



2020 Activity Report

We Stand for Wildlife®



The **Wildlife Conservation Society European Union Office (WCS EU)** is a Belgian NGO based in Brussels, affiliated to the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), a global conservation organisation with field programmes in more than 55 countries across the globe.

Learn more: brussels.wcs.org

WCS EU Mission

WCS EU works at the nexus of biodiversity and development cooperation to further our mission to save wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature. WCS EU provides technical, scientifically-informed inputs to government policy-makers and other key stakeholders to influence the development cooperation and environmental policies and programmes of the European Union, and the Belgian government. WCS EU raises awareness and fosters dialogue, emphasising the urgent need to protect biodiversity as a foundation for sustainable development and a healthy planet, which supports agriculture, fisheries, food security, water access, and climate resilience.

WCS EU is committed to working to improve the health of ecosystems and the wildlife they support, to benefit communities, in line with the commitments made under the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Achieving sustainable economic development and flourishing human development, depends on a healthy and resilient environment. Biodiversity loss, particularly in vulnerable regions, fuels conflict, displacement, and migration pressures, undermining stability. WCS EU supports WCS country programmes, to protect biodiversity, improve ecosystem health and resilience, and benefit local communities over the long-term, including in many least developed countries. WCS acts as a technical and science-based partner to governments, including through the delivery of rights-based conservation programmes in both terrestrial and marine environments.

Learn more: www.wcs.org

Policy and Visibility



INFLUENCING EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMMES

EU-Africa Strategy

On 20th May, WCS EU published its recommendations regarding the European Commission communication titled 'Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa'. We believe that the strategy provides the foundation for an ambitious partnership between the EU and Africa and welcome the strong focus on facilitating a green transition. [Read more](#)

EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030

On 23rd June, WCS EU published its recommendations regarding the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, and calls for concrete financial commitment to implement the external dimension of the strategy. [Read more](#)

Post-2020 EU Budget

On 9th July, WCS EU and other NGOs released a public statement calling for the EU to prioritise biodiversity within the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) in the new EU Budget. [Read more](#).

On 7th September, WCS EU and other NGOs sent a letter to Executive Vice-President Frans Timmermans and other relevant EU Commissioners calling for an EU global leadership on biodiversity finance. [Read more](#)

Global Biodiversity Finance

On 16th November, WCS and other NGOs released a joint statement welcoming the Joint Declaration by all Public Development Banks in the World signed at the Finance in Common Summit in Paris. [Read more](#)

COMBATING DEFORESTATION

The FGMC Programme

The Forest Governance, Markets and Climate (FGMC) Programme funded by the UK Government aims to address forest and wildlife crime and illegal deforestation in the Mekong, Central Africa, and Indonesia, and also aims to improve international and national governance frameworks and business standards for intact forests, climate and biodiversity. WCS EU staff, Janice Weatherley-Singh, Director, and Arnaud Goessens, Senior Manager, are engaged in the implementation of activities.

European Climate Law

On 6th February, WCS EU submitted comments on the roadmap regarding the European Climate Law, which aims to help achieving climate neutrality by 2050, highlighting the important role of intact forests. [Read more](#)

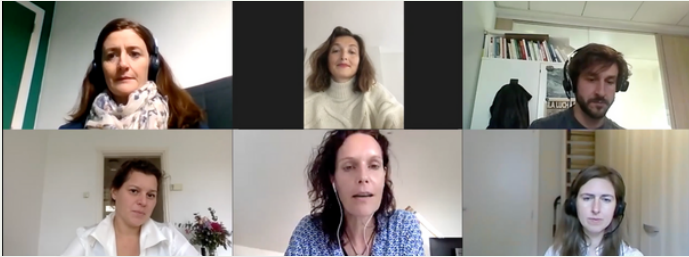
On 17th June, WCS EU submitted a response to the public consultation on the EU Climate Pact. We believe that the EU Climate Pact should incorporate action to ensure the conservation of the world's last remaining intact forests. A new index of forest landscape integrity is now available which can be adopted as an important measure of success. [Read more](#)

EU Forest Partnerships

On 25th May, WCS EU, Conservation International, and ClientEarth published recommendations for the development of EU Forest Partnership Agreements with priority partner countries and regions. Such partnerships will be key to leveraging action to prevent deforestation and forest degradation whilst achieving crucial co-benefits for people and biodiversity. [Read more](#)

Webinar on Nature-based Solutions

WCS EU and IUCN jointly hosted a virtual partner event during the European Green Week on 16th October titled 'Building back better with Nature-based Solutions'. [Read more](#)



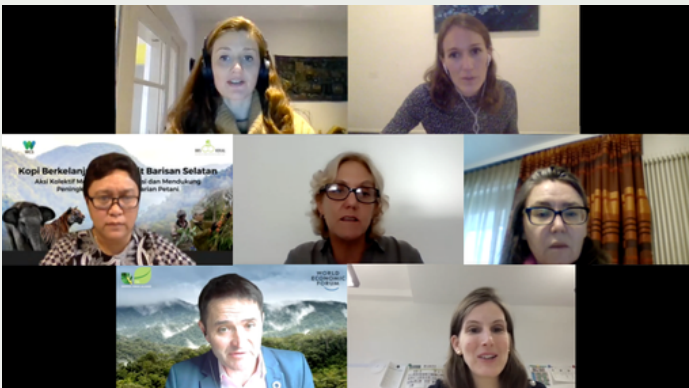
Top to bottom, left to right: Janice Weatherley-Singh (WCS EU), Elena Visnar Malinovska (DG CLIMA), Zacharie Mechali (AFD), Erica ten Broeke (Commonland), Hilde Eggermont (Belgian Biodiversity Platform/BiodivERsA), Chantal van Ham (IUCN)

EU Deforestation Regulation

On 10th December, WCS EU submitted a response to the public consultation on 'Deforestation and Forest Degradation – Reducing the Impact of Products Placed on the EU Market'. [Read more](#)

Webinar on a 'Forest-First Approach'

WCS EU hosted a virtual event on 11th December on the 'Forest-First Approach', a new framing that addresses supply chain risk and reduces deforestation and biodiversity loss at the forest and farm frontier. This webinar engaged government, scientists and civil society representatives in a panel discussion. [Read more](#)



Top to bottom, left to right: Janice Weatherley-Singh (WCS EU), Leonie Lawrence (WCS), Jeni Pareira (WCS Indonesia), Daphne Hewitt (FAO), Chantal Marijnissen (DG DEVCO), Justin Adams (TFA), Lisa Kirfel-Rühle (BMZ)

COUNTER-WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

EU Environmental Crime Directive

On 1st January, WCS EU submitted a response to the public consultation to review the EU Environmental Crime Directive, advocating for EU Member States to treat wildlife crime as a serious crime. [Read more](#)

On 29th December, WCS EU submitted comments on the roadmap regarding the revision of the EU Environmental Crime Directive.

[Read more](#)

EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking

On 18th March, WCS EU submitted comments on the roadmap regarding the evaluation of the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking.

[Read more](#)

EU Trade Policy Review

On 21st October, WCS EU submitted a response to the public consultation on the EU Trade Policy Review process, calling for wildlife trade and wildlife trafficking to be addressed in all EU trade agreements. [Read more](#)

EU Domestic Ivory Trade

WCS EU and other NGOs submitted a joint written statement in advance of an EU stakeholder meeting on 28th October to discuss the latest European Commission's proposal on the revision of EU rules on ivory trade.

[Read more](#)

On 9th November, WCS EU and other NGOs sent a letter to the EU ENV Commissioner and to all EU ENV Ministers to request the revision of the proposal currently on the table and asking for the closure of the EU domestic ivory market.

[Read more](#)

HEALTH

Preventing Future Zoonotic Disease Outbreaks

On 6th October, WCS EU and other NGOs sent a letter to the EU Environment and Health Commissioners to express our concern that, to date, the EU has been failing to support the strong global measures needed to prevent future zoonotic disease outbreaks. [Read more](#)

One Planet, One Health, One Future

The German Federal Foreign Office (FFO) in partnership with WCS co-hosted a two-day virtual conference "One Planet, One Health, One Future: Moving forward in a post-COVID19 world" on 17th and 18th November. [Read more](#)

VARIOUS

Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

WCS, WCS India, and WCS EU attended the 13th meeting of the Conference of Parties (CoP13) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) held in Gandhinagar, India, from 15-22 February. [Read more](#)



WCS Team Members (from left to right): Aristo Mendis, Ramya Roopa, Avik Banerjee, Arnaud Goessens (WCS EU), Sue Lieberman, Luke Warwick, Aditi Rajan, Alfred DeGemmis



Western lowland gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla gorilla*) in the Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park in the Republic of the Congo. © Scott Ramsay

Supporting Field Implementation through Funding and Partnerships



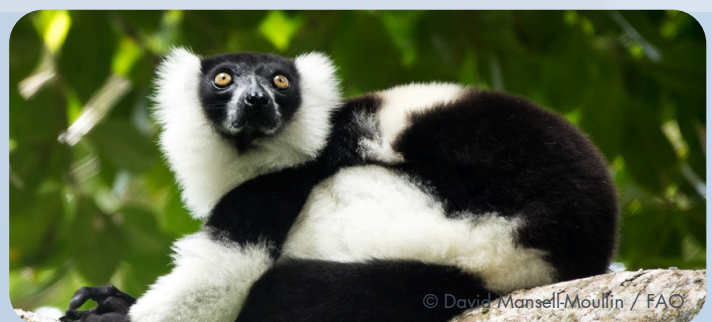
Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Programme

The Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM) Programme is a major international initiative that aims to improve the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife in forest, savannah and wetland ecosystems. It is being funded by the European Union with co-funding from the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) and the French Development Agency (AFD). The initiative is coordinated by a dynamic consortium of four partners, namely the FAO, CIFOR-ICRAF, CIRAD, and WCS. The SWM Programme is developing innovative, collaborative, and scalable new approaches to conserve wild animals and protect ecosystems, whilst at the same time improving the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities who depend on these resources. Projects are being piloted and tested with governments and communities in 16 participating countries. [Read more](#)

WCS EU staff, Caroline Abid, Chief of Party SWM Programme and Arnaud Goessens, Senior Manager (SWM R1 Focal Point), are engaged in the direct implementation of the SWM Programme by WCS (with which we are affiliated), through WCS's country programme offices in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Congo (RoC), Madagascar, and Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic required significant adaptation in the field implementation of the SWM Programme. However, it also led to the publication of a white paper aimed at informing decision-makers about the drivers of zoonotic disease outbreaks and proposing strategies for their prevention.

- **DRC:** The Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) protocol was signed with the Eboyo and Bapukeli communities, and contextual studies continued, with a particular focus on hunting and wildlife monitoring.
- **Congo:** Contextual studies were conducted on protein product value chains, bushmeat consumption, hunting practices, and the ecological context to provide valuable insights for guiding the future activities of the Congo programme.
- **Madagascar:** Support for fish farming activities continued and was expanded to include poultry farming, accompanied by material distributions and training sessions. Additionally, veterinary kiosks were introduced in communities, and two community vaccinators per community were trained to help prevent disease outbreaks.
- **PNG:** Efforts focused on community consultations to design future Conservation Deeds, a PNG-specific legal tool that enables communities to establish conservation areas and manage land under customary law.





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