

136 Addressing the direct exploitation of wild species

MINDFUL of the dire warnings in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) 2019 Global Assessment Report that about one million plant and animal species are threatened with extinction, many within decades, and more than ever before in human history, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2024 Synthesis Report that we are exceeding tipping points where cascading damage could occur, along with other scientific papers highlighting the risk that the biodiversity crisis poses for humanity;

NOTING that the [over]exploitation of wild species is the second leading driver of the crisis terrestrially and the leading driver in the ocean, affecting food security, climate regulation, healthy fish stocks and fresh water, along with local livelihoods and sustainable development, and poses risks to human health, due to pathogen spillover;

WELCOMING global efforts to promote ambition and take action to address the top drivers of biodiversity loss, such as habitat loss, climate change and pollution;

ACKNOWLEDGING, however, the need to focus similar high-level attention on the [over] exploitation of wild species and the role it plays in fuelling the biodiversity crises, and to take urgent action;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the sustainable use of wild species is critical for people and nature and that ensuring the sustainability of the use of wild species, including by promoting sustainable use, is critical to reverse the global trend in biodiversity decline;

WELCOMING the IPBES global assessments and its recommendations for approaches to sustainability that emphasise equitable, rights-based governance and the role of sustainable use in supporting biodiversity outcomes;

WELCOMING Goal A of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to halt human induced extinction and, by 2050, reduce the risk of extinction, along with targets to recover threatened species and [ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal] [preventing overexploitation, minimising impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spill-over, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by Indigenous peoples and Local communities];

ACKNOWLEDGING the ongoing work under treaties such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), among others, to address the overexploitation of wild species;

[alt1. CONCERNED that for species that are or may be affected by unsustainable exploitation, protection under relevant agreements may not be sufficiently implemented and enforced, and that significant time lags occur before appropriate actions are taken;]

[alt2. CONCERNED that hundreds or thousands of species that are or may be affected by unsustainable exploitation are not sufficiently protected under relevant agreements such as CITES and CMS, that significant time lags occur before appropriate actions are taken to effectively protect such species, and that relevant agreements may not be sufficiently implemented and enforced for species that are appropriately protected under such agreements;]

CONSIDERING that the IPBES Report recommended the effective implementation of biodiversity-related agreements as a key step in the transformative change needed; and

RECALLING IUCN Resolution 3.075 5 *Applying the Precautionary Principle in environmental decision-making and management* (Bangkok, 2004), and Resolutions 5.118 *A significant role for IUCN in the Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)* and 5.117 *Operationalization of the Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)* (both adopted in Jeju, 2012), and the role that IUCN plays in the implementation of agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES and

CMS, and its formal mandate as an Advisory Body to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee, and others;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the need to work with Indigenous peoples in support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

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

1. DECLARES IUCN's commitment to ensuring that wild species are afforded the highest appropriate level of protection under the provisions of relevant multilateral agreements and under the domestic laws of States;

[2. REQUESTS the Director General, Council, Species Survival Commission (SSC) and Specialist Groups to assess the role that IUCN plays in protecting species under relevant multilateral agreements, including the criteria for protection that IUCN uses when advising governments as to whether species qualify for protection and the role of Specialist Groups;]

[3. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director General and SSC to work with CITES, CMS and other relevant treaties to help establish a process to rapidly identify and promote the [appropriate and necessary] [level of] protection under the provisions of applicable multilateral agreements for species that are threatened with extinction [from unsustainable exploitation];]

4. URGES IUCN State Members in particular, along with other Members and partners, to assist IUCN in assessing the status of species nationally and globally pursuant to The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, national Red Lists and relevant agreements, and to support efforts to ensure that species threatened with extinction are prioritised for conservation planning and action, and that all species are afforded the highest appropriate level of protection possible under the provisions of applicable international and domestic law; [to promote international cooperation and capacity-building to strengthen enforcement and monitoring, particularly along key trade and transit routes;] and

5. WELCOMES [global coalitions of] States [focused] [to focus] [to collaborate] on addressing the [direct exploitation] [illegal and unsustainable use] of wild species [as one of the top drivers of biodiversity loss].