



PRESS RELEASE

Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management urges science-based approach to wildlife management in the context of COVID-19

- *Pragmatic, factual and science-based approach to wildlife management needed in wake of COVID-19 pandemic.*
- *Immediate pressures of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation as well as the underlying drivers must be addressed to reduce the risk of future zoonotic diseases.*
- *Guiding principles will steer decision-making that reduce risk of future disease while contributing to conservation of biodiversity while respecting livelihoods, food security and culture of diverse groups of people.*

Montreal 16 October 2020 - The Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) has released a [joint statement](#) calling for a pragmatic, factual and science-based approach to the wildlife management challenges that have arisen in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In their statement, CPW partners, put forward four guiding principles to steer decision-making towards actions that would work to reduce the risks of the rise and spread of new zoonotic diseases, while also contributing to the conservation of species and ecosystems, while respecting livelihoods, food security and culture of diverse groups of people.

These principles can be summarized in the following points:

- **Recognize the importance of the use of wildlife for many communities, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), in policy responses.**
- **Maintain and restore healthy and resilient ecosystems to reduce risks of zoonotic spillovers and future pandemics.**
- **Understand that persecution, including killing of wild animals suspected of transmitting diseases, will not address the causes of the emergence or spread of zoonotic diseases.**
- **Regulate, manage and monitor harvesting, trade and use of wildlife to ensure it is safe, sustainable and legal.**

The CPW statement seeks to encourage stakeholders to effectively regulate, manage and monitor the use, consumption and harvesting of wildlife to ensure that it is safe, sustainable and legal. The partnership also suggests that efforts to respond to the new challenges of the post-COVID-19 world should be grounded in science while taking into account the needs of the most vulnerable human

communities, so that the underlying factors that affect the health of global ecosystems, as well as human health, are effectively and efficiently tackled.

CPW partners urge governments, organizations and other partners to acknowledge the significant role that Indigenous Peoples and local communities can play in establishing effective approaches for the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife through the traditional knowledge of their environments, making plain the need to meaningfully involve these groups in crafting future solutions to these challenges.

The statement also seeks to encourage an integrated approach that can contribute to restoring damaged ecosystems and preserving essential services that keep nature, including humans, safe from the spread of disease.

Further, the principles call out the misplaced killing of animal species in the wild, such as bats, which will not stop the spread of COVID-19.

“Governments, international organizations and relevant partners may wish to join hands to strengthen multisectoral and multidisciplinary collaboration. Together, it is possible to integrate health, food security and biodiversity approaches to reduce the risk of future pandemics. An inclusive ‘One Health approach’ that integrates an “ecosystem health” dimension through ecological thinking and sound science, is fundamental.” said David Cooper, Chair of the CPW and Deputy Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) comprises an experienced group of international organizations that have a shared interest in a pragmatic, science-based approach for developing, monitoring, and guiding joint initiatives for the sustainable, legal and safe use of wildlife and conservation of biodiversity. The CPW promotes an integrated understanding of the complex interconnections and mutual dependencies between wildlife and people and works to increase cooperation and coordination on sustainable wildlife management issues among its members and partners. The CPW network has substantive expertise in relevant areas such as sustainable use of and trade in wildlife, food security, human livelihoods and well-being, human-wildlife conflict prevention and mitigation, and animal health.

Partners include the **CITES** Secretariat, the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**), the Convention on Migratory Species (**CMS**), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (**FAO**), the United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**), the Center for International Forestry Research (**CIFOR**), the World Organisation for Animal Health (**OIE**), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**), International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (**CIC**), the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (**IIFB**), International Institute for Environment and Development (**IIED**), International Trade Centre (**ITC**), International Union of Forest Research Organizations (**IUFRO**), and **TRAFFIC** – The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network.

The partnership was established in 2013, with the aim of establishing a platform for addressing wildlife management issues that require national and supra-national responses.

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/wildlife-partnership/en/>

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