

Draft WCS intervention, CBD SBSTTA/SBI virtual sessions on One Health/biodiversity:

TYVM. I am speaking on behalf of WCS, and we will send more detailed comments in writing, including some science-based recommendations on the Global Biodiversity Framework targets and indicators, in the context of One Health.

We strongly agree with previous speakers that we must work to prevent pandemics at source—preventing pathogen spillover first & foremost, as well as disease emergence. Business as Usual cannot be an option. Indeed, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. There must be a truly OH approach—and it must be trans-sectoral.

The foundational role of biodiversity in human health and wellbeing has been discussed extensively within CBD since at least CoP11, and has resulted in significant guidance to Parties. At CBD CoP14 in 2018, Parties adopted Decision 14/4. Many Parties have taken steps to implement that Decision, and some have developed national One Health frameworks. Those efforts are important, but in light of the devastation of COVID-19, we now know they were insufficient.

Combating the biodiversity, health, and climate crises is not a zero-sum game. It is vital that we all work collaboratively on all three fronts to prevent the next global pandemic. We must ensure the conservation and protection of biodiversity that, interwoven with intact and functional ecosystems, provides the foundational infrastructure of life, health, and well-being on our planet. The post-2020 GBF is fundamental to these efforts.

We urge the CBD Parties to build on the substantial available scientific knowledge that links EID's to encroachment, ecosystem destruction, and wildlife commercialization. The increasing human/wildlife interface is a major risk that must be addressed, nationally, and through the GBF. Aspects in the GBF on ecological integrity should also be seen in a OH context.

We appreciate that the IPBES report, and several speakers, highlighted the role of wildlife trade. The science is clear—ending commercial wildlife trade, particularly in live and freshly slaughtered animals for human consumption, is a cost-effective and science-based option to prevent spillover at source (while ensuring safe access to wildlife for IPLCs whose food and cultural security depend on wild species). Viruses don't care whether an animal was obtained illegally or unsustainably—and the legal trade must be addressed as well as the illegal if we actually want to make a difference. Combating illegal wildlife trade is vital, but it will not prevent the next pandemic of zoonotic origin; the majority of the trade is indeed legal. We stress that these recommendations do not relate to ALL wildlife trade (and much of the sustainable trade in wild animals and plants is not in live animals, and poses a low zoonotic risk).

The science is clear—there are thousands more viruses that could spill over, many unknown to science or our immune systems. COVID-19 is tragic, but COVID-21 or 22 could be even more deadly. Maintaining the *status quo* on live wildlife trade (for food, fur, etc.) or making minor sanitary adjustments, is not precautionary at all—the economic benefits of such trade are negligible compared to the economic losses today, including the collapse of wildlife-based tourism, which harm the rural poor in particular. Respecting and supporting the rights and needs of IPLCs is vital, but should not be used as a smokescreen to protect certain niche trade interests.

As you the governments work to recover from COVID-19, we urge you to implement precautionary policy measures that will truly help prevent the next such pandemic (not just slightly reduce the risk). CBD and the GBF can indeed provide guidance, including targets and indicators on pandemic prevention, and we would be glad to provide suggestions.

TYVM.