

083 Urgent action to prevent illegal succulent plant trade

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the rapid escalation in the number of species, volumes and new regions being impacted by the illegal trade in succulent plant species since 2019;

CONSCIOUS of the growing global demand for succulent plant species and that most of the recent increases are the result of newly developing markets which are easily accessed through online e-commerce and social media platforms;

MINDFUL OF the global scope of this problem, affecting a wide array of species across geographies and that slow-growing, rare and range-restricted species harvested from arid biodiversity hotspots are being targeted for international trade;

ALARMED by the results of initial research of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Succulent Plant Illegal Trade Task Force which has found that ~878 species have been confiscated between 2022 and 2024, and that ongoing illegal trafficking of plant species is leading to global and local extinctions particularly of restricted range taxa;

RECALLING Resolution 7.040 *Implementing international efforts to combat the sale of illegal wildlife products online* (Marseille, 2020), progress on which has referred to digital marketplaces continuing to present a large challenge due to the huge scale and relative anonymity, and that regulation and enforcement efforts are not sufficient to address the problem;

NOTING that while many succulents are listed on the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendices, resulting regulations are challenging to enforce with online trade, which has additionally led to changing market demands by targeting species not yet included in the Appendices;

CONCERNED that succulent plant trade is poorly understood, particularly with regards to the online trade and supply chains; and

RECOGNISING United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 69/314 *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife*, adopted on 30 July 2015, which encourages Member States to adopt effective measures to prevent and combat the serious problem posed by environmental crime;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. REQUESTS the Director General, in collaboration with the Commissions and its Members, to support efforts to eliminate the illegal trade of succulent plant species by:

- a. assisting SSC in an analysis of online trade and mapping global supply chains;
- b. developing and implementing recommendations to understand and prevent the illegal online trade of succulent plants; and
- c. facilitating co-creation of protocols with e-commerce and social media companies to deal with the issue of illegal plant trade; improving detection and response to illegally acquired succulent plants advertised on their sites; preventing their sale; and increasing awareness on the illegality of the trade; and

2. CALLS ON IUCN Members in consumer, transit and source countries to:

- a. strengthen regulation through enforcement of CITES and national legislation relating to trade in succulent plant species;
- b. gain information on import and export of succulent plant species via increased collaboration with e-commerce and social media companies;
- c. provide technical support for efforts to reduce illegal plant trade;

d. develop partnerships between consumer countries and countries of origin for the sustainable supply of succulent species for trade, and establish agreements under the Nagoya Protocol to share benefits arising from the use of plant genetic resources; and

e. promote legislation requiring e-commerce and social media platforms to take responsibility for combating illegal wildlife trade.