

Statement to the SBSTTA-24 and SBI-03 Special virtual session on Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19

TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, would like to thank the CBD Secretariat for organizing this Special Session on this crucial issue of Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19. The One Health approach is absolutely crucial in successfully preventing future pandemics and we believe the targets and indicators being developed for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework provide a good basis for the Convention's contribution to the One Health Approach and making those crucial links between biodiversity and human health and well-being. The challenge now is to see how we can ensure that those relevant targets in the framework also address the global challenges thrown up by the current health emergency and economic challenges.

For example, the updated zero draft of the post-2020 framework features, for the first time, targets related to wildlife trade. It is therefore important that the monitoring elements and indicators we use to measure progress on the implementation of the target also support efforts to reduce the risk of pathogens spreading through wildlife use and trade. This includes gathering the information needed to understand and map the risk; the aspects of the trade which are linked to zoonotic disease; the species and levels of use involved; where their markets and transport hubs are located; and the trade practices that increase risk of pandemics. Indicators can also measure the implementation of best-practice models that we can use to mitigate that risk, such as traceability systems, certification, and sanitary controls. Measures must also be applied beyond just terrestrial animal species and consider all species of flora and fauna when addressing drivers of biodiversity loss; for example, how changes in consumption due to COVID may result in increased use of fisheries as food that is lower risk, or medicinal plants in the treatment of COVID symptoms.

The updated zero draft also incorporates targets looking at the issue of sustainable use that are relevant, such as Target 8 to ensure benefits, including nutrition, food security, livelihoods, health and well-being, for people through sustainable management of wildlife. COVID-19 is not just an immediate human health threat - it also poses a long-term socio-economic threat. Sustainable use of biodiversity can contribute to economic recovery and can be part of the solution. The indicators for this target must therefore measure the contribution of biodiversity to the food security, health, income, and well-being of many rural economies and IPLCs. Policy responses to COVID-19 must use this data to consider the socio-economic impacts on these communities and identify approaches needed that are equitable, just, and participatory.

Targets 13, 14 and 15 are also relevant to the implementation of the One Health Approach, calling for biodiversity values to be mainstreamed across all sectors; ensuring production practices and supply chains are sustainable; and eliminating unsustainable consumption patterns, ensuring people everywhere understand and appreciate the value of biodiversity, and thus make responsible choices.

As a long-established organisation working primarily on wildlife trade, TRAFFIC is committed to assisting governments and mobilize action in our existing areas of expertise: market monitoring; design and mediation of regulatory and market-based solutions (including traceability systems); capacity-building in support of implementation and enforcement; design of consumer behaviour change messaging; and

trade impact evaluation. We look forward to working with CBD Parties and other partners in the coming years in tackling this global challenge together.

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