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To: UNEA Secretariat

**Born Free Foundation comments on the zero draft of the UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration**  
**(Version circulated on November 3, 2021)**

Born Free is a UK-based international wildlife protection charity. We promote compassionate conservation to enhance the survival of threatened species in the wild and protect natural habitats while respecting the needs and safeguarding the welfare of individual animals. We work closely with local communities to engage, empower and enhance the lives of those who live alongside wildlife and, as a leading wildlife charity, we oppose the exploitation of wild animals in captivity and campaign to keep them where they belong – in the wild.

We welcome this opportunity, as a UNEP-accredited observer organisation, to provide feedback on the zero draft of the Ministerial Declaration for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Our proposed additions to the text are provided in underlined and emboldened red text below.

Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact us should you require further information or clarification. We look forward to further opportunities to engage in this important process going forward.

Sincerely,

Dr Mark Jones, Head of Policy, Born Free Foundation

**Co-Founder** Virginia McKenna OBE | **Executive President** Will Travers OBE | **Managing Director** Karen Botha

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## Ministerial declaration for the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”

PP2 add the following text:

**We also recognise the interconnected nature of the crises facing our climate, biodiversity, and human and animal health and well-being, and the value of adopting the principles of ecological sustainability, One Health and One Welfare across policy initiatives.**

New preambular paragraph:

**NEW We note with profound concern the accelerating rate of species extinctions, with around one million animal and plant species estimated to be threatened with extinction, many within decades, and the impacts that this escalating extinction crisis is having on wider diversity and all humankind.**

PP3 add the following text:

We **also** note with profound concern the loss, degradation and fragmentation of ecosystems and habitats for biodiversity, affecting both life on land and life under water, due to multiple and interlinked threats such as **direct exploitation and** unsustainable management of nature and its resources, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, climate change, and pollution and littering of water, air, and soil.

PP6 add the following text:

We recognize the need for transformative and systemic changes and could have the opportunity to achieve more by policies and investments that address several environmental challenges simultaneously through innovative holistic approaches that truly value nature, **and through the adoption of One Health and One Welfare principles.**

OP8 add the following text:

We commit to supporting a green, **humane** and just recovery, with the goal of revitalizing our economies and livelihoods, contribute to poverty eradication, by mainstreaming environmental concerns, **wildlife protection and animal welfare imperatives across all sectors and levels of government and** into all policies, **programmes, plans** and tools promoting economic recovery; making use of green economy pathways that **recognise the intrinsic value of nature,** emphasize ecosystem and knowledge-based management, and by reducing greenhouse gas emissions while adapting to climate change in line with the Paris Agreement.

OP9 make the following amendments:

We commit to working across sectors and levels of government to halt the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of ecosystems, focusing on areas of particular importance for biodiversity, through sustainable land use, effectively managing protected areas, safeguarding especially vulnerable habitats, types of nature and eco-systems, **enhancing ecological, social and cultural integrity, ecosystem functionality and connectivity, actively conserving and restoring wild animal species,** and addressing **wildlife trade which is unsustainable, unsafe, unregulated and/or illegal, other exploitative uses of wildlife,** deforestation ~~and wildlife trade~~, mining, and other activities ~~crimes~~ that have serious **negative** impacts on the environment.

OP10 add the following text:

We commit to rethinking our approach to the use and management of nature and its resources, to **redefine the ‘sustainable use’ narrative to incorporate ecological principles and risks to human and animal health and well-being, to** advance **ecologically** sustainable consumption and production patterns, including through resource efficiency and circular economy policy approaches, **to phase out public subsidies and private investment in activities that are harmful to nature, biodiversity, human and animal health and the climate,** and by integrating the proper valuation of nature and the assessment of nature-related risks in policymaking.

OP13 add the following text:

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 environment that stimulates investments in **ecologically sustainable and safe** production and value chains.

OP14 add the following text:

We commit to safeguarding life under water, and a clean, healthy, and productive ocean capable of providing food, livelihoods, and storing carbon, through strengthening efforts to ~~sustainably~~ manage all our oceans **in an ecologically sustainable way**, as well as by sustainably using and protecting oceans, seas and coastal ecosystems, while acting to prevent pollution, and prevent marine temperature rise and ocean acidification, by keeping our efforts in line with the Paris agreement.

Proposed new OP after OP14:

**NEW We commit to recognising the carbon sequestration value of the activities of certain animals such as great whales and forest elephants (as documented by the International Monetary Fund) when they are allowed to live out their lives as part of natural, functional ecosystems, and to protecting these animals and the wider ecosystems of which they are a part.**