

Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
**Information document on the inclusion of a target on
Human-wildlife conflict in the framework**

7 July 2021

The Convention on Biological Diversity's 2050 Vision of *Living in harmony with nature* envisages a world in which environmental conflicts are much reduced and “*humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.*” This inherently entails giving a high priority to reducing conflicts that exist over natural resources, including wildlife, protected areas, access, use, and many other aspects of conservation.

Among these biodiversity conflicts, [human-wildlife conflict](#) (HWC) is a rapidly growing, serious and widespread concern for conservation and local sustainable livelihood initiatives and development more generally, worldwide. Human-wildlife conflict typically occurs when wildlife poses a direct or indirect and recurring threat to the livelihoods or safety of people, leading to the persecution of the wildlife. A great number of species are affected by HWC, from invertebrates to the largest mammals, and much media and political attention is drawn particularly to conflicts involving large, iconic wildlife species such as elephants, large cats, bears, crocodiles and sharks, which require large areas and often cannot survive only inside protected areas. To enable nature-friendly agriculture and ensure food security alongside biodiversity conservation, the international community must look closely at how communities can live sustainably alongside wildlife, and shift a greater focus onto developing ways to coexist with these and many other species outside of protected areas.

At a global scale, HWC is rapidly escalating to a point where it triggers deeper conflicts over conservation, social change and inequalities. We must have the foresight to anticipate emerging conflicts over biodiversity which risk undermining many of the excellent successes of conservation efforts so far. **It is essential therefore to include HWC explicitly in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework text.**

Related to this, the [IUCN Resolution \(WCC 2020 Res 101\) on Addressing Human-Wildlife Conflict](#) calls on the global community to recognise HWC as a rapidly growing cause of wildlife declines and population disruptions in the freshwater, marine and terrestrial realms, as well as a threat to sustainable development, food security, public safety, the rights of wildlife to exist in the landscape, and biodiversity conservation.

Human-wildlife conflict is currently included in the Updated Zero Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([CBD/POST2020/2/1](#)), which states:

Target 3. By 2030, ensure active management actions to enable wild species of fauna and flora recovery and conservation, and reduce human-wildlife conflict by [X%].

Here we outline our recommendations related to this target.

1) We recommend a change to the wording of this target:

We propose to **retain the target but improve its language** to reflect a more realistic goal. Assigning a percentage total reduction as the universal target for all parties may not be the most helpful way to enable countries to meet their target of reducing HWC. This is because HWC comprises impacts on wildlife, areas, local livelihoods, human well-being, and social inequalities. Summing all these effects, which will vary by region, into a single percentage would be both very difficult to calculate and too vague to be meaningful.

While certain impacts, such as losses of crops, livestock, loss of human life, killing of wildlife, and habitat alterations can be quantified, several other very important aspects of HWC (such as behaviour alterations, gradual species range changes, effects on human wellbeing and livelihoods, local economic multiplier effects, political effects, cultural influences) do not lend themselves to straightforward quantitative analysis. Many of these broader aspects can, however, be assessed qualitatively, and changes can be tracked and monitored.

The impacts of HWC vary greatly in severity, and while almost all countries struggle with the issue (indeed more than a third of all NBSAPs list HWC as a serious concern), some do so much more than others. Countries such as India, Kenya, Gabon, Sri Lanka, Brazil and many more face very high-pressure and high-profile HWC challenges, while some others do so much less.

We recommend the target should be for countries to *mitigate, manage and prevent* HWC effectively and sustainably, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate progress in reducing HWC. Such a combination of indicator tools is feasible and can be developed together with the parties.

We therefore suggest the target language be modified to:

Target 3. By 2030, ensure active management actions to enable wild species of fauna and flora recovery and conservation, and effective, quantifiable measures to reduce human-wildlife conflict have been implemented.

2) Indicators for the target are already in development

In reference to the [Co-chairs' text on item 3 Annex](#) of the Scientific and Technical Advice on Updated Goals and Targets, and Related Indicators and Baselines, of The Updated Zero Draft of The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which states:

(64) Target 3: It was identified that human-wildlife conflict, while important, is problematic given the lack of information to establish a baseline and to monitor progress. Because of these some suggested removing this issue from the proposed target while others suggested removing the quantitative element.

We would like to draw attention to current efforts underway to provide precisely such baseline and progress monitoring. Methods to measure and monitor HWC certainly do exist and have been carried

out by many researchers at local, community, regional and sub-national scales. The IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force together with the GEF-financed, World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program and several other organisations is working on developing a **Global Assessment of Human-Wildlife Conflict**, with the primary purpose of providing baseline and monitoring data for the Post 2020 GBF and towards the 16th Conference in 2030.

This was initially proposed at the First meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group in Nairobi, 27-30 August 2019, and is detailed in Annex 4 of the [Workshop Proceedings: Sustainable Wildlife Management Beyond 2020 – Report Of The Consultative Workshop, 25-26 June 2019](#) and the following outline indicators were suggested.

Updated 2030 Targets	A. Components of the 2030 targets	B. Monitoring Elements	C. Indicators	D. Period of availability of baseline data and frequency of updates
Target 3 By 2030, ensure active management actions to enable wild species of fauna and flora recovery and conservation, and reduce human-wildlife conflict by 30%	T3.2. Reduced human-wildlife conflicts and increased, sustainable coexistence	Trends in human-wildlife conflicts, including: a) Species and conservation areas b) People and communities c) Economic impacts d) Capacity & knowledge e) Policy & resources	a) Proportion of species populations that are affected by HWC b) Number of people affected by HWC in various ways c) Economic and livelihood costs of HWC d) Capacity of communities, governments, NGOs & other actors to manage HWC e) Policies & strategies at national levels, and resources for HWC management & prevention	Baseline: 2020-2021 Global Assessment of HWC M&E Updates: Global HWC monitoring & learning framework and sub-studies reports 2022-2028 Follow-up: 2029-2030 Global Assessment of HWC

Target 3 monitoring for HWC component, as recommended by the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force in 2019

3) Addressing human-wildlife conflict facilitates the enabling conditions of the framework

The [IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human–Wildlife Conflict](#) “urges governments, non-governmental organizations, researchers, practitioners, community leaders, environmental agencies, and others to ensure that efforts to manage human–wildlife conflicts are pursued through well-informed, holistic, and collaborative processes that take into account underlying social, cultural and economic contexts”.

Central to the effective mitigation and prevention of HWC are the **Enabling Conditions** required for the implementation of the framework, which contribute to the attainment of other societal conditions, as outlined in Paragraph 14 of Section G (page 7) of the Update of the Zero Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework Note by the Co-Chairs ([CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1](#)). **Best practice in HWC management not only requires but also enables and facilitates** all of the conditions listed in Paragraph 14:

- (a) The participation of indigenous peoples and local communities and a recognition of their rights in the implementation of the framework;
- (b) The participation of all relevant stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, youth, civil society, local and subnational authorities, the private sector, academia and scientific institutions through a whole-of-society approach and through inclusive and representative multi-stakeholder and multisectoral platforms;
- (c) Gender equality, gender-responsive approaches and empowerment of women and girls;
- (d) Recognition of intergenerational equity, including the transmission of knowledge, language and cultural values associated with biodiversity, especially by IPLCs;
- (e) Synergies among relevant multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant international processes, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and instruments at the global, regional and national levels, including the strengthening or establishment of cooperation mechanisms;
- (f) Partnerships to leverage sustainable activities and programmes at local, national, regional and global levels;
- (g) Inclusive and integrative governance and whole-of-government approaches to ensure policy coherence and effectiveness for the implementation the framework;
- (h) Mainstreaming biodiversity in all sectors;
- (i) The engagement of private sector, academic institutions and civil societies;
- (j) Safety and security in use of biodiversity to prevent spillover of zoonotic diseases, spread of invasive alien species and illegal trade in wildlife;
- (k) Political will and recognition at the highest levels of government of the urgent need to halt biodiversity loss;
- (l) The active involvement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities and a recognition of their competence and specific roles for the implementation of the framework;
- (m) Consider and recognize, where appropriate, the rights of nature

4) Technical advisory support is available to parties

Governments, non-governmental organizations, communities, companies, research institutions and individuals around the world are working to understand and address human-wildlife conflicts more efficiently and sustainably. The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force](#) is an interdisciplinary global advisory group that support organisations, governments and professionals working to resolve conflicts in biodiversity conservation. It was created to foster links between policy, science, and communities, and assimilate knowledge and capacity for HWC management.

The Task Force is available to assist with technical support to all parties and able to advise on the operationalization of a monitoring framework for the HWC component of Target 3 as part of a technical expert group, in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the Draft Recommendations submitted by the Chair regarding the [Scientific and Technical Information to Support the Review of the Updated Goals and Targets, and Related Indicators and Baselines](#) (26 May 2021).

Managing human–wildlife conflict and coexistence is a field of continuous learning that requires collaborative processes tailored to social and cultural contexts. To this end the IUCN SSC Human–Wildlife Conflict Task Force is currently in the final stages of preparing comprehensive practical guidance to assist practitioners, researchers, communities, and decision-makers in navigating human–wildlife interactions. The [IUCN Guidelines on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#) which provide comprehensive practical advice, is expected to be piloted in late 2021 with governments, conservation organisations, communities, and projects around the globe.

Citation: IUCN SSC HWCTF (2021). *Information document on the inclusion of a target on Human-wildlife conflict in the framework*. IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force. Available at: www.hwctf.org/policies

About the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force

The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force](#) is an interdisciplinary global advisory group that support organisations, governments and professionals working to resolve conflicts in biodiversity conservation. It was created to foster links between policy, science, and communities, and assimilating knowledge and capacity for this human-wildlife conflict management.

The Task Force is working to help enable the following outcomes:

1. **increase understanding** and awareness of the complexities of conflict
2. **facilitate more collaboration** between practitioners and policy, science and community
3. **catalyse more resources** and effort committed to good human-wildlife conflict management
4. **encourage preventive mitigation** of emerging human-wildlife conflicts
5. **integrate effective policies** into global biodiversity and development agendas

Key resources:

[IUCN Human-Wildlife Conflict Resource Library](#)

[IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)

[IUCN SSC Guidelines on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)

[International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence](#)

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Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

**Information document on developing indicators
for a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework**

31 January 2022

The Convention on Biological Diversity's 2050 Vision of *Living in harmony with nature* envisages a world in which environmental conflicts are much reduced and "*humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected.*" This inherently entails prioritising reducing conflicts that exist over natural resources, including wildlife, protected areas, access, use, and many other aspects of conservation.

Among these biodiversity conflicts, [human-wildlife conflict](#) (HWC) is a rapidly growing, serious, and widespread concern for species conservation, sustainable livelihoods and development worldwide. HWC typically occurs when wildlife poses a direct or indirect and recurring threat to the livelihoods or safety of people, leading to the persecution of the wildlife. A great number of species are affected by HWC, from invertebrates to the largest mammals, and much media and political attention is drawn particularly to conflicts involving large, iconic wildlife species such as elephants, large cats, bears, crocodiles and sharks, which require large areas and often cannot survive only inside protected areas. To enable nature-friendly agriculture and ensure food security alongside biodiversity conservation, the international community must look closely at how communities can live sustainably alongside wildlife and shift a greater focus onto developing ways to coexist with these and many other species outside of protected areas.

HWC is included in the First Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([CBD/WG2020/3/3](#)), which states: **Target 4. Ensure active management actions to enable the recovery and conservation of species and the genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species, including through ex situ conservation, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to avoid or reduce human-wildlife conflict.**

The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force](#) welcomes the removal of a percentage reduction for this target as initially proposed in the Updated Zero Draft ([CBD/POST2020/2/1](#)) because a total percentage reduction as the universal target for all parties may not be the most helpful way to enable countries to meet their target of reducing HWC. As noted in our "[Information document on the inclusion of a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework](#)", HWC comprises impacts on wildlife, areas, livelihoods, human wellbeing, and social inequalities. Summing all these effects, which will vary by region, into a single percentage would be very difficult to calculate and too vague to be meaningful.

We recommended the target should focus on the task of *mitigating, managing and preventing* HWC effectively and sustainably, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate progress to this aim. Here we outline our recommendations related to indicators for a target including HWC. HWC is both a biodiversity challenge and a sustainable development challenge, making it difficult to measure and develop indicators for the framework comprehensively and holistically. The [Co-chairs' text on item 3 Annex](#) of the Scientific and Technical Advice on Updated Goals and Targets, and Related Indicators and Baselines, of the Updated Zero Draft initially suggested

that “human-wildlife conflict, while important, is problematic given the lack of information to establish a baseline and to monitor progress”. However, efforts are underway to provide precisely such a baseline and progress monitoring. Methods to measure and monitor HWC certainly exist and have been carried out by many researchers at local, community, regional and sub-national scales. Many individual studies have been carried out which it may be possible to bring together into a collaborative monitoring framework.

Five key considerations for developing HWC indicators

In developing a monitoring approach and indicators, we urge the consideration of the following:

- 1) The indicator needs to focus on the long-term aim of human-wildlife conflict resolution, not symptomatic components thereof.** Keeping in mind Goodhart’s Law: *when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure*, overly focussing on easily noticeable elements of HWC, such as income loss from crop damage or number of animals killed in retaliation does not adequately provide an indication of whether the conflict itself is being managed effectively.
- 2) Developing monitoring methods for HWC needs to be a highly participatory, co-designed process involving many stakeholders.** Process is as important as the final method. To improve the approach, ensure it is relevant and applicable, and to create co-ownership and commitment, extensive collaboration and a pathway for ongoing iterative learning about HWC management is essential.
- 3) The human, social and the intangible aspects of HWCs are the most important components to measure, as they are closest to the root of the problem.** HWCs are about conflicts between groups of people over the management of wildlife; measuring the social dimensions of conflict, and ability of stakeholders to navigate these core and essential in measuring HWC.
- 4) HWC situations and management capacities are relative and highly variable.** Within and across countries HWCs are managed to very different extents. A universal measurement method would need to be adaptable to large variations in scale (local, regional, national) as well as the uniqueness and biological as well as social complexity of each scenario over time.
- 5) Measuring and monitoring HWC can be costly and resource dependent.** Substantial resources and budget allocations will be needed for parties to collect and analyse data. This can be operationally onerous and costly. It is important to consider the practicalities and do a feasibility test on several diverse HWC situations to ‘field-test’ the method, and co-design cost-effective innovative approaches.

Addressing HWC facilitates the enabling conditions of the framework

The [IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#) “urges governments, non-governmental organisations, researchers, practitioners, community leaders, environmental agencies, and others to ensure that efforts to manage human-wildlife conflicts are pursued through well-informed, holistic, and collaborative processes that take into account underlying social, cultural and economic contexts”. Central to the effective mitigation and prevention of HWC are the Enabling Conditions required for the implementation of the framework, which contribute to the attainment of other societal conditions, as outlined in Paragraph 14 of Section G (page 7) of the

Update of the Zero Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework Note by the Co-Chairs ([CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1](#)). Best practice in HWC management not only requires but also enables and facilitates all of the conditions listed in Paragraph 14.

Technical advisory support is available to parties

Governments, non-governmental organisations, communities, companies, research institutions, and individuals worldwide are working to understand and address HWCs more efficiently and sustainably. The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force](#) is an interdisciplinary global advisory group that support organisations, governments and professionals working to resolve conflicts in biodiversity conservation. It was created to foster links between policy, science, and communities and assimilate knowledge and capacity for HWC management.

The Task Force is available to assist with technical support to all parties and able to advise on the operationalisation of a monitoring framework for the HWC component of Target 4 as part of a technical expert group, following Paragraph 11 of the Draft Recommendations submitted by the Chair regarding the [Scientific and Technical Information to Support the Review of the Updated Goals and Targets, and Related Indicators and Baselines](#) (26 May 2021).

Managing HWC and coexistence is a field of continuous learning that requires collaborative processes tailored to social and cultural contexts. To this end, the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force is currently in the final stages of preparing comprehensive practical guidance to assist practitioners, researchers, communities, and decision-makers in navigating human-wildlife interactions. The [IUCN Guidelines on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#), which provide comprehensive practical advice, is expected to be piloted in 2022 with governments, conservation organisations, communities, and projects around the globe.

Citation: IUCN SSC HWCTF (2022). *Information document on developing indicators for a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework*. IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force. Available at: www.hwctf.org/policies

About the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force

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Key resources:

[IUCN Human-Wildlife Conflict Resource Library](#)
[IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)
[IUCN SSC Guidelines on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)
[International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence](#)

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CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Summary of key points regarding the inclusion of human-wildlife conflict in the framework

IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force

www.hwctf.org/policies

14 March 2022

Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) is a rapidly growing, serious, and widespread concern for species conservation, sustainable livelihoods and development worldwide. HWC is included in the First Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([CBD/WG2020/3/3](#)), under **Target 4. Ensure active management actions to enable the recovery and conservation of species and the genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species, including through ex situ conservation, and *effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to avoid or reduce human-wildlife conflict.***

TARGET

There has been much discussion about the placement of HWC in the framework text, specifically whether it should appear under Target 4, or be moved to Target 9, or even be given a separate, new Target. The [IUCN Position Paper](#) (March 2022) states that “IUCN supports the inclusion of human-wildlife conflict in the Framework, which is an increasingly critical and complex ecological and social global issue. However, we consider that it requires a separate target [with the] following formulation...: *Ensure that human-wildlife conflicts and coexistence are managed effectively through inclusive, holistic and collaborative processes that benefit both people and wildlife.*

Further to this, and as noted in our [Information document on the inclusion of a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework](#) (July 2021) the [IUCN SSC HWC Task Force](#) **re-emphasises that HWC must be explicitly mentioned and included in the Post 2020 GBF.** This we consider more important than the target placement, i.e. whether parties decide to include it under T4, T9, or elsewhere, the HWCTF is ready and able to support parties in the next steps of implementation and monitoring.

INDICATORS

Crucial to this is the development of indicators, which has been another area of discussion on the topic of HWC in the Framework. As outlined in our [Information Document on developing indicators for a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework](#) (January 2022), we recommend a focus on *mitigating, managing and preventing* HWC effectively and sustainably, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate progress to this aim. Methods to measure and monitor HWC do exist and have been carried out by many researchers at local, community, regional and sub-national scales. **Indicators are difficult to define but are underway and their development under coordination by the IUCN SSC HWC Task Force.**

In developing a monitoring approach and indicators, we urge the consideration of several key points, summarised here and also explained in more detailed in the above-mentioned document:

- 1) The indicator needs to focus on the long-term aim of the drivers HWC resolution, not symptomatic components thereof.
- 2) Developing monitoring methods for HWC needs to be a highly participatory, co-designed process involving many stakeholders.
- 3) The human, social and the intangible aspects of HWCs are the most important components to measure, as they are most reflective of the root and nature of the problem.
- 4) HWC situations and management capacities are relative and highly variable, and reporting needs to be feasible and appropriate for each party.

The current wording in the [Proposed Headline Indicators of the Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) proposes the indicator for Target 4.0.1 as “Proportion of species populations that are affected by human wildlife conflict”. NOTE that this is a remnant of very old input which included several more lines but was truncated during the evolution of drafts. This is not what the HWCTF proposes, as HWC is not solely a species issue. We are in the process of fine-tuning this for a more accurate indicator wording, and will likely propose text along the lines of:

4.0.1 Trends in effective and sustainable management of human-wildlife conflicts and coexistence.

This can be disaggregated into: Trends in human-wildlife conflicts, focussing on incidents, tolerance, process, and capacity: a) incidences of negative impacts or encounters on people and/or wildlife; b) willingness to coexist with wildlife (tolerance, perceptions); b) processes of engagement and capacity for efficient management.

The development of the indicators and accompanying components is being facilitated and convened by the IUCN SSC HWC Task Force and collaborators and will continue in follow-up to the Geneva CBD meetings of March 2022.

Citation: IUCN SSC HWCTF (2022). *Summary of key points regarding the inclusion of human-wildlife conflict in the framework*. IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force. Available at: www.hwctf.org/policies

About the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force

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Key resources:

[IUCN Human-Wildlife Conflict Resource Library](#)

[IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)

[IUCN SSC Guidelines on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict](#)

[International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence](#)



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CBD Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Information Document and Discussion Summary regarding the Indicator for Human-Wildlife Conflict in Target 4

15 June 2022

Human-wildlife conflict in the Post-2020 GBF

[Human-wildlife conflict](#) (HWC) is an escalating and serious concern for species conservation, sustainable livelihoods and development worldwide. HWC is included in the First Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework ([CBD/WG2020/3/3](#)), under Target 4: *Ensure active management actions to enable the recovery and conservation of species and the genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species, including through ex situ conservation, and **effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to avoid or reduce human-wildlife conflict.***

Target wording

IUCN, reflecting on several Parties' suggestions made during the third meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG-3, March 2022, Geneva) to clarify the wording of "human-wildlife interactions" by adding the bracketed "[to avoid or reduce human-wildlife conflict]" and/or referring to "coexistence", suggests simplified wording for the latter part of the Target as follows:

...and **effectively manage human-wildlife conflict and coexistence** ([IUCN Position Paper OEWG-4](#)).

Indicator wording

The current wording in the [Proposed Headline Indicators of the Monitoring Framework for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) lists the headline indicator for Target 4.0.1 as "*Proportion of species populations that are affected by human wildlife conflict*". This is a remnant of old input which contained more elements but was truncated during subsequent drafts. The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group](#) (HWCCSG, formerly Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force) agrees with the feedback on this during [SBSTTA 24](#), that this indicator is not suitable and currently not fully operational as HWC is not solely a species issue, nor does this wording capture the multi-faceted nature of HWC as a conservation issue.

IUCN's HWCCSG recommends the indicator for the HWC component of Target 4 to be revised to: ***Trends in effective and sustainable management of human-wildlife conflict and coexistence.*** This wording better captures the Target's goal, which is about improving HWC situations and creating or maintaining coexistence through effective, context-specific and appropriate management of the issue.

This indicator also lends itself well to further breaking down into the core components of what is necessary to manage HWCC, for example, this indicator can be disaggregated into trends in the following components which can be developed further:

- 1) **Incidences of negative impacts** or encounters on people and wildlife
- 2) **Willingness to coexist with wildlife** (tolerance, social, cultural, political)
- 3) **Quality of processes** of engagement, policy and capacity for efficient management



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This is technically feasible for national and global levels (data can be aggregated), it is more relevant to key elements of the target, and is something that can be developed collaboratively between Parties and Observers, with the HWCCSG available to coordinate efforts and help provide science-policy linkages (e.g. via the [IUCN Library on HWC](#) and [IUCN Guidelines on HWC](#) in preparation).

Development of the HWC Indicator

As outlined in the [Information Document on developing indicators for a target on human-wildlife conflict in the framework](#) (January 2022), the HWCCSG **recommends a focus on preventing, managing and mitigating HWC effectively and sustainably, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate progress to this aim.** In developing a monitoring approach for HWC, the following aspects should be considered: a) the indicator needs to focus on the long-term aim of the drivers of conflict resolution, not just symptomatic aspects, b) the social, cultural and political aspects of HWCs are crucially important components, as they are most reflective of the underlying nature of the problem; and b) HWC situations and management capacities are highly variable, so reporting needs to be manageable and relevant for each party.

Technical workshops on HWC indicator development

The HWCCSG is the proposed institution for coordinating the development and delivery of the indicator for HWC for Target 4 as part of [UNEP-WCMC's compilation of data relating to headline indicators](#). Therefore, **a first online technical workshop was convened on 8 June 2022, which included members of the HWCCSG and colleagues from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), WWF, as well as the CBD Secretariat and OEWG, UNEP-WCMC and several government parties (incl. Angola, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Mozambique, Namibia, Uganda, UK).** Workshop participants discussed the potential metrics for this indicator and to what extent data collection for the three proposed components would be feasible. The main conclusions included:

- 1) Incidences of impacts: a range of data in this category are already collected by many parties and organisations. It is considered important that the indicator picks up both human and wildlife impacts.
- 2) Willingness to co-exist: Although methods for this are well established in conservation social sciences, for some parties this is a less familiar aspect to measure. Experience of measuring e.g. tolerance (in a repeatable way to allow trend assessment) may be limited within some wildlife/forestry departments, but guidance and links across disciplines can readily be mobilized for this.
- 3) Quality of process: Reporting of the level of engagement, stakeholder participation and policy development (ie the extent to which conflict and coexistence are well managed) is also an important component and reasonable straightforward to document and report on (e.g. through evidence of consultations, use of facilitators, community-led projects etc).

Given the range of capacities, it was suggested that the methods underpinning the HWC indicator will likely continue to evolve and become more accurate, refined, and comparable as this effort continues up to and beyond COP15. Furthermore, although HWCs around the world share many common characteristics, contexts vary greatly from country to country, and most likely a methodology that sets out a monitoring framework but allows for a range of context-appropriate data collection approaches within it, may be most beneficial at this time. Concerns over feasibility were also discussed, to consider whether countries have capacity to collect the range of data needed, at scale. Certainly guidance and resources will be needed to support this. The multi-disciplinary nature of the components also



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requires engagement of experts from a range of fields to assist in the development of methods and to support countries in their reporting requirements. To assist with this, **a joint working group (of interested organisations and parties) could be formed to continue these engagements and efforts post-COP**. Parties themselves are best positioned to decide on which metrics are most relevant and feasible to specific HWC situations, but ongoing technical support mechanisms could certainly be created to support this journey.

Technical advisory support is available

Governments, non-governmental organisations, communities, companies, research institutions, and individuals worldwide are working to understand and address HWCs more efficiently and sustainably. The [IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group](#) is an interdisciplinary global advisory group that was created to foster links and assimilate knowledge and capacity for HWC management. The HWCCSG and collaborators such as those participating in this workshop are available to assist with technical support to parties and able to advise on the operationalisation of a monitoring framework for the HWC component of Target 4 as part of a technical expert group, following Paragraph 11 of the Draft Recommendations submitted by the Chair regarding the [Scientific and Technical Information to Support the Review of the Updated Goals and Targets, and Related Indicators and Baselines](#) (26 May 2021).

Citation: IUCN SSC HWCCSG (2022). *Information document and discussion summary regarding the indicator for Human-Wildlife Conflict in Target 4*. IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group. Available at: www.hwctf.org/policies

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HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT

- Wildlife can threaten people's safety and livelihoods, which can lead to conflicts between groups of people over how to resolve the situation; experts call this 'human-wildlife conflict'.
- Human-wildlife conflicts are becoming more frequent, serious and widespread as human populations grow and habitats are lost.
- Effectively managing human-wildlife conflicts protects communities, stops conflicts escalating, builds trust in conservation and avoids retaliation against wildlife.
- Human-wildlife conflicts have unique ecological, cultural, social, historical, physical, economic and political characteristics which strategies to manage conflicts must consider.

What is the issue?

Wildlife can pose a **direct threat to the safety, livelihoods and wellbeing of people**. For example, when elephants forage on crops, seals damage fishing nets or jaguars kill livestock, people can lose their livelihoods. Retaliation against the species blamed often ensues.

The term human-wildlife conflict has traditionally been applied only to these negative interactions between people and wildlife, but this implies deliberate action by wildlife species and ignores the **conflicts between groups of people** about what should be done to resolve the situation.

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group defines human-wildlife conflict as:

struggles that emerge when the presence or behaviour of wildlife poses an actual or perceived, direct and recurring threat to human interests or needs, leading to disagreements between groups of people and negative impacts on people and/or wildlife.

Human-wildlife conflicts are becoming **more frequent, serious and widespread** because of **human population growth, agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, climate change** and other drivers of habitat loss. Human-wildlife conflicts can occur wherever wildlife and human populations overlap, so any factor that forces wildlife and people into closer contact makes conflicts more likely.

Much work to date has focussed on interventions to reduce impacts on people and retaliation against wildlife such as creating barriers, deploying deterrents or moving wildlife.

In the absence of consultative, collaborative processes with stakeholders, these measures often have limited success.



A lion kills a donkey on the boundary of Makgadikgadi Pans National Park, Botswana © James Stevens

Why is this important?

Healthy ecosystems and the vital services they provide to people depend on wildlife. Managing human-wildlife conflicts is therefore crucial to achieve the **UN Vision for Biodiversity 2050** in which 'humanity lives in harmony with nature and in which wildlife and other living species are protected'.

Human-wildlife conflicts have severe implications for communities' livelihoods, safety and wellbeing, and risk undermining conservation efforts by eroding support for protected areas, wildlife and biodiversity.

Retaliation against wildlife can pose a serious threat to a species' survival, and reverse previous conservation progress.

For example, wolves, bears and other large carnivores are recovering across Europe, leading to tensions over how to manage their presence, which is welcomed by some and perceived as a risk to safety and livelihoods by others.

What can be done?

Human-wildlife conflict is recognised as a global concern in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's [post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#) (to be adopted by Parties at CBD COP15 Part Two). Related to this, many governments are beginning to **include the management of human-wildlife conflict in national policies and strategies** to ensure resources are made available to manage them.

There are [numerous approaches and measures that can be taken](#) to reduce the damage or impacts, de-escalate tensions, address risks to income and poverty, and develop sustainable solutions.

These sometimes include barriers (fences, nets, trenches), guarding and early-warning systems, deterrents and repellents (sirens, lights, beehives), translocation (moving wildlife), compensation or insurance, providing risk-reducing alternatives, as well as managing tensions between stakeholders involved in these situations.

Effective planning and implementation of such measures requires consideration of **good principles in community led-conservation**, in collaboration with the communities affected.



Asian elephants damage crops in Assam, India
© Assam Haathi Project/Chester Zoo

Research has shown that **conflicts are complex** and each situation has **unique ecological, cultural, social, historical, physical, economic and political characteristics**.

Although it is tempting to transfer approaches for damage reduction (e.g. fences, barriers) that appear helpful in one area directly to another, these only succeed if achieved through consultative, collaborative processes with stakeholders.

There can be pressure for 'quick fixes' to human-wildlife conflicts, but **actions that do not consider the wider social and local contexts can lead to unintended consequences** and increase tensions.

These can escalate into deeper divisions in which stakeholders perceive the conflict over wildlife to threaten their values or identity. Such situations become extremely difficult to resolve. In tensions over wolves in parts of North America for example, the relationship between stakeholders has deteriorated to deeply polarised conflict. In such cases, **professional mediation and reconciliation processes** (as used in peacebuilding) are needed.

Levels of Conflict



The levels of conflict over wildlife
© Zimmermann et al 2020

Efforts to assess and manage complex human-wildlife conflicts require collaboration across disciplines and sectors. For example, collaborations could involve conservation practitioners, community leaders, governments, researchers, businesses and other stakeholders; and need expertise in ecology, social psychology, economics, peacebuilding and environmental law.

Where can I get more information?

IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group: hwctf.org
hwctf.org/document-library - resource library
hwctf.org/policies - briefing papers
hwctf.org/guidelines - guidance

IUCN Resolution WCC-2020-Res-101 *Addressing human-wildlife conflict: fostering a safe and beneficial coexistence of people and wildlife* iucncongress2020.org/motion/117

IUCN (2020) IUCN SSC Position Statement on the Management of Human-Wildlife Conflict:
iucn.org/theme/species/publications/policies-and-position-statements