



World Wildlife Day 2022

Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration

A contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)

CONCEPT NOTE

In 2022, World Wildlife Day (WWD) will draw attention to the critical role that keystone species – many of which are threatened or endangered – play in ensuring ecosystem health. It will explore why actions to protect individual species and to revive entire ecosystems must go hand-in-hand, highlight recent success stories, and discuss challenges and solutions for the future.

Under the theme *“Recovering key species for ecosystem restoration,”* the World Wildlife Day celebration will serve as a contribution to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It will provide inspiration for scaling up conservation efforts in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Goals 1 (*No Poverty*), 2 (*Zero hunger*), 12 (*Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*), 13 (*Climate Action*), 14 (*Life Below Water*) and 15 (*Life on Land*).

According to data from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, over 8,400 species of wild fauna and flora are critically endangered, while close to 30,000 more are understood to be endangered or vulnerable. In 2019, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) published its Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which found that a quarter of species on Earth already face the threat of extinction. Global ecosystems had declined by nearly half, relative to their earliest estimated states. These losses are being driven by a variety of factors, including but not limited to changes in how people use both land and sea, hunting and harvesting, pollution and climate change.

World Wildlife Day 2022 will therefore drive the debate towards the imperative need to reverse the fate of the most critically endangered species, to support the restoration of their habitats and ecosystems and to promote their sustainable use by humans.

The Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other UN system organizations, Member States, and civil society will unroll a series of virtual events and social media activities around World Wildlife Day on 3 March 2022.

The CITES Secretariat and UNDP are collaborating with Jackson WILD to organize a World Wildlife Day Film Showcase to put the spotlight on the status of the world’s most vulnerable species of wild fauna and flora

and that of their ecosystems, and on the efforts underway to conserve and restore these. The winning films will be highlighted during the WWD2022 events.

The CITES Secretariat is also teaming up with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to organize a WWD2022 International Youth Art Contest.
