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IUCN's Inputs to draft UNEA 5 Ministerial Declaration of 8 October 2021

General comments:

In reading the current draft, two observations are made about possible improvements:

- 1) The structure/flow/placement of specific topics and paragraphs is not always clear. There does not seem to be an overall thread, flow or logic. For instance, the preambular COVID-19 para could come earlier on in the document, towards the beginning.
- 2) Many operational statements remain rather general in nature and for that reason it is not clear how useful they will be for guiding policy and subsequent action. IUCN suggests wherever possible to add more specific guidance (e.g., NEW para after OP9: "We commit to pursue and join untraditional partnerships ... "; OP10: "We commit to rethinking our approach ..."; OP19: puts together all the critical elements of "means of implementation/partnership", essentially SDG 17, with no specifics on how to move these forward).

Specific language suggestions (with relevant para indicated):

PP3 – add “armed conflict” to the list of threats

PP4 – proposed addition: "We are encouraged by the strength of innovation, knowledge building, and investment in green technologies [**and nature-based solutions**] currently taking place which indicate that solutions exist or can be found."

PP6 – rephrase: “We recognise the need for transformative and systemic changes, *supported by policies and investments that address several environmental and societal challenges simultaneously through innovative holistic approaches that truly value nature.*”

New OP10bis on nature and conflict – “*We emphasise the role of nature and conservation, including addressing impacts of climate change, in all phases of armed conflict - prevention, mitigation, resolution and recovery - and call for new partnerships between UNEP, humanitarian, development, conservation and military sector actors to increase knowledge and awareness and propose innovative governance and policy options.*”

OP11 – include reference to IUCN's Nature-based Solutions (NbS) [definition](#) and Global [Standard](#): "We commit to promote and strengthen Nature-based Solutions by actively protecting, sustainably managing, and restoring degraded ecosystems that provide us with food, water, and energy, are habitats for biodiversity and provide carbon storage and sequestration, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, for example natural forests, wetlands, and mangroves, thus underpinning our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. **We recognise the desirability of having a common definition and global standard with agreed criteria that ensure quality and sustainability, such as that developed by IUCN.**"

OP13 – add a reference to respecting customary laws and land rights of indigenous peoples: "We will promote comprehensive land use planning backed up by robust national enforcement as an invaluable tool for sustainable development and help create a conducive business **and legal** environment that stimulates investments in sustainable production and value chains, **including respecting customary laws and land rights of indigenous peoples**".