

TRAFFIC Briefing on the Scope and Content of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Background

Wildlife trade is an issue at the nexus of today's most pressing conservation and development concerns linked to human use of natural resources. The trade in wild animals and plants contributes to the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people around the world and generates hundreds of billions of dollars of economic value annually. However, all too often, efforts to ensure this trade remains legal and at sustainable levels struggle to succeed. This jeopardises the status of species, ecosystems and the well-being of people who depend on wild resources for their livelihood.

Poaching, illegal logging, and other types of wildlife crime have been particularly severe in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where wildlife populations are under extreme pressure due to growing demand, particularly from markets in Asia. Well-known species such as elephants, rhinos and tigers remain at risk, with poaching for trade also threatening a wide variety of other fauna including pangolins and species of reptiles, and birds. It is not only terrestrial animal species that are threatened by illegal activities. A growing number of timber and plant species, marine fish and other aquatic species are also illegally targeted to supply markets including in Asia, the USA, and Europe.

As a result, over recent years the issue of wildlife trade has been brought to the forefront of global attention, at the highest level of government. In July 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted its first-ever Resolution on Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife (69/314) and this was followed by numerous commitments on wildlife trade being adopted by individual countries at the highest political levels, as well as co-operative strategies and plans to address wildlife trade adopted by regional economic integration organisations and other regional bodies.

For many species, the impacts of illegal trade are compounded by legal but unsustainable trade linked to a wider lack of good governance and effective management, as well as persistent and systemic corruption in the area of natural resources management.

Fortunately, the past decade has also seen the development and implementation of a growing number of regulatory and voluntary systems and approaches to support sustainable management of wildlife resources and facilitate benefit flows from legal, sustainable wildlife trade. Positive actions by businesses that depend on sustainable supplies of wild-sourced products are also growing. Chain of custody, certification and other approaches are increasingly being used to demonstrate sustainability and traceability along supply chains in the timber, fisheries, botanicals, and leather goods sectors. Key companies in sectors such as transport, logistics, courier and freight companies, alongside e-commerce, social media and travel and tourism, are mainstreaming biodiversity into their operations by implementing "zero-tolerance" policies towards illegal wildlife trade. Governments have also acted to strengthen management and traceability systems for wildlife products in trade, e.g. in relation to timber trade in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, Tanzania, Cameroon and Madagascar, and trade in European Eels to Asia.

Nevertheless, expanding human populations, growing consumer purchasing power and global interconnectivity drive and facilitate increasing wildlife consumption that is all too often at unsustainable levels. Illegal exploitation and trade in wildlife products, exacerbated by corruption and links with financing other illicit activities, continues to drive an increasing number of species towards

extinction, and undermine national and international efforts to transition towards sustainable practices.

CBD and wildlife trade

The Aichi Targets in the CBD's Strategic Plan to 2020 do not include a target specific to trade in wildlife, despite illegal and unsustainable trade being one of the key drivers of biodiversity loss, and sustainable, well-managed legal wildlife trade having a scope for providing benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services. Selected Aichi Targets (for example Target 6 concerning fish, invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants), as well as the Targets of the CBD's Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, recognise and reflect on the importance of addressing illegal and unsustainable trade in species of wild flora and fauna. The relevant areas of work in CBD include Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Health and Biodiversity, Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, Business and Biodiversity, among others.

While the commitments of CBD Parties concern the issues of national jurisdiction, in the current set-up of the global biodiversity targets, the impacts of trade on biodiversity in other countries is poorly covered. Such impacts on biodiversity outside national borders are exemplified by international wildlife trade currently lacking the commitment to implement measures to ensure trade is legal and sustainable at the global level. While certain other Multilateral Environmental Agreements—in particular 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)—address elements of wildlife trade, **wider commitment under the umbrella of the global biodiversity framework is needed, including to provide the direct link to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the accompanying Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Targets. This has renewed policy attention to sustainable use of marine and terrestrial ecosystems (SDGs 14 and 15), sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12), and provided a framework for measuring progress. It also helped reinforce similar commitments to ensuring sustainable natural resource use is reflected in a wide range of intergovernmental, national and private sector policies. Of specific direct relevance to wildlife trade is SDG 15.7: ***“Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products”***

Recommendation for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

TRAFFIC believes that establishing a target within the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which focuses on wildlife trade, is essential to ensure the political commitment and levels of implementation to address this truly global issue. It will also ensure connectivity with the SDGs, something we feel is essential when addressing this key topic.

To this end, we request the CBD Secretariat to **consider including the following target within the post-2020 framework:**

Reduce the pressure of illegal and unsustainable trade in wild flora and fauna on biodiversity, and enhance the benefits to wildlife conservation and human well-being that derive from legal wildlife trade at sustainable levels

TRAFFIC will be available to work with the CBD Secretariat and other organisations, as necessary, to develop a set of measurable indicators for this target. Example sub-targets (with accompanying indicators further available) that could be used to evaluate the success of Parties, other governments and stakeholders in achieving the target include:

- Illegal trade in elephant, rhino and tiger products reduced by 50%
- Unauthorised timber exports reduced by 50% or more from countries with significant illegal trade from high conservation value forests
- Risk of overexploitation reduced by 30% for “high risk” shark species in trade
- Best practice guidelines (e.g. the FairWild Standard recognised by the CBD’s Global Strategy for Plant Conservation) applied to trade in 50 priority wild plant value chains
- Robust traceability mechanisms established for high risk wild species in trade

It may be useful to note that from the perspective of businesses expressing their commitment to the implementation of global targets, SGD 15.7 has proven difficult to report against. A target articulating a commitment to reduce illegal wildlife trade and/or support legal and sustainable trade, as well as the relevant traceability mechanisms would support a business response and potentially support a review of the SDG 15.7 indicators that businesses could then use to show their contribution to the delivery of the global commitments to ensure legality in wildlife trade.

Regarding the process of the development of the post-2020 framework, TRAFFIC recommends the balanced inclusion of Parties and other relevant stakeholder from across the world, including through inclusive regional consultations, to achieve the development of robust and representative targets.

TRAFFIC will also support the formulation of Targets around enabling conditions, including good governance, adequate financing, capacity building to ensure the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and necessary linkages with other global commitments.