepening relevant officials' knowledge and raising public awareness must be made an integral part of the future plan;
46. Calls further on the Commission to create clear and implementable targets and actions as part of the action plan and to develop a clear monitoring and evaluation mechanism;
47. Considers it crucial that the action plan be fully in line with the biodiversity strategy for 2030, and ensure synergies with relevant EU legislation and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; strongly believes that the action plan should identify and focus in particular on priority species and address the issue of nationally protected species illegally traded in the EU;
48. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to tackle both online and offline trade in the revised EU action plan against wildlife trafficking, ensuring that wildlife cybercrime is given the same level of priority as other forms of cybercrime that threaten human health, the environment, the economy, security and education, inter alia, through communication, cooperation and coordination across the public and private sectors

concerned; calls on the Commission to promptly evaluate how the Digital Services Act<sup>1</sup> could act as a tool to address the illegal online trade in animals and plants;

49. Notes that there is evidence that the legal trade in wild animals serves as cover for illegal trade activities, provides abundant laundering opportunities and complicates enforcement; calls on the EU to address both the legal and illegal trade in wild animals in the revision of the EU action plan against wildlife trafficking;
50. Stresses that the action plan should adopt a comprehensive approach from source to consumer;
51. Considers it important that the action plan involve and engage with the private sector to fight against illegal wildlife trafficking, and that sufficient public and private investments be made in research to increase our understanding of the wildlife trade;
52. Emphasises that the revised action plan should integrate human rights and gender, recognise the role of civil society organisations, include stakeholder consultations and ensure public participation;

#### ***Organised crime, cybersecurity and confiscated animals***

53. Urges Member States, through their competent institutions, to build cross-border cooperation and coordination with various relevant international authorities and institutions in order to combat the involvement of organised criminal groups in the illegal trade in wildlife species;
54. Urges the Commission and the Member States to promote the preparation and adoption of an ambitious and effective protocol on environmental crime under the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as referred to in the 2021-2025 EU strategy to tackle organised crime<sup>2</sup>, which would include a provision obliging the parties to criminalise the import of and trade in wildlife that has been taken illegally from its country of origin;
55. Strongly welcomes the proposal for the revision of the Environmental Crime Directive (2008/99/EC) to include most forms of environmental crime offences such that they are punishable by harmonised, dissuasive, effective and proportionate sanctions or penalties;
56. Calls on the Commission to ensure coordination in the implementation of the Environmental Crime Directive, the EU wildlife trade regulations and the revised EU action plan against wildlife trafficking, making the most effective use of the tools offered under the different frameworks;

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<sup>1</sup> Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Single Market For Digital Services (Digital Services Act) and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (COM(2020)0825).

<sup>2</sup> Commission communication of 14 April 2021 on the EU strategy to tackle organised crime 2021-2025 (COM(2021)0170).

57. Calls for the inclusion of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and underwater noise pollution among the listed criminal offences in the revised Environmental Crime Directive;
58. Regrets that animal welfare considerations are absent from the proposal; calls on the Commission to ensure that cruelty against animals is considered as an aggravating circumstance enabling increased penalties under the revised Environmental Crime Directive;
59. Urges the Commission to adopt specific EU guidance to tackle wildlife cybercrime, ensuring harmonised policies in Member States and the collaboration between all relevant stakeholders;
60. Urges the Member States to effectively and fully implement CITES Decisions 18.81-18.85 on wildlife crime linked to the internet, while making full use of Interpol's guidelines entitled 'Wildlife Crime Linked to the Internet - Practical Guidelines for Law Enforcement Practitioners', developed to implement the relevant provisions of CITES Decision 17.93;
61. Urges the EU to promote and support initiatives to significantly increase wildlife rescue and rehabilitation capacity through resources, funding, training and, importantly, the establishment of a network of competent and accredited rescue facilities and sanctuaries and national action plans for the management of confiscated live animals;
62. Notes that lack of national rescue and sanctuary capacity may contribute to the lack of enforcement of relevant provisions related to the wildlife trade by a Member State and may result in measures inadequate to deter wildlife crime; considers that the revised Environmental Crime Directive could, for example, include rules for the management of the confiscated profits, including appropriate care of confiscated live animals;
63. Underlines the importance of undertaking financial investigations and asset recovery procedures systematically; calls on the EU and its Member States to support measures aimed at seizing disruptive illicit financial flows and the proceeds of wildlife crime;
64. Calls on Member States to implement and promote consistent and transparent reporting on all seized or confiscated live animals to CITES, Europol and the countries of origin;

***One Health approach and role of CITES in reducing the risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with the international wildlife trade***

65. Recalls that according to IPBES, 70 % of emerging diseases and pandemics are of animal origin; expresses, not least in view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, its deep concern about the increasingly frequent emergence and spread of zoonotic diseases that are transferred from animals to humans (anthropozoonoses), which is exacerbated by climate change, environmental degradation, land-use changes, deforestation, the destruction of and pressure on biodiversity and natural habitats, illegal trafficking of wild animals, and unsustainable food production and consumption patterns; underlines the need to improve knowledge about the links between disease emergence on the one hand and the legal and illegal wildlife trade, conservation and ecosystem degradation on the other;

66. Points out that the risk of pandemics can be significantly lowered by reducing human activities that drive biodiversity loss and that the estimated cost of reducing the risk of pandemics is 100 times lower than the cost of responding to them; stresses that it is of the utmost importance to protect and restore wildlife habitats to prevent another pandemic of animal origin; urges all parties to step up their efforts;
67. Urges the EU and all other parties to ensure the welfare of live animals in trade as well as those held in breeding facilities, recognising scientific evidence that poor welfare conditions in holding, transport and trade are linked to the outbreak and spread of diseases and thus threaten both animal and human health; stresses the benefit of an EU-wide positive list of animals allowed as pets in this regard;
68. Calls on the Commission to use the regulatory dialogues provided for in FTAs to promote stringent EU sanitary, phytosanitary and animal welfare standards in order to minimise the risk of future epidemics and pandemics; calls further on the Commission to consider, if necessary, the adoption of a moratorium on imports of wild animals or other species from emerging infectious disease hotspots in order to address any safety concerns;
69. Emphasises the important role that CITES should play in preventing future pandemics as the international wildlife trade regulator;
70. Underlines the World Health Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the United Nations Environment Programme guidance calling on national competent authorities to suspend the trade in live caught wild animals of mammalian species for food or breeding purposes and close sections of food markets selling live caught wild animals of mammalian species as an emergency measure unless demonstrable effective regulations and adequate risk assessment are in place and underlines the IPBES recommendations to remove live species in wildlife trade that are identified by expert review as being a high risk for the emergence of disease; calls on the Commission and the EU Member States to support the global community in addressing the commercial trade and sale in markets of live wildlife for human consumption, particularly birds and mammals, with a view to phasing out this trade as a key step towards achieving the goal of preventing future pandemics of zoonotic origin;
71. Underlines the important role of the Commission and Member States in coordinating and supporting the 'One Health' approach in the EU and advocating it at all international forums; calls for the urgent adoption of a new resolution that encourages parties to institutionalise a 'One Health' approach to wildlife use and trade, using the operational definition of One Health developed by the One Health High-Level Expert Panel, when implementing the convention and in their national laws, and to undertake appropriate risk analyses and prevention programmes with respect to animal, human and environmental health when considering applications for wildlife trade-related permits and certificates;
72. Notes with concern that significant quantities of meat from domestic and wild animals are still smuggled into Member States by air passengers, posing risks to animal and human health and biodiversity; calls on the Commission to step up data collection on this issue with the Member States and to support and coordinate an EU response to illegal meat imports;

73. Welcomes CITES's intention to work with the OIE to develop a joint programme of work to collaboratively fill knowledge gaps and identify effective and practical solutions for reducing pathogen spill-over risks in wildlife supply chains; encourages CITES to continue strengthening active collaboration with other international organisations and conventions involved in zoonotic disease prevention taking a 'One Health' approach;
74. Recalls the importance of indigenous peoples' and local community engagement in relation to species conservation and the implementation of the convention; recognises the dependence of some communities on CITES-listed species for their livelihoods; regrets that a certain level of recognition of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) is lacking in CITES, contrary to CBD; considers that CITES meetings would benefit from greater representation of IPLCs and participation by them, and regrets the lack of progress made so far; urges the parties and the Secretariat to continue the work to define and implement effective mechanisms to ensure that IPLCs' voices are heard;
75. Calls on the World Health Organization to take a stance against the use of wild animals in medicines, in particular against the use of species classified as (near) threatened, vulnerable or endangered on the IUCN red list;

#### ***Amendments to the CITES appendices***

76. Expresses its strong support for the listing proposals submitted by the EU and its Member States to amend the appendices to CITES;
77. Calls on the EU Member States to support proposals to CoP19 to list species or to move them from Appendix II to Appendix I that are put forward or supported by range countries;
78. Calls on the EU Member States and all other parties to support proposals submitted to CoP19 to better protect reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and mammals that are threatened by the international trade for the pet market, acknowledging that the market for exotic pets and the range of affected species are growing both within the EU and internationally;
79. Calls for the EU and all parties to CITES to adhere to the precautionary principle with regard to species protection in all their formal positions on working documents and listing proposals, and to take full account, in particular, of the user-pays principle, the principle of preventive action, the principle of the best available scientific information and the ecosystem approach;
80. Urges the EU to call for a revision of Resolution Conf. 9.21 (Rev. CoP18) on the interpretation and application of quotas for species included in Appendix I, to increase the frequency with which quotas of these species, which have the highest level of protection under the appendices, are reviewed, since the current timeframe of nine years (three intersessional periods) is too long;
81. Supports the recommendations to strengthen the protection and conservation of species, including sharks and rays, marine turtles, seahorses, big cats, elephants, Tibetan antelope and saiga antelope;

82. Urges the EU to support the establishment of a transparent and inclusive process for a further comprehensive, time-bound review of Resolution Conf. 10.21 on the transport of live specimens and the associated CITES guidance on non-air transport; calls for the constitution of a joint working group on the transport of animals and plants committee with a mandate to manage the regular review of the guidelines and to develop amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.21 (Rev. CoP16), to improve detailed transport requirements clarifying responsibilities for compliance, and to review their implementation by the parties;
83. Calls on the EU and its Member States to support the adoption of a decision proposed by the Standing Committee to reconvene the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force, highlighting the fact that poaching and illegal trade in rhinoceros horn remain major threats to the survival of African and Asian rhinoceroses;

### ***Species-specific matters***

#### *Sharks and rays*

84. Underlines that sharks and rays play a key role in keeping ocean life healthy and that new research released since CITES CoP18 now shows that 37 % of shark and ray species are already threatened with extinction, which is the second-highest rate among all vertebrate groups after amphibians<sup>1</sup>; highlights that one of the primary drivers of these declines is the international trade in their products and that the EU is a major exporter of, and trader in, shark parts and products;
85. Regrets that to date only 25 % of species affected by the fin trade are listed in CITES Appendix II; urges the EU to ask the Secretariat, Standing Committee and CITES parties to further explore and address the worrying and critical mismatch identified in SC74 Doc. 67.2 between the catch and trade levels of CITES-listed shark species and to identify potential sources of underreporting or illegal trade in CITES-listed shark species;
86. Welcomes, therefore, the Commission proposal for a Council decision which includes an Appendix II proposal that would bring the entire family of hammerhead sharks under the CITES regulation;
87. Urges the EU, which plays a key role in global shark fisheries and trade, to support the proposal led by the host country of CoP19, Panama, to list requiem sharks (family *Carcharhinidae*) in Appendix II, with the rest of the family *Carcharhinidae* qualifying to be included as lookalike species due to the similarity in their appearance;

#### *Big cats*

88. Recognises that some of the big cat species are among the most endangered CITES species, with populations continuing to decline to the point of recent national-level extinctions, and that the conservation of, and trade in, CITES big cat species has suffered from a lack of attention and financial support comparative to other CITES matters;

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<sup>1</sup> IUCN Species Survival Commission – Shark Specialist Group, ‘New Global Study Finds Unprecedented Shark and Ray Extinction Risk’, 6 September 2021.

89. Urges the EU to establish a big cat species conservation fund that would, inter alia, support the implementation of CITES big cat species-specific resolutions and decisions and the implementation of time-bound, country-specific recommendations and the CITES big cat task force outcomes and outputs;
90. Urges further the EU to ensure that the CITES Secretariat takes a risk-based approach to the implementation of the CITES missions to countries with captive Asian big cat facilities of concern;
91. Notes with great concern that all five species of the *Panthera* genus (tiger, lion, jaguar, leopard, and snow leopard) have an unfavourable conservation status varying from 'near threatened' to 'endangered' while their populations are decreasing;
92. Urges all the parties to prohibit commercial trade, without exception, in the five species of the *Panthera* genus (tigers, lions, jaguars, leopards and snow leopards); calls, furthermore, on the Member States to prohibit captive breeding of these species by private entities, other than licensed zoos, as this can facilitate their illicit trade;
93. Points out that the legal commercial trade in captive-bred species such as tigers and other big cats is highly detrimental as it stimulates demand, complicates enforcement, and provides abundant laundering opportunities;
94. Calls for the closure of tiger farms and for an end of all commercial trade in captive-bred tigers and their parts;
95. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and all CITES parties to ensure that the African lion is included in Appendix I to give it optimal protection status and calls for a crackdown on the illegal trade in the African lion, which is mainly with Asian countries;

#### *Elephants*

96. Calls on the Commission to fully support and actively advocate the inclusion of all African elephant populations in Appendix I of CITES and to oppose moving any elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II;
97. Calls on the Commission and Member States to support the development of a simple and unified legal framework on the trade in live African elephants caught in the wild, limiting exports to *in situ* conservation programmes or secure areas in the wild, within the species' natural and historical range in Africa;
98. Highlights the position of the African elephant range states belonging to the African Elephant Coalition and of the IUCN Species Survival Commission – African Elephant Specialist Group, which do not endorse the removal of African elephants from the wild for any captive use;
99. Urges the EU to highlight the poor ongoing implementation of all provisions of CITES Decisions 18.226 and 18.227, and to strongly encourage all the parties to address these provisions in full, while being cognizant of commitments by several Asian elephant range states to implement more secure systems of registration, marking and tracing of live Asian elephants;



100. Urges the closure of all remaining legal domestic ivory markets, such as that in Japan, as a matter of urgency and calls on the EU and all the parties to oppose any proposals seeking to remove restrictions on the trade in ivory;
101. Calls on the Commission and Member States to require increased transparency and improved management of ivory stocks and stockpiles, and encourage their destruction;
102. Calls on the EU to follow up its suggestion to the 74th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee and ensure inclusion in Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) reports, including the report to be submitted to CoP19, of an analysis of ivory seizures connected to each party with legal domestic markets for the commercial trade in ivory, and to request the CITES Secretariat to use information collected via the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE), ETIS and the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process to conduct an analysis of where the largest undeclared stockpiles are likely to exist;
103. Urges the EU and its Member States to support recommending a review of the NIAP process to ensure it remains fit for purpose, and calls for further efforts by the parties concerned under the NIAP process on ivory stockpiles;
104. Calls on the EU to ensure that the ETIS remains the robust mechanism and information source on trends in illegal ivory trade that it has proven to be for over two decades;

#### *Other species*

105. Calls for the EU and all the parties to:
  - support proposals to list the common hippopotamus, *Hippopotamus amphibius*, in Appendix I, given the ongoing concerns over population declines and trade in the species;
  - support proposals to include additional turtle species in the CITES appendices, including those in the genera *Kinosternon*, *Claudius* and *Staurotypus*;
  - support the proposal led by Costa Rica with support from other range states to list glass frogs (family *Centrolenidae*) on Appendix II of CITES to ensure that trade in these species is legal and sustainable;
  - urge Botswana to report on any activities it is implementing to address rhinoceros poaching and illegal trade under Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.CoP17) on conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses, given the serious concerns over the increase in rhinoceros poaching in Botswana since CoP18;
  - advance decisions and/or amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.10 on conservation of and trade in pangolins to encourage those parties with domestic markets to take all measures to close those markets and to destroy their pangolin stockpiles;
  - advance decisions that hold Mexico to account for its failure to prevent illegal fishing and trade in *Totoaba macdonaldi*, an Appendix I listed species, which is driving the vaquita (*Phocoena sinus*) to extinction, including consideration of a suspension in the commercial trade of CITES-listed species consistent with Res. Conf. 14.3;

106. Calls on Hong Kong and China to step up their border controls to stop imports of totoaba, mainly destined for China;

107. Urges all the parties to prohibit the trade in totoaba completely;

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108. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and its Secretariat.