World Animal Net (WAN) Comments on the Questionnaire about UNGA Resolution 73/333

I.   **Guiding questions concerning the preparatory process**

1. **The outcome reads: "Forward these recommendations to UNEA for its consideration".**
    a. *Under which agenda item should UNEA 5 consider these recommendations?*
    b. *One option being under the inclusion in the already established item 5 of the provisional agenda entitled "International environmental policy and governance issues" or by recommending the establishment of a new item?*

It would be possible to include this under item 5 of the provisional agenda entitled "International environmental policy and governance issues", but World Animal Net (WAN) considers it much preferable to establish a new agenda item. This is because this is an important issue, referred by the General Assembly, which is deserving of its own agenda point rather than being tucked away in a broad agenda dealing with a range of international environmental policy and governance issues.

2. **The outcome mandates: "to prepare, at its fifth session (…) a political declaration (…):**
    a. *What level of detail should a text have in order to be considered by UNEA 5?*
    b. *When should the "preparation of a political declaration" begin and what should be the recommended format, leadership and timeline of the preparatory process before UNEA 5?*
    c. *How can accredited stakeholders be involved, and member States without representation in Nairobi participate, in the process?*

 WAN considers that there should be a significant degree of detail in the political declaration, so this can take forward the important work begun in the three Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) meetings on the Global Pact for the Environment. It is important that the political declaration includes actionable commitments which will achieve the five objectives guiding the recommendations of the ad hoc open-ended working group, including in particular the objective of "strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want"." See also Para 4 below.

Work should begin on this political declaration as soon as possible, because considerable efforts will be needed to examine the work already undertaken, what more is needed to achieve effective environmental governance (for the next 50 years), and to ensure an

actionable and effective outcome (as evidenced by the difficult work in the three OEWG meetings). Significant discussion and debate will be needed to raise political will and commitment to the level needed to effectively tackle environmental governance at this time of unprecedented environmental crises. Regular CPR meetings should be scheduled to consider this, with invitations to stakeholders, including the member states, experts and stakeholders who attended previous meetings on the Global Pact (for example, NGO participation should include not just UNEP accredited NGOs, but also those who were accredited to Global Pact meetings through other channels, as there were different criteria for OEWG participation, including ECOSOC and previous involvement), and the governing bodies/key staff of multilateral environmental agreements.

There should also be discussions/collaboration with the International Law Commission on principles of International Environmental Law, and their definitions and inclusions in this body of work.

There should also be opportunities for online/virtual participation, and opportunities for written inputs after each draft revision of the resolution.

II.   **Guiding questions related to the a "United Nations high-level meeting […] in the context of the context of the commemoration of the creation of UNEP**

3. **The outcome speaks about "a United Nations high-level meeting, subject to voluntary funding, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (…)".**
    a. *What is meant by "a United Nations high-level meeting, subject to voluntary funding, in the context of the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment"?*
    b. *Who is expected to convene the UN high-level meeting? What should its format be?*

UNGA resolution 73/333 calls for UNEA to develop a political declaration for a high-level meeting, and this must clearly be the Stockholm+50 commemoration, which Sweden has generously offered to host.

UNEP should be a key convener/organiser of this meeting – because it commemorates its own creation.

We agree with previous consultations that: "The commemoration should be an opportunity to engage in a stock-taking exercise for the past 50 years, but also to look ahead and consider a vision for how to address global environmental challenges for the upcoming 50 years, taking

into account the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and international environmental governance."

Most importantly, this meeting must be a loud rallying call for strengthened action on the environment, and for increased power and resources for the work of UNEP.

The format of the meeting would depend largely on the availability of funding and human resources to organise this. It would be an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of both the existential environmental crisis of our time, and the many positive actions that have been and are being taken to address and solve these. The profile could be raised in an imaginative way by harnessing voluntary contributions from marketing/advertising agencies, artists, singers etc. Most importantly, this must not be yet another talking shop where vested interests kill the spirit of positivity and vitally-needed change. It is essential that stakeholders are seriously committed to taking real and meaningful action.

This meeting should not be permitted to be dropped due to lack of funding. It is a real pity that the UNGA resolution made it subject to voluntary funding. An early fundraising exercise is needed, as the amounts of funding available will determine the nature of this event. If significant funding could be attracted, it could and should be high-profile, high-level, and include significant outreach – reaching down to regions and local communities, generating awareness and a sense of urgency and action.

III. **Guiding questions regarding the content of the political declaration and the support by the UNEP Secretariat**

4. **The outcome also signals that the objective of the political declaration is "with a view to strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled ´The future we want'".**
   a. *what 'elements' or 'building blocks' in the objectives guiding the recommendations and in the substantive recommendations contained in the Annex to Resolution 73/333 could be identified for inclusion in the political declaration to achieve the overall objective of "strengthening the implementation of international environmental law and international environmental governance, in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on*

b. *How should the political declaration relate to the five objectives guiding the recommendations and to the thirteen substantive recommendations of the ad-hoc open-ended working group established pursuant to UN General Assembly resolution 72/277 and endorsed in UN General Assembly resolution 73/333?*
c. *Should there be a substantive connection between the political declaration and the commemoration of the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment?*
d. *How should the political declaration be in line with paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development?*
e. *What kind of inputs should the Secretariat prepare in order to best assist member States in the preparation of the political declaration?*

We consider that if the declaration is to address both the UNGA resolution and mandate and current existential environmental challenges it must:

- Support and promote all commitments and obligations made in paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).
- Ensure that it achieves all five of the objectives guiding the recommendations in the resolution.
- Comprehensively incorporate the substantive recommendations of the resolution, with these being strengthened and developed wherever possible.

The following should definitely be included:

o Greater political will and commitment to address current environmental crises effectively
o Effective implementation of current environmental measures and agreements (including obligatory reporting and monitoring systems)
o Finalising an agreement on core environmental principles
o Measures to fill gaps in existing environmental provisions (the UN's report on Gaps in International Environmental Law is a significant piece of work in this regard).

The report on International Environmental Governance: Accomplishments and Way Forward by Maria Ivanova et al is another significant piece of work to take into account.

Successfully tackling the gaps in international environmental law, including governance and implementation, is the only way to address "in a comprehensive and coherent manner, the challenges posed by environmental degradation in the context of sustainable development", as required by UNGA resolution 73/333.

It is important that this declaration includes a tangible commitment to the mainstreaming of environmental protection in all relevant sectoral and systemic issues and, most importantly, in national development and sustainable development policies, legislation and programmes; together with an effective monitoring and reporting system.