



PRESS BRIEF Wednesday 19 August 2020

CO-OP BANK JOINS GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

Co-operative Bank of Kenya is delighted to join the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in the fight against Illegal Wildlife Trafficking by signing the *United for Wildlife 2018 Mansion House Declaration*. The signing up means the bank has now joined the **United for Wildlife's (UfW) Financial Taskforce** committing to fight the illegal trafficking in wildlife, by way of building illegal wildlife trade into existing financial crime compliance programs. In addition, Co-op Bank also commits to also work with other financial institutions to share good practices and support one another in fighting illegal trade in wildlife.

United for Wildlife Taskforce is fighting to save the endangered species like elephants, rhinos, tigers and pangolins. The Royal Foundation is spearheaded by the Duke of Cambridge.

As a signatory to the UfW Financial Taskforce, Co-op Bank joins other global banks including HSBC, Royal Bank of Scotland, Bank of America, and JPMorgan and others that have committed to contribute to the global fight against Illegal Wildlife Trafficking.

On 21st January 2020, H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta spoke at the United for Wildlife Taskforce meeting at St. James's Palace in London hosted by the Duke of Cambridge. He talked about the important and urgent work of the Taskforces in the larger context of Kenya's and the world's efforts to stop poaching and wildlife trafficking and support conservation.

The financial taskforce was initiated in London on 10 October 2018 and has since grown to a network of more than thirty financial institutions across the globe. The taskforce also includes partners in government and not-for-profit sector players who support the recognition that treating illegal wildlife trade as a significant financial crime, and one that has substantial overlap with other serious transnational organized crime, will make a difference in fighting the loss of some of the world's most iconic species.

The United for Wildlife (UfW) Mansion House Declaration is a set of six commitments developed by the financial industry to help them take action against global wildlife trafficking. By signing the Declaration, Co-operative bank is committing to take measures to increase awareness of the Illegal Wildlife Trade and the role of the financial industry in combating it. The bank will be providing training to relevant staff within financial crime compliance functions to enhance their ability to identify and investigate potentially suspicious activity that may be related to the illegal trade. In addition, Co-op Bank will utilize current suspicious activity reporting mechanisms to provide intelligence related to potential illegal wildlife trade activity to the relevant regulatory body or law enforce agencies as permitted by law. The bank will review



intelligence reports received in the financial taskforce and take appropriate steps to identify, investigate and report potentially suspicious financial activity related to the illegal trade.

When signing the Declaration, Co-operative Bank Group Managing Director & CEO, Dr. Gideon Muriuki affirmed the bank's commitment to wildlife conservation and sustainability. He observed that the bank has for a long time been associated with the elephant as a symbol of strength and humbleness, "Co-op Bank cards are well known in this industry as the '*elephant in your wallet*', while our *Jumbo Junior* children service has the '*elebank*', short for 'elephant bank' given to children to encourage them to save. Co-op Bank has the strongest association with elephants of any financial brand in Kenya."

"Our majestic wildlife heritage is God's gift to this nation and for generations to come, and our noble responsibility is to take care of it for them." He added.

On behalf of the UfW IWT Financial Taskforce, the Chairman, Lord Hague of Richmond said,

"The Taskforce secretariat and the Taskforce partners look forward to supporting you as our newest member. The potential rewards are significant: by improving the detection and disruption of IWT, we will make a difference in fighting the loss of some of the world's most iconic species," he added.

Co-op Bank has a sustained commitment to sustainability and was named Overall Winner of the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) 2019 Sustainable Finance Catalyst Award. The Awards recognize institutions that practice sustainable finance which has a direct positive impact on the financial sector, the economy, the environment and the society. The bank was also named Best Bank in Sustainable Finance in Kenya at the 2019 Energy Management Awards hosted by the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, and also feted as Overall Winner in Environmental Sustainability Reporting at the 2019 East African Financial Reporting (FiRe) Awards.

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For more information (press only);

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