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Sustainable wildlife management

Development of global guidance on the sustainable management of wildlife applicable to multiple species and multiple practices[**]

I. Introduction

1. In its decision 16/15, paragraph 6, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, in particular the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and with inputs from Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and relevant organizations, to prepare draft global guidance on the sustainable management of wildlife applicable to multiple species and multiple practices, with a focus on:

(a) Inclusive and participatory decision-making;

(b) The inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and the recognition of rights;

(c) The equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

2. Further, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, other Governments, subnational governments at all levels, indigenous people and local communities, women and relevant organizations to submit information on best practices for sustainable wildlife management, and requested the Executive Secretary to compile and synthesize the information thus submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its twenty-seventh meeting. The submissions are compiled in an information document.

3. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties further requested the Executive Secretary to submit the guidance referred to in paragraph 6 to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice for its consideration at a meeting to be held before the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, ensuring that such guidance avoids the duplication of existing guidance

4. The present document summarizes the analysis undertaken to support the preparation of the draft global guidance on the sustainable management of wildlife. It describes the sources of

[*] CBD/SBSTTA/28/1.
[**] The present document is being issued without formal editing.

information reviewed, the main findings identified and how those findings informed the structure and content of the draft global guidance.

5. The draft guidance uses the definition of sustainable wildlife management contained in decision 14/7 as the "sound management of wildlife species to sustain their populations and habitat over time, considering the socio-economic needs of human populations". It also clarifies that wildlife is understood to include both wild flora and fauna. This reflects the need, identified in the analysis, for guidance that is applicable beyond a narrow set of species or practices.

6. In preparing the draft global guidance, the Secretariat convened an informal technical committee composed of representatives of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

7. The informal technical committee provided technical support and was regularly consulted throughout the drafting process, including through the review of successive iterations of the draft guidance. The committee supported efforts to ensure that the draft guidance was technically sound, responsive to the mandate in decision 16/15 and coherent with existing guidance, tools and processes developed under relevant multilateral environmental agreements and competent intergovernmental organizations.

II. Background

8. In decision 14/7, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the voluntary guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector. The guidance was adopted with the aim of promoting the sustainability of supply at the source, managing demand along the value chain and creating enabling conditions for the legal and sustainable management of terrestrial wild meat in tropical and subtropical habitats, while taking into account the traditional use of wild meat by indigenous peoples and local communities and safeguarding their livelihoods.

9. Through the same decision, the Conference of the Parties also requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with interested Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, and subject to the availability of resources, to identify areas where complementary guidance may be needed and to explore ways to apply such guidance to other geographical areas, species and uses, recognizing that the voluntary guidance applies only to certain terrestrial tropical and subtropical habitats, biomes and ecosystems.

10. In decision 15/23, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, members of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, and other relevant stakeholders and right holders, and subject to the availability of resources, to complete the work mandated under decision 14/7. This included identifying additional areas beyond the wild meat sector that may require complementary guidance, such as other geographical areas, species and uses, taking into account the outcomes of the Consultative Workshop on Sustainable Wildlife Management Beyond 2020[1] and the results of the survey on sustainable wildlife management.

11. In note CBD/SBSTTA/25/11, prepared in response to decision 14/7, the Executive Secretary, analysed areas beyond the wild meat sector that may require complementary guidance and outlined possible future work under the Convention on sustainable wildlife management, particularly in relation to Targets 4, 5 and 9 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

12. The note based some of its analysis on the assessment by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services identified priority areas requiring attention,

[1] See CBD/WG2020/1/INF/3

including unsustainable hunting and harvesting practices, by-catch mortality, destructive and illegal logging practices, unsustainable gathering of ornamental plant species, and emerging technologies that could lead to unsustainable practices.

13. The assessment also identified seven key elements associated with effective policy responses for the sustainable use of wild species, namely:

(a) inclusive and participatory decision-making;

(b) recognition of multiple knowledge systems;

(c) equitable distribution of costs and benefits;

(d) policies tailored to local social and ecological contexts;

(e) robust institutions, including customary institutions;

(f) monitoring and adaptive management; and

(g) coordination and alignment across sectors and governance levels.

14. In recommendation 25/7, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice noted the information prepared by the Secretariat regarding areas beyond the wild meat sector that might require complementary guidance, as contained in document CBD/SBSTTA/25/11, as well as the views expressed by Parties on additional areas that could benefit from further work under the Convention, including issues addressed in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species that were not reflected in the document.

15. In the same recommendation, the Subsidiary Body noted that additional guidance on sustainable wildlife management beyond the wild meat sector should contribute to the implementation of the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, to undertake a further gap analysis to identify areas not adequately covered by existing guidance developed under relevant multilateral environmental agreements and competent intergovernmental organizations. The recommendation further requested that the gap analysis take into consideration the seven key elements of effective policy for the sustainable use of wild species identified in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment, and that views and inputs be solicited from Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, relevant multilateral environmental agreements and competent intergovernmental bodies.

16. In response to recommendation 25/7, a gap analysis was prepared by the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management in collaboration with the Secretariat, and submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting. The analysis reviewed areas not adequately covered by existing guidance developed under relevant multilateral environmental agreements and competent intergovernmental organizations, focusing on the sustainable use, management and conservation of wild species, including their links to biodiversity, livelihoods, food security, health, governance and monitoring.

17. The analysis identified areas related to the use of wild species that fall within the scope of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, namely terrestrial vertebrates, but are not sufficiently addressed by existing international guidance. To support this work, an inventory of existing guidance, tools and documents related to different areas of sustainable wildlife management was compiled, based on submissions to notification 2023-121, including issues such as the pet trade, ornamental plants, trophy hunting and other uses of wild species.

18. The scope of the analysis covered different types of practices identified in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment, including fishing, gathering, logging, terrestrial animal harvesting and non-extractive practices.

19. In addition, the analysis drew on findings from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment regarding key knowledge gaps, including gaps related to data and information availability and access, assessment and monitoring methods, traditional knowledge, and the interactions between multiple uses of wild species and other pressures.

20. The main findings indicated that, while substantial guidance already exists, coverage remains uneven across thematic areas and taxa. Key gaps included practical implementation guidance, cross-sectoral coordination, monitoring and reporting, and approaches for addressing emerging pressures on wildlife and wildlife-dependent communities.

21. A supplementary gap analysis was conducted by the Secretariat of the Convention to address areas beyond the scope of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management analysis and to ensure a more comprehensive assessment of relevant guidance. The supplementary analysis considered issues beyond the mandate of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, including matters related to Article 8(j) and related provisions, traditional knowledge, the role of indigenous peoples and local communities, and the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

22. The supplementary analysis identified gaps relating to traditional knowledge, biocultural diversity and the role of women, youth, and indigenous peoples and local communities in implementation.

23. The analyses showed that existing guidance largely focuses on monitoring of social and ecological conditions and practices and coordinated and aligned policies. At the same time, significant gaps were identified across practices, species and geographical regions, particularly in relation to inclusive and participatory decision-making, the inclusion of multiple forms of knowledge and recognition of rights, equitable distribution of costs and benefits, and policies tailored to local social and ecological contexts.

24. These findings provided the basis for the subsequent request by the Conference of the Parties in decision 16/15, to prepare draft global guidance focused on participation, knowledge systems and rights, and equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

III. Sources of information and analytical approach

A. Review and analysis

25. Pursuant to decision 16/15, the Secretariat conducted a review and analysis of relevant materials to support the preparation of the draft global guidance. The analysis drew primarily on:

(a) Note CBD/SBSTTA/25/11 (Sustainable wildlife management), which analysed areas beyond the wild meat sector that may require complementary guidance and outlined possible future work under the Convention on sustainable wildlife management;

(b) Document CBD/COP/16/INF/6 (Gap analysis to identify areas that are not adequately covered by existing guidance developed under relevant multilateral environmental agreements and by competent intergovernmental organizations), containing the gap analysis undertaken to identify areas that are not adequately covered by existing guidance developed under relevant multilateral environmental agreements and competent intergovernmental organizations;

(c) Document CBD/COP/16/INF/7 (Additional analysis of available guidance, tools and documents related to various areas of sustainable wildlife management that might require complementary guidance), containing the additional analysis of available guidance, tools and documents related to various areas of sustainable wildlife management that might require complementary guidance;

(d) The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species, including the seven key elements associated with effective policy responses for the sustainable use of wild species;

(e) Submissions of views and information on global guidance for sustainable wildlife management submitted pursuant to notification 2025-014. A total of 14 submissions[2] were received (8 from Parties[3] and 6 from relevant organizations[4]);

(f) Submissions of information on best practices for sustainable wildlife management submitted pursuant to notification 2025-015. A total of 21 submissions[5] were received (9 from Parties[6] and 12 from relevant organizations[7]); and

(g) The outcomes of the expert meeting[8] held from 9 to 11 February 2026 in Bonn, Germany. The meeting brought together experts from 18 Parties and a range of organizations and networks, including representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, relevant United Nations entities and secretariats, intergovernmental organizations, scientific institutions, civil society organizations and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management. Participants had expertise in areas ranging from wildlife conservation and management to biodiversity policy, sustainable use, rights-based approaches, traditional knowledge, sharing of benefits arising from sustainable wildlife management, and cross-sectoral governance.

(h) Relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity relating to sustainable wildlife management.

26. The review and analysis informed the preparation of the draft global guidance by identifying the main areas where existing guidance remains insufficient, uneven or fragmented, particularly in relation to the three focus areas in decision 16/15, and policies tailored to local social and ecological contexts.

27. The review and analysis also informed the structure of the draft guidance, including its context, mandate, purpose and scope, principles, safeguards, key elements for developing and implementing policies on sustainable wildlife management, and actions for implementation. In particular, the seven key elements identified in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment provided an organizing framework for linking ecological, social, cultural, institutional and governance dimensions of sustainable wildlife management.

28. The review and analysis considered the different types of practices identified in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment, including fishing, gathering, logging, terrestrial animal harvesting and non-extractive practices, in order to assess the breadth and limitations of existing guidance.

29. The review analysis helped identify areas where the draft guidance could complement, rather than duplicate, existing guidance. They also highlighted the need for guidance that is applicable across multiple species, multiple practices and diverse geographical, ecological, social and cultural contexts. Accordingly, the draft guidance was prepared as a framework that can be adapted to

[2] All submissions are available at https://www.cbd.int/notifications/2025-014

[3] Brazil, Canada, the European Union and its member states, Finland, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[4] Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Global Youth Biodiversity Network, Nepal Indigenous Nationalities Preservation Association, Women4Biodiversity

[5] All submissions are available at https://www.cbd.int/notifications/2025-015

[6] Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[7] Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, British Association for Shooting and Conservation, Conservation Visions, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Nepal Indigenous Nationalities Preservation Association

[8] The organization of the expert meeting was generously supported by the European Union.

national, subnational and local circumstances while supporting implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

30. The submissions received in response to notifications Nos. 2025-014 and 2025-015 were reviewed to identify key issues, best practices, implementation challenges and proposed elements for the draft global guidance, with particular attention to the three focus areas identified in decision 16/15.

31. Issues raised in the submissions were grouped thematically and compared with the findings of the gap analysis contained in document CBD/COP/16/INF/6, the additional analysis contained in document CBD/COP/16/INF/7 and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species. The gap analyses were used to identify areas not adequately covered by existing guidance, including gaps across species groups, practices, and geographical regions.

32. The analysis of submissions helped identify practical examples, implementation challenges and priorities that were reflected in the draft guidance. These included, inter alia, the need for co-management and shared decision-making arrangements, recognition of indigenous and local knowledge, free, prior and informed consent, secure tenure and access rights, equitable benefit-sharing, human-wildlife conflict prevention and mitigation, cross-sectoral coordination, capacity-building, monitoring and adaptive management.

33. The findings from review and analysis were then synthesized to identify areas of convergence, recurring gaps and issues requiring attention in the draft global guidance. The outcomes of the expert meeting held from 9 to 11 February 2026 were used to further refine the analysis, to develop the draft guidance and to ensure it remained responsive to decision 16/15 and avoided duplication of existing guidance.

B. Peer review

34. The draft global guidance on the sustainable management of wildlife applicable to multiple species and practices was presented for peer review through notification 2026-024. A total of 27 submissions[9] were received (19 from Parties[10] and 8 from relevant organizations[11]).

35. The peer review submissions provided additional technical comments on the scope, framing and operational clarity of the draft guidance. Several comments welcomed the focus on governance, participation, equity, rights and knowledge systems, while also suggesting that the relationship between those governance elements and the ecological and technical requirements of wildlife management could be made clearer. In particular, some comments emphasized the importance of population assessment, monitoring, adaptive management, ecological safeguards, traceability, risk assessment and the determination of sustainable use levels in ensuring that wildlife management contributes to conservation and sustainable use objectives.

36. The peer review feedback also highlighted areas where the draft guidance needed to balance different perspectives. Some submissions emphasized the role of regulated sustainable use, community-based wildlife management, benefit-sharing and wildlife-based economies in supporting conservation incentives and livelihoods. Others emphasized the need for stronger safeguards, including in relation to animal welfare, zoonotic disease risk, One Health, precautionary approach, ecological limits and circumstances in which certain forms of wildlife use may need to be restricted or avoided. These comments were considered in refining the analysis and identifying areas where the

[9] All submissions are available at https://www.cbd.int/notifications/2026-024

[10] Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, the European Union, France, Germany, Israel, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[11] CBD Women's Caucus, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, EMS Foundation-South Africa, Fungi Foundation, Global Youth Biodiversity Network, Society of Wetland Biodiversity Conservation-Nepal, Sustainable Ocean Alliance and World Federation for Animals

draft guidance could provide broad policy direction while allowing for complementary technical, sectoral, practice-specific or taxon-specific instruments, as appropriate.

IV. Main findings from the review and analysis

37. The structure of the draft guidance was designed to reflect both the mandate contained in decision 16/15 and the principal findings emerging from the review and analysis undertaken by the Secretariat in consultation with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management. In particular, the guidance was organized to address recurring governance, participation, safeguards, implementation and policy coherence issues identified across submissions, gap analyses, expert discussions and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment (Box 1). The draft global guidance is contained in a document submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

Box 1: Structure of the draft guidance

Accordingly, the draft guidance has been structured as follows:

i. Context

ii. Mandate

iii. Purpose and scope

iv. Principles

v. Safeguards

vi. Key elements for developing and implementing policies on sustainable wildlife management

vii. Actions for implementation for sustainable wildlife management

A. Cross-cutting Elements: Policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration

B. Inclusive and participatory decision-making

C. Inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and a human rights-based approach

D. Equitable distribution of costs and benefits

38. The present section summarizes the principal findings emerging from the analysis and describes how these findings informed the structure and content of the draft guidance.

A. Context, mandate, purpose and scope

39. The mandate section of the draft guidance reflects decision 16/15, which requested the preparation of draft global guidance on the sustainable management of wildlife applicable to multiple species and multiple practices, with a focus on: (a) inclusive and participatory decision-making; (b) the inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and the recognition of rights; and (c) the equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

40. The purpose and scope section reflects the sources and analytical findings considered during the development of the draft guidance. Accordingly, the draft guidance applies to multiple species across terrestrial, inland water, marine and coastal ecosystems and to both extractive and non-extractive practices, including, inter alia, fishing, gathering of wild plants, fungi and algae, logging, terrestrial and aquatic animal harvesting and wildlife-based tourism.

41. The purpose of the draft guidance is to support Parties in strengthening policy and institutional frameworks for sustainable wildlife management, consistent with the objectives of the Convention

and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In line with decision 16/15, the draft guidance promotes inclusive and participatory decision-making, inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and recognition of rights, and the fair and equitable distribution of costs and benefits arising from wildlife use and management.

42. The draft guidance also aims to enhance policy coherence across sectors and governance levels. This reflects the prominence of these issues in the submissions received pursuant to notifications Nos. 2025-014 and 2025-015, as well as findings from the gap analyses indicating that fragmented governance arrangements remain a recurring challenge for implementation.

43. The draft guidance sets out general principles, safeguards and broad areas for action to support Parties in strengthening national approaches to sustainable wildlife management. It is not intended to provide detailed operational guidance or species-specific technical standards, which may be addressed through complementary national measures and relevant sectoral or taxon-specific instruments.

B. Principles and safeguards

44. The principles and safeguards reflect the finding that sustainable wildlife management requires both ecological sustainability and enabling governance conditions. Drawing on the Convention, the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines, decision 14/7, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment, the draft guidance addresses ecological sustainability and precaution; human rights-based and inclusive participation; equity and benefit-sharing; integration of knowledge systems and adaptive management; and policy coherence and institutional alignment.

45. The safeguards section of the draft guidance defines safeguards as procedures and measures intended to ensure that sustainable wildlife management interventions avoid or minimize unintended adverse impacts on biodiversity and promote ecological integrity, social equity and accountability. In line with Article 14 of the Convention, safeguards may include environmental and social impact assessment, public participation, monitoring, and the adjustment or suspension of measures where new information indicates that current practices are unsustainable.

46. The safeguards are organized under three areas: safeguards for ecological integrity; safeguards for social equity and human well-being; and safeguards for transparency and accountability. They address matters including ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, invasive alien species, cumulative pressures, environmental and social impact assessment, human-wildlife conflict, customary access, subsistence use, culturally significant practices, benefit-sharing arrangements, transparency, wildlife harvest, handling and trade practices, and the use of emerging technologies.

1. Principles

47. The gap analyses contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, confirm that existing guidance contains a number of principles relevant to sustainable wildlife management, including ecological sustainability, precaution, participation, recognition of rights, equity, adaptive management, policy coherence and institutional effectiveness. However, these principles are unevenly reflected across species groups, practices and governance contexts.

48. The analyses therefore point to the need for guidance that provides a coherent normative foundation for applying these principles together across multiple species, multiple practices and multiple governance systems. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment reinforces this finding by emphasizing that policy instruments and tools are more effective when they are tailored to social and ecological contexts, support fairness, rights and equity, are informed by multiple systems of knowledge, and are supported by robust and adaptive institutions.

49. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 show broad support for principles that strengthen the legitimacy, effectiveness and fairness of sustainable wildlife

management. These include ecological sustainability and precaution; human rights-based and participatory approaches; recognition of customary governance, tenure and knowledge systems; gender-responsive participation; transparency; accountability; and the equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

50. Several submissions also emphasized that principles should support policy coherence and institutional alignment across biodiversity, land-use and sea-use planning, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, trade, tourism, health, climate change, infrastructure, enforcement and development policies, in order to avoid fragmented implementation and conflicting incentives.

Analytical Conclusion

51. The subsection on principles reflects the finding that sustainable wildlife management requires an integrated normative foundation that can guide implementation across species, practices, ecosystems and governance contexts. The draft guidance therefore includes principles on ecological sustainability and precaution; a human rights-based approach and inclusive participation; equity and the fair distribution of benefits; the integration of knowledge systems and adaptive management; and policy coherence and institutional alignment.

52. The analysis further highlighted that these principles should be understood as mutually reinforcing conditions for sustainable wildlife management. The draft guidance is therefore intended to support Parties in applying them in a practical and coherent manner, in accordance with national circumstances, priorities and legislation.

2. Safeguards

53. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, confirm that existing guidance contains safeguards relevant to sustainable wildlife management, including impact assessment, monitoring, public participation, transparency, adaptive management and measures to avoid adverse ecological and social impacts. However, these safeguards are not consistently addressed across species groups, practices and governance contexts.

54. The analyses therefore point to the need for guidance that helps Parties apply safeguards in an integrated and practical manner. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment reinforces this finding by emphasizing that sustainable use depends on effective monitoring, adaptive institutions, attention to social and ecological contexts, and the ability to respond to changing risks and pressures.

55. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 show broad support for safeguards that ensure wildlife management measures avoid or minimize unintended adverse impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem integrity, human well-being and rights. Several submissions emphasized the need for environmental and social impact assessments, monitoring and evaluation, transparent decision-making, grievance mechanisms, and the adjustment or suspension of measures where evidence indicates that practices are unsustainable.

56. Several submissions also highlighted safeguards relating to human-wildlife conflict, zoonotic disease risk, invasive alien species, habitat degradation, animal welfare, legal and sustainable trade, benefit-sharing, customary access, culturally significant practices and sensitive data. Submissions further emphasized that safeguards should be applied in a context-specific and precautionary manner, while respecting national legislation and applicable international obligations.

Analytical Conclusion

57. The subsection on safeguards reflects the finding that sustainable wildlife management requires procedures and measures to prevent, minimize and respond to ecological and social risks. The draft guidance therefore includes safeguards for ecological integrity; safeguards for social equity and human well-being; and safeguards for transparency and accountability.

58. The analysis further highlighted that safeguards should support adaptive and accountable implementation across different species, practices and governance settings. The draft guidance is therefore intended to help Parties apply safeguards through impact assessment, participation, monitoring, review, transparency, risk management and corrective action, in accordance with national circumstances, priorities and legislation.

C. Key elements for developing and implementing policies on sustainable wildlife management

59. The key elements section of the draft guidance is based on the seven key elements of effective policy actions identified in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment. These are:

(a) inclusive and participatory decision-making;

(b) inclusion of multiple knowledge systems and recognition of rights;

(c) equitable distribution of costs and benefits of wildlife use and management;

(d) policies tailored to local social and ecological contexts;

(e) monitoring of social and ecological practices and conditions;

(f) coordinated and aligned policies across sectors; and

(g) robust institutions from customary to statutory.

60. The draft guidance states that these key elements were identified as enhancing the sustainability of the use of wild species and as a prerequisite for stronger implementation across practices. Accordingly, the elements influence the effectiveness of sustainable wildlife management by strengthening legitimacy, supporting adaptive and context-specific implementation, improving policy coherence and coordination, and reinforcing the institutional conditions needed to respond to ecological and social change.

61. In the structure of the draft guidance, elements (a) to (c) are addressed principally through the sections on inclusive and participatory decision-making, inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and recognition of rights, and equitable distribution of costs and benefits. Elements (d) to (g) are integrated across the guidance, including in the cross-cutting actions, principles and safeguards.

62. This structure reflects the analysis by using the key elements to connect the mandate in decision 16/15 with broader implementation considerations, including local social and ecological contexts, monitoring, coordinated policies and institutions.

63. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, confirm that the seven key elements identified by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services provide a useful structure for developing and implementing policies on sustainable wildlife management. The analyses also show that existing guidance does not address these elements evenly. Guidance is comparatively stronger on monitoring and coordinated policies, while support is more limited or fragmented in relation to participation, recognition of rights, equitable distribution of costs and benefits, and the practical application of these elements across multiple species, practices and governance systems.

64. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 show broad support for using the key elements as an organizing framework for the guidance.

65. Submissions also highlighted that these elements should be applied in an integrated manner. Contributors noted that sustainable wildlife management depends not only on individual policy tools, but also on how participation, rights, knowledge, equity, monitoring, institutional capacity and policy coherence operate together in specific social-ecological contexts.

Analytical Conclusion

66. The subsection on key elements reflects the finding that sustainable wildlife management requires a practical framework for translating broad principles into policy design and implementation. The draft guidance therefore uses the seven key elements identified by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services as a basis for organizing actions across governance, rights, equity, context, monitoring, coordination and institutions.

67. The analysis further highlighted that these elements should be understood as mutually reinforcing. The draft guidance is therefore intended to support Parties in developing and implementing policies that are participatory, rights-based, equitable, context-specific, evidence-informed, coordinated and institutionally robust, in accordance with national circumstances, priorities and legislation.

D. Actions for implementation of sustainable wildlife management

68. The actions for implementation section of the draft guidance comprises a set of possible actions that Parties may consider in support of the implementation of sustainable wildlife management. The section is organized into four subsections: A. cross-cutting actions to support policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration; B. inclusive and participatory decision-making; C. inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and recognition of rights; and D. equitable distribution of costs and benefits.

69. Subsections B, C and D of the draft global guidance correspond to the three focus areas identified in decision 16/15 and therefore incorporate the principal findings emerging from the gap analyses and the thematic assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species, together with information and views contained in submissions received pursuant to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015. Subsection A on policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration was included in response to the prominence of policy coherence and coordination issues across the submissions and other analytical materials reviewed by the Secretariat.

70. The peer review submissions informed the refinement of the implementation actions by identifying areas where additional clarity was needed, including participatory and rights-based approaches, ecological safeguards, monitoring, adaptive management and evidence-informed decision-making. The peer review process also highlighted the importance of addressing issues relating to One Health, wildlife health, traceability, legal and sustainable wildlife use and trade, and context-specific implementation across ecological regions, governance systems and national circumstances.

71. The draft guidance does not provide detailed operational guidance or species-specific technical standards. The analysis and peer review process further demonstrated that implementation approaches may need to be adapted to national and local contexts and complemented, where appropriate, by regional, sectoral, practice-specific or taxon-specific instruments addressing issues such as monitoring methodologies, adaptive management, harvest sustainability, wildlife health, risk assessment and application of safeguards in specific contexts.

1. Policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration

72. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, confirm that coordinated and aligned policies are one of the areas where existing guidance is comparatively stronger, but they also show that this strength is uneven. Existing materials often address coordination within sectors or practices but provide less support for managing interactions among multiple species, multiple practices, multiple pressures and multiple governance systems.

73. The analyses therefore point to the need for guidance that helps Parties and relevant stakeholders manage the practical interfaces between sectors. These include the relationship between wildlife management and land-use planning, biodiversity strategies, protected and conserved areas,

trade regulation, tourism development, wildlife health, food security, climate adaptation and enforcement. The gap is not simply the absence of policy coherence as a principle; it is the lack of operational guidance on how to achieve coherence in complex, multi-actor settings.

74. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment reinforces this finding by emphasizing that policy instruments and tools are more effective when they are aligned across sectors and scales. It also highlights the value of policy combinations rather than isolated measures. This is relevant because unsustainable use often results from interacting drivers, including climate change, land-use and sea-use change, trade, poverty, inequality, illegal harvesting, conflict, technological change and shifting patterns of demand.

75. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 show that sustainable wildlife management is closely linked to policies and decisions relating to agriculture, fisheries, forestry, trade, tourism, land-use planning, infrastructure, health, climate change and development. Several submissions emphasized that limited coordination across these sectors may create conflicting incentives and undermine legal and sustainable use.

76. Submissions further identified cross-sectoral coordination and institutional coherence as recurring implementation challenges. Several submissions highlighted fragmented institutional mandates, limited coordination among authorities, illegal wildlife trade, corruption, burdensome administrative procedures and limited enforcement capacity as factors that may discourage legal and sustainable use, contributing to informal or illegal activities.

77. Several submissions emphasized the importance of coordination among national, subnational and local authorities, indigenous peoples and local communities, customary institutions and other stakeholders. Submissions further highlighted the importance of reflecting wildlife management considerations in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, climate-related policies and national reporting processes under the Convention.

Analytical Conclusion

78. The subsection on policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration reflects the finding that sustainable wildlife management is influenced by interacting drivers across sectors and governance levels and within diverse social-ecological contexts. The draft guidance includes actions on policy, legal and institutional conditions; cross-sectoral coordination; wildlife crime and illegal use or trade; habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation; climate-related risks; biosecurity risks, invasive alien species and zoonotic disease risks; pollution; legal, sustainable and traceable wildlife use and trade; ecological connectivity; urban planning; transboundary cooperation; biodiversity mainstreaming; monitoring; adaptive management; education; capacity-building; and resource mobilization.

79. The analysis further highlighted that the draft guidance should consider policy coherence and cross-sectoral integration as enabling conditions for sustainable wildlife management. The draft guidance is therefore intended to support Parties in aligning wildlife management with biodiversity, land-use, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, trade, tourism, health, infrastructure, development and climate policies. It also aims to support the identification of situations where sectoral policies may unintentionally undermine sustainable use, rights, livelihoods or conservation outcomes, while promoting coordination across institutions and governance levels.

2. Inclusive and participatory decision-making

80. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, identify inclusive and participatory decision-making as one of the areas where guidance remains insufficient across species, practices and geographical regions. Participation should not be seen as a procedural issue; it influences legitimacy, compliance, conflict resolution, adaptive management and the ability of policies to reflect local realities.

81. The gap analyses also indicate that guidance should support clearer procedures for participation, transparent decision-making rules, defined roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms

that allow affected communities and stakeholders to influence decisions. They further suggest that participation should extend to transboundary and range-State contexts, where wildlife populations, habitats and use practices cross jurisdictional boundaries.

82. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment identifies inclusive and participatory decision-making as a key condition for sustainable use and emphasizes that participatory mechanisms enhance adaptive capacity. Participation enables management systems to respond to changing ecological and social conditions, incorporate different forms of knowledge and improve legitimacy and compliance.

83. Submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 consistently identified inclusive and participatory decision-making as central to effective and legitimate wildlife management. It was emphasized that participation should involve indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, civil society organizations, scientists, practitioners and authorities at national, subnational and local levels. The submissions further indicated that participation should extend beyond consultation and support the involvement of relevant stakeholders in policy development, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review.

84. Several submissions identified co-management arrangements, joint planning bodies, community consultations, participatory mapping, co-created steering committees, participatory monitoring, mediation and conflict-resolution mechanisms as practical approaches to support participatory wildlife governance. These examples suggest that participation is most effective when it is structured, resourced and connected to decision-making authority.

85. The submissions also highlighted persistent implementation challenges. Participatory processes were described as fragmented, time-consuming, under-resourced or insufficiently representative, particularly for indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and other marginalized groups. This suggests that the issue is not only whether participation is recognized in principle, but whether the conditions exist for participation to be meaningful in practice. Capacity-building, facilitation, mediation, access to information and institutional continuity were therefore identified as important enabling factors.

Analytical Conclusion

86. The analysis highlighted that participation should be reflected in the draft guidance as a substantive governance component. Further, it emphasized the importance of approaches supporting shared decision-making, co-management, co-design of policies, participatory planning, community-based monitoring, transparent decision-making and conflict resolution, as well as the need to address barriers limiting the effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and other relevant stakeholders.

87. Accordingly, the subsection on inclusive and participatory decision-making includes actions relating to stakeholder identification, participatory governance mechanisms, community-based approaches, access to information, clear roles and responsibilities, adequate timelines for participation, grievance prevention and dispute-resolution mechanisms, participatory monitoring and inclusive dialogue processes. The subsection also addresses participatory approaches in contexts relating to human-wildlife conflict, zoonotic disease risks, scenario-planning and trade-off analysis.

3. Inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and recognition of rights

88. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, indicate that guidance relating to the inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and the recognition of rights remains limited across many species groups, practices and geographical regions. This represents a significant gap, as many existing guidance materials place greater emphasis on ecological monitoring, species management and policy coordination than on the governance conditions necessary to support the respectful, equitable and effective inclusion of diverse knowledge systems.

89. The supplementary analysis further identified gaps relating to the intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge, including the role of indigenous languages, indigenous women, youth and local communities. It also highlights the importance of strengthening linkages between biological and cultural diversity and reflecting these considerations in implementation measures such as national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national reporting.

90. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment further emphasized the importance of indigenous and local knowledge systems and customary governance systems in supporting the sustainable use of wild species. The assessment also mentioned the importance of secure tenure and access rights, noting that lack of recognition may weaken stewardship incentives, trust and long-term management approaches.

91. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 indicate that the inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge is closely linked to the recognition of rights. Several submissions emphasized that scientific knowledge may be strengthened when complemented by indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems, innovations and practices grounded in long-standing relationships with ecosystems and wildlife. At the same time, submissions underscored that such knowledge cannot be treated merely as an information source. It is embedded in cultural values, customary governance systems, territories, livelihoods and responsibilities.

92. Several submissions linked knowledge integration with recognition of customary tenure, access and use rights, free, prior and informed consent, customary law, community-defined rules and self-determined conservation initiatives. Community forestry, wildlife management areas, locally governed management units and co-management arrangements were identified as examples of rights-based and community-led stewardship approaches.

93. The submissions also identified safeguards as essential. These include respect for intellectual property rights, equitable benefit-sharing, free, prior and informed consent and data sovereignty. It was emphasized that indigenous peoples and local communities should retain control over how their knowledge, spatial data, maps and monitoring information are accessed, used and shared. The analysis therefore highlighted the importance of situating knowledge inclusion within broader rights-based and governance frameworks.

Analytical Conclusion

94. In light of these findings, the draft guidance includes provisions relating to the inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and the recognition of rights as integral components of sustainable wildlife management. These provisions address, inter alia, co-production of knowledge, free, prior and informed consent, customary tenure and access rights, customary governance systems, protection of indigenous and local knowledge, data sovereignty and culturally appropriate safeguards.

95. The analysis further demonstrated that the effective inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge in sustainable wildlife management depends on the recognition of rights, respect for customary institutions and equitable governance arrangements. Accordingly, the subsection on inclusion of multiple systems of knowledge and recognition of rights includes actions relating to customary governance systems, tenure arrangements, community-defined rules, consent procedures, integration of scientific and traditional knowledge systems, community-based knowledge documentation, intergenerational knowledge transfer, community-based monitoring and locally appropriate approaches to assessment, monitoring and management.

4. Equitable distribution of costs and benefits

96. The gap analyses, contained in documents CBD/COP/16/INF/6 and 7, identify equitable distribution of costs and benefits as one of the most significant gaps in existing guidance. This indicates that existing guidance often recognizes sustainable use, conservation and management objectives, but gives less operational attention to who benefits, who bears costs, and how distributional outcomes affect sustainability.

97. The analyses therefore point to the need for guidance relating to fair and transparent benefit-sharing arrangements, compensation schemes, social safeguards, conflict-prevention measures, alternative livelihood options and monitoring systems capable of assessing distributional outcomes. The analyses further suggests that equity should be addressed not only as a general principle, but also as a measurable outcome of sustainable wildlife management.

98. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment emphasizes that inequitable allocation of usage rights and benefits may occur within and between communities, between communities and private sector, across generations, among levels of government and among jurisdictions sharing responsibility for cross-boundary species. Such inequities may undermine compliance, intensify conflict and contribute to overuse.

99. The assessment also highlights the importance of gender equity in benefit-sharing arrangements, noting that women may bear disproportionate costs and receive fewer benefits where governance systems do not account for gendered roles, rights and impacts.

100. The submissions received in response to notifications 2025-014 and 2025-015 identify equitable distribution of costs and benefits as a central condition for effective and durable wildlife management. Several submissions highlighted benefits arising from tourism, sustainable harvesting, biodiversity-based value chains, employment, ecosystem services, community development investments and other wildlife-related economic activities. Submissions further emphasized that such benefits should meaningfully support indigenous peoples and local communities, including women and youth, and contribute to livelihoods, food security and economic resilience.

101. At the same time, the submissions indicate that the costs of wildlife conservation and management are often borne disproportionately by those living closest to wildlife. These costs may include human-wildlife conflict, restricted access to resources, livelihood losses, damage to crops and property, enforcement burdens and opportunity costs linked to conservation measures. This creates a central equity challenge: the actors who bear the greatest costs are not always those who receive the greatest benefits.

102. Several submissions called for transparent and accountable benefit-sharing mechanisms, compensation schemes, conflict prevention strategies, alternative livelihood opportunities and accessible community conservation finance mechanisms. Several submissions emphasized that addressing underlying structural inequities is essential for the long-term sustainability of wildlife management.

Analytical Conclusion

103. The analysis demonstrated that equitable distribution of costs and benefits should be reflected in the draft guidance both as a guiding principle and as an implementation consideration. The analysis further highlighted the importance of fair and transparent benefit-sharing, measures to address the costs of conservation and management, human-wildlife conflict prevention and mitigation, gender-responsive approaches, community conservation finance and monitoring of distributional outcomes.

104. Accordingly, the subsection on equitable distribution of costs and benefits includes actions relating to monetary and non-monetary benefits; fair, transparent, participatory and accountable benefit-sharing arrangements; differentiated costs borne by those living with wildlife; gender-responsive approaches; insurance and compensation mechanisms; revenue-sharing arrangements; accountability for wildlife revenues; small-scale harvesters, processors and social enterprises; diversified and climate-resilient livelihood strategies; sustainable financing mechanisms; equitable market access; and restoration and recovery initiatives.

105. The analysis also highlighted the importance of ensuring that wildlife management measures do not unintentionally marginalize, criminalize or restrict access for indigenous peoples, local communities and other groups in vulnerable situations, particularly where livelihoods, food security, cultural practices and customary use depend on wildlife resources.

V. Overall synthesis of the review and analysis

106. The review and analysis indicate that existing guidance on sustainable wildlife management provides an important foundation but remains uneven across species, practices and geographical contexts. Guidance is relatively more developed on technical and ecological matters, including monitoring, species management, wildlife health, trade, enforcement, wildlife crime, human-wildlife conflict and aspects of wild meat, habitat management and hunting. By contrast, the governance, rights-based and equity dimensions that enable durable implementation are less consistently addressed.

107. The submissions, gap analyses, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessment and peer review feedback converge on the need to link governance and ecological sustainability more clearly. Participation, knowledge systems and benefit-sharing should be connected with population assessment, monitoring, adaptive management, ecological safeguards and risk-based decision-making.

108. The draft guidance therefore provides an integrated and adaptable framework that builds on existing technical guidance while addressing persistent gaps in participation, rights and knowledge integration, fair and equitable distribution of costs and benefits, locally tailored policy design, safeguards, adaptive management and institutional coordination. It is intended to complement, rather than replace, technical, sectoral or taxon-specific guidance, consistent with decision 16/15 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

VI. Implementation Considerations

109. Implementation of the draft global guidance would benefit from continued collaboration among relevant organizations, processes and stakeholders, consistent with the collaborative approach used in its preparation. The draft guidance was developed in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, in particular the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and with inputs from Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and relevant organizations.

110. The analysis highlighted that implementation depends on coordination across sectors, governance levels and relevant processes, including on wildlife crime, legal and sustainable trade, habitat loss, climate-related risks, biosecurity, invasive alien species, zoonotic disease risks, pollution, and shared species and ecosystems.

111. The analysis identified capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and technical support as enabling conditions for the implementation of the draft guidance. In particular, submissions highlighted needs relating to ecological monitoring, adaptive management, participatory governance, safeguards, benefit-sharing approaches, One Health implementation, traceability and integration of scientific, indigenous and local knowledge systems.

112. The draft guidance therefore includes actions relating to education, awareness-raising, capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and technical cooperation, including through partnerships with academic institutions, indigenous peoples and local communities, community institutions and subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres.

Annex

Decisions of the Conference of the Parties relevant to sustainable wildlife management

The following table shows the decisions made by the Conference of the Parties since 2004 that are relevant to sustainable wildlife management.

COP decision	*Year*	*Title*
VII/12	2004	Sustainable Use (Article 10)
IX/5	2008	Forest Biodiversity
IX/17	2008	Biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands
X/32	2010	Sustainable use of biodiversity
XI/25	2012	Sustainable use of biodiversity: bushmeat and sustainable wildlife management
XII/18	2014	Sustainable use of biodiversity: bushmeat and sustainable wildlife management
XIII/8	2016	Sustainable use of biodiversity: bushmeat and sustainable wildlife management
14/7	2018	Sustainable wildlife management
15/19	2022	Programme of work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
15/23	2022	Sustainable wildlife management
16/15	2024	Sustainable wildlife management