



Born Free statement – informal session of SBSTTA-24

18.02.2021

Agenda item 3: post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Thank you Chair.

I'd like to use this opportunity to highlight shortcomings in the proposed wording and indicators for Target 4 relating to wildlife trade and use.

The global impact of both the legal and illegal trade on species in the wild is massive, and the risk that ever-increasing human-wildlife interactions pose to our health, wellbeing, safety and livelihoods is alarming. The science - and the economics, as confirmed in the recent Dasgupta review - urge us to take a highly precautionary approach when it comes to wildlife exploitation and trade. Both the IPBES Pandemics report and the GBO-5 concede that unsustainable practices like the industrial-scale commercial wildlife trade should be halted. Why is this not currently reflected in the draft Framework?

On that basis and with reference to document 24/3 and its addendums, Born Free has 3 key points to make:

1. Current proposed indicators for Target 4 focus on legality, which is not a direct measure of sustainability or safety. The target suggests that if it's not illegal or unsustainable, it is therefore safe, which isn't necessarily the case. In addition, "proportion" of traded wildlife that is "legal and safe" is not only difficult to objectively ascertain, but it doesn't account for fluctuations in supply and demand, the effects of which can be dramatic on total volume of trade. Further, monitoring measures to ensure "safe" wildlife harvesting and trade operations will inevitably fall short of keeping people safe. We for example need clear indicators measuring reductions in the commercial exploitation of wildlife that risks zoonotic disease transfer.
2. There are no obvious indicators that 'define' sustainability or safety. Taking note of Info doc 11 on "Annotations for terms", we suggest including definitions of those concepts for the sake of clarity, and ensuring that the evaluation of 'sustainability' has an ecological basis, with the objective to have healthy functioning ecosystems rather than focussing on maximum sustainable yield.
3. Regarding the lack of indicators to measure 'reduction in human-wildlife conflict', we would promote monitoring systems that address broader issues beyond providing a record of damage incidents. Possible indicators might include the attitudes, tolerance and understanding of rural communities; their living standards and capacities; and the resilience of sustainable rural economies; as well as the implementation of direct actions such as physical barriers and policy changes. Those practical actions must be implemented with a view to develop a culture of co-existence with wildlife.

Born Free stands ready to provide more detailed suggestions on these topics and other areas of the post-2020 GBF in the lead up to COP15. Thank you.