

Cerritos Fall Conference 2019

UNTOC



Topic: Wildlife and Forest Crime

Director: Emma Yang

October 12, 2019

To Delegates of Cerritos Novice 2019 Conference

Dear Delegates,
Welcome to Cerritos Novice 2019!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our annual novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host another year of this long-standing conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2019, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. With 31 high school committees and 2 middle school committees, CHSMUN 2019 will provide a quality experience for beginners to learn, develop, and grow as delegates.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2019!

Sincerely,

Brianna Roldan and Tess U-Vongcharoen

Secretary-Generals

UNTOC

Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime

A Note From the Director

Delegates,

My name is Emma Yang, and it is my pleasure to serve as the director UNTOC committee this year! Currently, I am a senior attending Cerritos High School, and though I didn't do MUN in middle school, I have done so for three years now in high school. This program really improved my confidence as a speaker as well as my debate and research skills; I'm glad that I will be able to share this experience with you all. Hopefully, this conference is the kickstart to a wonderful journey filled with learning and fun because though it may seem intimidating at first, it becomes a part of who you are. Be confident in your speaking abilities and don't be afraid to make mistakes! I'm absolutely thrilled to hear the substantive debate that you will bring!

Sincerely,

Emma Yang

Director, UNTOC

Committee Introduction:

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) is the main body against transnational crime within the United Nations, specifically the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). On November 15, 2000, this treaty was established as formal resolution 55/25 by the General Assembly, and it later was signed by member nations in December 15 later that year. By September 29, 2003, UNTOC was officially made effective and headed by three main goals: "the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition." (2) By endorsing this resolution, member nations are expected to adopt certain frameworks on preventing corruption and to address problems regarding money laundering and lack of organization within law enforcement. This can be shown through the partnership with Global Initiative to create the UNTOC Watch that surveils and reports on how organized crime is being tackled across the world to create more effective strategies for the UN in the future. (13)

Background:

The third most lucrative illegal industry in the globe, illicit wildlife and forest trade, totaled \$91 billion in 2016, compared to \$70 billion in 2014. This was 26% higher than predictions, showing the rapid growth in the demand of these goods. Seeing as only \$20-30 million is used for addressing wildlife crime, the money lost to this business is 10,000 times more than the money fighting it. Though a serious crime, wildlife and forest trafficking has not been addressed to the proper extent with only 11% of occasions involving the seizure of illegal products have investigated further after being recognized. (14) Reasons for the popularity of this trade can be due to the medicinal use seen in the horns, tusks, or shells of animals or the decoration in jewelry that these animals can offer. This can be seen in the decline of thousands of animal populations, with rhinos and elephants dropping 30% each year and pangolins experiencing as much as an 80% decline as one of the most trafficked animals. From 1970 to 2000, 90% of all rhinoceroses were killed, with only five out of thirty species remaining and roughly 1,000 rhinos killed each year. (8) Furthermore, elephant ivory has been priced around \$850 per kilogram in Asia and jumping to almost \$2,100 in China, leading to the decline of 95% of the elephant population within the last five years. The eight countries most involved in illegal ivory trade are Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, where 87% of all ivory smuggling takes place. (16)

Another aspect of wildlife trafficking includes illegal fishing, which not only prompts overfishing, but increases the rate of degradation of marine ecosystems and harms the livelihoods of those who rely on fishing to survive. In light of maritime disputes occurring in the South China Sea and off the coasts of African countries, 25% of all fish sold in the regions were caught illegally with an estimated \$36.4 billion lost each year due to illegal fishing. The increased demand for fish has led to illegal catching to endorse in the overfishing of certain species, including the yellowfin, albacore, skipjack tuna, bluefin tuna, and bigeye tuna within oceans across the world. Populations of Atlantic, Pacific, and Southern bluefin tuna in particular have declined dramatically due to illegal fishing in the past decades because of the rising requests within Asian markets and cuisine according to the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation. (7)

Forest crime is another major factor in the illicit trade of the world's flora and fauna, and it is defined as the illegal logging and trade of timber, which is responsible for over 100 million cubic meters of wood being sold illegally each year. This industry that makes \$17 billion in profits from East Asia alone results in deforestation and destruction of habitats and diversity within ecosystems, as well as impacting climate change on a large scale. Seeing as eight out of ten species that live on land reside in the forest and nearly 300 million people depend on them for food, shelter, and resources, the increased loss of natural forest is unacceptable. (6)

United Nations Involvement:

A steady rise in the relevancy of wildlife and forest crime within the past half century has caused the United Nations to take action to improve countries' abilities to prevent and respond to traffickers. Under the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) created the Wildlife and Forest Analytic Toolkit to observe and record infractions under passed legislation, analyze the supply and

demand chain for illegal products, and discuss strategies to halt trafficking in local communities. Already in place in South Asia and Africa, this government-led toolkit caters towards the specific needs and requests of each government, drawing attention from countries across Central Asia and Africa. However, as this toolkit doesn't have an enforcing mechanism, it's difficult to impose regulations in areas where trafficking is the most prevalent. (9) Furthermore, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is a UN agency providing standards to protect more than 36,000 species and regulate proper international trade measures. In 2017, UNODC conducted a wildlife crime report in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering under CITES that investigates the supply chain for wildlife crime and the potential indicators of crime within case studies in countries like Vietnam.

The 13th UN Crime Congress in Doha, Qatar on April 13th, 2015 was one of the earliest calls for wildlife and forest trafficking to be considered a serious crime with its respective punishments, which was highlighted under the Doha Declaration. This document aimed to putting an end to illicit trade of flora and fauna through law enforcement as shown in the case study of Nepal, where there was zero poaching in specified endangered species in 2011, 2014, and 2015 through the Wildlife Crime Control Coordination Committee and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau. (3) Seeing as trafficking of animals and plants yields some of the most profits compared to other illegal industries, the Global Environment Facility has partnered with the UNDP to create the Global Wildlife Program, which manages the criminal market trading chains through a \$131 million grant program across 19 countries. For example, \$6 million was dedicated to Botswana for creating stronger governance guidelines to support proper land usage and increase criminal justice regulations, and another \$15.8 million was granted to Mozambique for protecting animals within the Gorongosa National Park region. (9) However, it is still clear that more action needs to be taken in order to eliminate this issue.

Bloc Positions:

African Bloc: This bloc contains three of the eight countries that have the most illicit ivory trade, with the countries being Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. The prevalence of wildlife trade has steadily increased as the prices of animal prices on the black market increases, and averaging at one hundred African Elephants being poached each day, there were 25,000 killed in 2011 and 33,000 killed in 2012. (16) In order to address this issue, nineteen member states in the African Bloc attended the Symposium on Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Combat Wildlife Crime in Central and West Africa from September 11 to 12 in 2018. This meeting was in conjunction with the UN in order to create stronger penalties for those criminally accountable for illicit wildlife and forest trade and to facilitate smoother legal trade. Not only was it an opportunity to raise awareness but also to draft legislation that was ratified in some countries later. (12)

Asian-Pacific Bloc: The Asian-Pacific Bloc is perhaps the most affected region for wildlife and forest crime, seeing as the majority of trafficking occurs within this region. For example, the price of one kilogram of rhino horn in India alone was \$10,111, but the costs skyrocketed to around \$65,000 on the black market. (4) Furthermore, countries within this bloc partake in active deforestation and have a rising demand for certain fish within their markets and diet. Therefore,

this bloc has been active with its involvement with the United Nations to curb this problem, as shown through the UNODC's Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime. Under this, seven Asian-Pacific countries received UN aid and reform, some being a Thai criminal justice system and intercountry smuggling case in Laos. (1)

Latin American and Caribbean Bloc: Deforestation has become a rising issue within this bloc, with a 17% loss of the Amazon forest cover within the past fifty years. (6) The lack of communication between the local, state, and federal governments of countries with the international community has set up many countries in this bloc with a weak strategy to combat this issue. To address this, the Corruption and Economic Crime Branch (CEB) works to predict and pinpoint patterns of trafficking and smuggling through conducting and analyzing research within countries in Central and Southern America and the Caribbean. CEB also provides training and assistance to combat corruption of governments linked to wildlife and forest crime in economic-related crimes like money laundering and fraud. (11)

Western Bloc: The European Union has become a popular place to transfer wildlife products to other parts of the world, especially in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany, where 70% of all seizures occurred. (15) Though recently the amount of trafficking has been relatively stable, the European Commission created the EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking, setting aside three main priorities to address this issue. In the 2018 progress report, it was noted that the EU created the EU Enforcement Group to deal with traffickers breaking the law as well as ratifying stricter trade rules for endangered flora and fauna for not only the EU, but Europol, CITES, and Interpol as well. (5)

Basic Solutions:

First and foremost, the topic of wildlife and forest crime is incredibly multi-faceted, and there are a broad range of potential solutions to address. With poaching levels rising, a prominent issue to focus on would be the rapid deterioration of biodiversity within many regions of the world. Seeing as many environments are very fragile and dependent on certain species, the loss of habitat or the removal of one animal could potentially destroy the entirety of the ecosystem. Because of this, delegates should focus on solutions that address the direct protection of species, whether through field work or legislation ratification.

Furthermore, the issue of corruption within governments and lack of enforced legislation should be discussed to incorporate solutions that involve international cooperation. For instance, the Wildlife Crime Initiative (WCI) is focused on preventing corruption through the 3C Network, or the Countering Conservation-related Corruption Strategy, which raises awareness within governments, strengthens and enforces legislation, and advocates for no immunity from punishment for aggressors of corruption. Their Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species (ROUTES) Partnership secured a \$4.9 million grant to cutting off trafficking routes by expanding operations for transportation personnel to aid government and encourage the collaboration of different corporations to enact the proper standards against wildlife trafficking in industrial sectors. (10).

Finally, the feasibility of surveillance and monitoring to prevent trafficking should be debated to include technological solutions as well as non-technological solutions. Another part of

the WCI that serves as an example for committee was the Zero-Poaching Toolkit, which is an online tool for governments that includes training frameworks and enforcement aid to promote anti-trafficking with the support of twenty-eight organizations. Under this toolkit, WCI has worked with RF Mesh Networks to combine the use of technology with the physical rescue of animals to improve the management of patrols and increase animal security in 59 locations across the globe. (17)

When considering wildlife crime, marine life must be protected as well, and therefore delegates should address illegal transport of fish and overfishing. This would include monitoring fisheries and their harvesting techniques along with the amount of fish being harvested. To address the illegal transport of lumber, delegates should consider solutions that address deforestation and illegal logging, whether it is through monitoring forest or providing incentives to stop such actions. The UN views wildlife and forest exploitation to be a heinous crime, and therefore has taken action against smugglers of animal and plant products. With this being said, it is highly encouraged for all countries to attempt reaching a zero poaching goal by increasing security locally, nationally, and internationally through unique solutions to create a multi-faceted debate.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can countries create a more thorough and effective legal framework to address wildlife and forest crime?
2. What incentives can be provided to countries that rely on illegal logging or fishing for income to stop condoning such illicit trade?
3. To what effect does technological tools play in the monitoring and surveillance of both potential poachers and countries preventing wildlife smuggling?
4. Seeing as many products are smuggled between countries, in what ways can border security be strengthened between hotspot transport countries?
5. How can the international community improve its effectiveness in addressing wildlife and forest crime since many of the regulations aren't properly respected and enforced?

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