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**DIALOGUE ON PLASTICS POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE
PLASTICS TRADE**

STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN)

Pre-Plenary Meeting – 23 November 2023

DOCUMENT DE SÉANCE NON OFFICIEL¹

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* In Original language only/En langue originale seulement/En el idioma original solamente.

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Dear Excellencies:

We applaud the WTO Dialogue on Plastic Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade for its proposal of a draft statement for MC-13 and greatly appreciate the opportunity to address these comments in the hopes of building further bridges between the ongoing Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (ILBI) and the WTO. We offer is intervention as a complement to the IUCN written submission.

The IUCN highlights the importance of the intersections between the WTO and the INC process leading to the ILBI. In particular, the draft statement provides an opportunity to reiterate that the inclusion of issues such as subsidies as part of the ILBI would offer coherence with existing WTO laws. As seen during INC-3 last week, a clear statement of the ability of the ILBI and the WTO regimes to coexist and complement each other is crucial to the creation of a strong ILBI in law and in practice.

The draft statement should serve as a clear recognition of the triple planetary crisis and trade as a cross-cutting element of addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, especially plastic pollution. As the IUCN submission suggests, the addition of language recognizing the connections between trade, plastic pollution and biodiversity protection is essential. So too are terms that reflect the need for the compilation addressing "environmental, social and health impacts" to specify that this includes "environmental health, biodiversity health and human health." References to the Convention on Biological Diversity and, especially, to the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework should also be included in the preamble and core elements of the draft statement. These include the potential use of environmental and biodiversity criteria for assessments of substitutes and alternatives to plastics.

Finally, the IUCN wishes to emphasize the role of just transitions in all aspects of addressing plastic pollution, including in trade and associated practices. For this reason, our submission suggests the inclusion of connections with just transitions across the full life-cycle of plastics, with nature positive systems and trade practices, and nature-based solutions as part of the shared principles section.

Again, we thank you for the chance to participate in this vital dialogue and stand ready to provide the expertise in protecting nature that the IUCN has honed over the course of its 75-year history.
