NON-BINDING BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON HOW TO DETERMINE WHETHER "THE TRADE WOULD PROMOTE *IN SITU* CONSERVATION"

This guidance contains the points, that a Scientific Authority and Management Authority (SA and MA) of the State of import may consider when assessing the trade of specimens of an Appendix II population for which an annotation requests that the State of import assess whether the trade would promote *in situ* conservation.

- The SA and MA should consider using the list of possible benefits for *in situ* conservation, set out below as a benchmark based on which an assessment of benefits of a particular transfer can be carried out.

- The SA and MA of an importing country may want to obtain full details of the conservation actions being proposed as part of, or as a result of, any proposed trade, and use the list below for comparison and cross-checking t if the proposed actions are aligned with the provided guidance on actions that promote *in situ* conservation.

- The SA and MA of the importing country could seek the support, views and advice of the SA and MA exporting country where appropriate, particularly in relation to verification of the conservation activities proposed.

- Regarding the relative value of each of the possible benefits in terms of their contribution towards *in situ* conservation, the list below provides a wide range of ways trade may contribute towards *in situ* conservation, and as such, there is a question over how impactful the possible benefits would be and how the relative weights of impact may be assessed towards a sufficient contribution.

- This determination is one which is left to the discretion of the SA and MA of the State of import for assessment on a case-by-case basis, based on the information provided and the species concerned. In some instances, the financing of material/equipment, infrastructure and investment in technologies that aim at protecting wildlife habitats may be the most appropriate contribution if the species concerned is most threatened by poaching or collection for local consumption**.** For other species, the expansion, restoration or creation of habitats securing and improving the quality and carrying capacity of habitats so that viable populations can be maintained may be the most appropriate form of *in situ* conservation support if the species is mainly threatened by habitat loss or deterioration.

- Some options may need to be combined with other options to result in a substantial net conservation contribution for the species in the wild.

Possible forms of benefits for *in situ* conservation

It should be emphasized that any of the benefits should have the aim of securing long-term populations of species in natural ecosystems and habitats. The proceeds of export of wildlife can be used to directly finance a variety of activities that may benefit *in situ* conservation of CITES species in the wild and the ecosystems on which they depend. These include but are not limited to:

- financing of material/equipment, infrastructure and investment in technologies that aim at protecting wildlife areas (parks, conservation areas and established habitats) and the protected species living therein.

- recruitment of personnel to enhance the management and protection of species within their natural range

- provision of capacity building and support for field staff/managers, *in situ* conservation personnel, community members and local stakeholders to

    - successfully protect threatened species from poaching
    - improve the technical capacity to analyze and report on spatially explicit data in a timely manner
    - use satellite tracking collars, software, GPS devices to protect wildlife

- use science-based management practices of species or populations,

- expansion, restoration or creation of habitats securing and improving the quality and carrying capacity of habitats so that viable populations can be maintained

- development and carrying out of community awareness, education and conservation programs for indigenous and local communities in order to

  - improve coexistence with wildlife
  - develop incentive schemes for conserving threatened species to reduce harvest where it is biologically unsustainable
  - provide assistance with alternative livelihoods
  - development of community benefits for people living with wildlife
  - develop humane deterrents to keep target species away from areas of human habitations and reduce human-wildlife conflict
  - implement humane measures to protect crops
  - to reduce and/or eliminate illegal exploitation of natural resources
  - to enhance environmental attitudes, values, and knowledge
  - to build skills that prepare individuals and communities to collaboratively undertake positive environmental action.

- conducting research to improve ways in which humans and wildlife can coexist

- establishment of rescue, rehabilitation, reintroduction, release and post-release monitoring programs that prioritize endangered or threatened species

- conducting research on threatened species, including but not limited to ecology, population monitoring, wildlife health, establishment of monitoring and adaptive management plans

- development and support of control protocols that oversee the implementation and monitoring activities in relation to the protection and biologically sustainable use of threatened species

Non-monetary contributions can also have direct and indirect benefits for *in situ* conservation. These include but are not limited to:

- research from *ex situ* locations intended to support scientific work relating to *in situ* conservation and /or directly contribute to the conservation of species or ecosystems:

  - monitoring methods, life history information, nutritional requirements, disease transmission/treatments
  - Genetic and demographic modelling – assess the relative importance of different threats to the different populations
  - animal physiology,
  - ecological and behavioral studies
  - husbandry/recognized captive breeding programs (such as the SSP of AZA, the EEP of EAZA or the GSMPs of WAZA) that support conservation of the threatened species in the wild in the return of rescue animals to the wild, and/or release and reintroduction purposes
  - veterinary health
  - demand reduction research for rhino and elephant products which threaten wild populations

- development of knowledge that allows for the carrying out of community awareness, education and conservation programs mentioned above

- exchange of specimens from recognized breeding programs (such as the SSP of AZA, the EEP of EAZA or the GSMPs of WAZA) for reintroduction into the wild, applying the IUCN guidelines for reintroductions

- holding workshops, conferences, symposia or other meetings intended to share and expand knowledge for the conservation of the species *in situ* and build capacity *in situ*.

Below you find a list of references to important guidelines and examples of best practices in relation to our mandate.

Guidelines:

IUCN have guidelines for reintroductions and other wildlife translocations *https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2013-009.pdf*

IUCN Species Survival Commission Guidelines on the Use of *Ex situ* Management for Species Conservation: https://www.eaza.net/assets/Uploads/Position-statements/IUCN-Guidelines-on-the-Use-of-ex-situ-management-for-species.pdf

IUCN Guidelines (2017) IUCN Guidelines for Determining When and How *Ex Situ* Management Should Be Used in Species Conservation https://conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/conl.12285

One Plan Approach from IUCN: The One Plan Approach to Conservation | Conservation Planning Specialist Group (cpsg.org)

Examples/ best practice:

North Carolina Zoo:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Larry_Minter/publication/332273276_The_African_elephant_Loxodonta_spp_conservation_programmes_of_North_Carolina_Zoo_two_decades_of_using_emerging_technologies_to_advance_in_situ_conservation_efforts/links/5d3322b74585153e59110155/The-African-elephant-Loxodonta-spp-conservation-programmes-of-North-Carolina-Zoo-two-decades-of-using-emerging-technologies-to-advance-in-situ-conservation-efforts.pdf

Colchester Zoo Project: Elephant Orphanage Project (EOP), South Kafue National Park, Zambia - https://www.actionforthewild.org/projects/current-projects/projects-in-africa/elephant-orphanage-project-eop/

Zoological Society of London – London and Whipsnade
https://www.zsl.org/conservation/regions/asia/asian-elephant-and-tiger-conservation-in-thailand

Bechert, U.S., Brown, J.L., Dierenfeld, E.S., Ling, P.D., Molter, C.M. and Schulte, B.A. (2019), Zoo elephant research: contributions to conservation of captive and free-ranging species. Int. Zoo Yb., 53: 89-115. https://doi.org/10.1111/izy.12211

The Thermal imaging elephant work at ZSL, zoo elephant contributing to wild counterparts: HEAT-seeking | Zoological Society of London (ZSL)

The Aspinall Foundation https://www.aspinallfoundation.org/the-aspinall-foundation/working-around-the-world/?_ga=2.215169107.575971721.1613136783-1464609486.1613136783

Prigen Conservation Breeding Ark https://prigenark.com