



**Briefing for CMS COP15  
Campo Grande, Brazil  
23-29 March 2026**



*Credit: Karen Wood, Panthera*

**Delegation Contacts:**

Karen Wood, Sr. Director, Global Policy ([kwood@panthera.org](mailto:kwood@panthera.org))

WhatsApp: +1 978-857-5389

Allison Devlin, Director, Jaguar Program ([adevlin@panthera.org](mailto:adevlin@panthera.org))

Ronaldo Morato, Director, Panthera Brazil ([rmorato@panthera.org](mailto:rmorato@panthera.org))

Fernando Tortato, Panthera Brazil Program Coordinator ([ftortato@panthera.org](mailto:ftortato@panthera.org))

Clémence Tranchand, Legal Counsel, Panthera France ([ctranchand@panthera.org](mailto:ctranchand@panthera.org))

**About Panthera**

Panthera, founded in 2006, is creating a world where wild cats thrive in healthy, natural and developed landscapes that sustain people and biodiversity. Through cutting-edge scientific research, strategic species recovery, habitat restoration and collaboration with communities



and partners, we're protecting the world's 40 species of wild cats and helping ensure a future for us all.

### **Panthera at CMS COP15**

Panthera works with CMS Parties around the world as partners in wild cat conservation. We combine science, technology and on-the-ground conservation action to develop collaborative, evidence-based approaches that benefit wild cats and people, so that both can thrive.

Wild cats are wide-ranging species that routinely move across national jurisdictional boundaries in search of mates, prey and suitable habitat for raising their young, placing them squarely in the CMS definition of “migratory.” Five of the seven big cat species are currently listed on CMS Appendices I and/or II and two small cat species—Eurasian lynx and Pallas’s Cat—were added to Appendix II in 2023. Intergovernmental cooperation is critical to the protection of CMS-listed cat species and their habitats. Panthera and our partners are working in transboundary landscapes in Africa, Asia, Mesoamerica, and South America that are models of cooperation, community empowerment and conservation impact. We believe that such collaborations will become even more important for cats as human settlement, habitat loss and fragmentation and climate change affect their movement patterns, and in the best-case scenario, as populations recover and their ranges expand.

### **Recommendations and Commentary by Document**

We offer this commentary to assist with your consideration of the cat-specific and relevant cross-cutting documents before COP15 and are available for additional information and discussion.

### **Terrestrial Species Conservation Issues**

#### **[27.1 Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative](#)**

**SUPPORT** adoption of draft decisions and deletion of decisions 14.161–14.166

Panthera commends the Range States of African Carnivores for the progress they’ve made to implement activities under the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative. The 2021-2025 ACI Programme of Work was very comprehensive and ambitious for a five-year plan. We support the Range States’ development of an updated version considering the latest Red and Green List assessments for lions and leopards to which Panthera contributed substantially working alongside our government colleagues.

The challenge of 30+ countries working synergistically for conservation of African Carnivores is daunting, but vitally important. Cheetahs, lions and leopards continue to decline across Africa faced by a range of complex and interconnected threats. Panthera is working with more than a dozen Range States in Southern, East, West and Central Africa to mitigate these threats in line with national priorities. We’re committed to facilitating cooperation amongst all stakeholders to catalyze sustainable funding, promote knowledge sharing, ensure efficient use of resources and to monitor and maximize the impact on the ground of ACI activities. We look



forward to Zimbabwe's convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of ACI Range States later this year as a critical forum for assessing and strengthening this unique partnership.

#### 27.4 Jaguar

**SUPPORT, with revisions**, adoption of draft amendments to Res. 14.14 and draft decisions

Panthera welcomes the significant work undertaken since COP14 to advance a range-wide approach to jaguar conservation and commends Range States on the landmark adoption of the new Regional Action Plan and its vision for 2050. The Regional Action Plan integrates the objectives of the Jaguar 2030 Roadmap and builds on Range States' efforts since 2019 to secure priority jaguar landscapes throughout their range.

The partners in the Jaguar 2030 Roadmap Coordination Committee stand ready to support Range States to implement the Regional Action Plan, as stated in the Amended Resolution, and look forward to engaging on critical next steps regarding the development of the intergovernmental platform and a long-term monitoring system for illegal killing of jaguars.

We support the draft amendments to Resolution 14.14 with the following revisions for consideration (suggested revisions are noted in **bold text** to distinguish them from existing draft amendments):

*The Conference of the Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

4. Agrees to implement actions that the objective of the Initiative consists of to maintaining the integrity of large, medium and ~~mid-sized~~ small jaguar populations throughout their range ~~along its distribution~~ and connectivity between them ~~each other~~ and between transboundary populations, taking into account ~~considering~~ the needs ~~of~~ and livelihoods ~~means of support to~~ of **Indigenous Peoples** and local communities that coexisting with the jaguar;

5ter. Notes the importance of moving forward quickly with priority actions for jaguar conservation related to the CMS mandate, such as habitat conservation and restoration, ecological connectivity, addressing interactions and promoting coexistence between humans and wildlife, given that the greatest threats to jaguar conservation are the destruction and fragmentation of its habitat, and advancing tools and techniques to monitor and measure such actions;

6 c) defining the current distribution, based on ~~per the~~ available knowledge about ~~on~~ the species according to ~~per state of~~ its geographical range, ~~with~~ prioritizing ~~ation of~~ significant important transboundary ~~transborder~~ areas, connectivity corridors, and a core areas for the preservation of the species in order to promote all other management measures to be developed;



6 f) promote ~~ing~~ coexistence between jaguars, Indigenous Peoples and local communities through efforts for changing behaviors, and ~~the~~ adoption of productive practices and livelihoods that benefit people and jaguars ~~respect the jaguar-friendly means of support~~— especially in priority areas ~~zones~~ for connectivity and for ~~the~~ reducing ~~tion~~ of hunting and ~~#~~trafficking;

6 h) ~~improving~~ increase education and awareness of and access to the benefits of living with jaguars among Indigenous Peoples and local communities ~~of indigenous people, local communities and the general public about overall population~~ while reducing the costs;

6 o) take into consideration the cultural and land-use perspectives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities that are compatible with species and habitat conservation actions, and proactively engage with them ~~into~~ developing jaguar conservation initiatives (at local, national and regional levels) under the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC);

## Cross-Cutting Issues

### 28.1 Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species

**SUPPORT** adoption of amendments to Resolution 11.31 (Rev.COP14) and draft decisions

Panthera supports adoption of the amendments to Resolution 11.31 (Rev.COP14) and the draft decisions.

We appreciate the efforts of the Working Group to strengthen this resolution and provide actionable recommendations to address the threat of illegal and unsustainable take at the national and transboundary levels. A 2025 study by Lindsey et al. shows that targeted poaching of African lions for their body parts to feed domestic, intra-African and Asian markets is becoming increasingly prevalent and represents a growing challenge to lions' conservation and resilience, especially when compounded with other forms of mortality, both natural and human-induced.

A Pan-African review of cultural uses for carnivore body parts (Williams V et al., 2025) found that taking of Appendix I species like lions and leopards for traditional uses is likely under-considered, under-reported and under-measured in species' risk assessments. We note that different forms of offtake, both legal and illegal, are often siloed and don't inform one another in determining what level of offtake is sustainable. We strongly support the Scoping Analysis's recommendation to promote policy coherence and inter-agency coordination and to harmonize legislative measures under CMS with related obligations and objectives under other biodiversity-related MEAs. We welcome the establishment of the Global Initiative as a coordinated response to address the threat posed by illegal and unsustainable taking to wild cats and their prey.

### 28.2 Ecological Connectivity

**SUPPORT** adoption of amendments to Res.14.16 (Rev.COP15) and draft decisions



Panthera supports the adoption of the amendments to Resolution 14.16 (Rev.COP15) and the draft decisions and is pleased to have been part of the Working Group. Ecological connectivity is central to Panthera's strategies for numerous wild cat species.

Jaguars, perhaps more so than any of the big cats, are still largely connected by functional corridors across their enormous range from northern Mexico to northern Argentina. However, recent and ongoing assessments showing the fragility of some key links in the Jaguar Corridor point to the urgent need for the proactive and innovative approaches called for under this Resolution (and in Res. 14.14 and Draft Decision 15CC d) on Jaguar). Preserving ecological connectivity in jaguar landscapes is a core objective of a new project Panthera, local NGOs and Indigenous groups are undertaking with Brazil, French Guiana, Guyana and Suriname with funding from the Government of France. The "Forests, Jaguars and Peoples of the Guiana Shield" project will identify, create and safeguard ecological connectivity corridors as other effective conservation measures (OECM) that will help to meet 30x30 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) targets in the Guiana Shield.

Ecological connectivity is also core to Panthera's strategy for lions in Southern and East Africa where substantial connectivity remains. We welcome the references in paragraphs 18 and 19 to Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) recognizing the value of such agreements to enhance transboundary cooperation and policy coherence to maintain connectivity in African cats' expansive landscapes, including KAZA, LOZMAP and GLTFCA, where Panthera is engaged.

### **30.2.1 Proposal for the inclusion of Cheetah population of Zimbabwe in Appendix I & II** **SUPPORT** inclusion of Cheetah population of Zimbabwe in Appendix I & II

Panthera supports the proposal for inclusion of Zimbabwe's cheetah population in Appendix I & II. We note that cheetah is one of the priority species that form part of the Hwange Citizen Science project supported by Panthera. This project supports ecotourism practitioners in and around Hwange National Park and contributes to essential ongoing monitoring of the cheetah population in Zimbabwe. Panthera stands ready to provide survey data and technical support to augment Zimbabwe's population monitoring efforts if requested.

We agree with the conclusion of the Intersessional Working Group encouraging the Range States of the Southern African cheetah population to address transboundary connectivity and illegal taking and trade in cheetahs through cooperation under the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI).

### **31.3.3 Proposal for a concerted action for the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*)** **SUPPORT** proposal for a concerted action

Panthera supports this proposal for a concerted action to continue the progress made since COP14 on assessments and planning for the recovery and conservation of the four southern



subspecies of Eurasian lynx. We recommend that reintroductions and other conservation translocations called for in the strategies and plans in development be undertaken in consultation with the IUCN SSC Conservation Translocation Specialist Group.

### **Side Events**

Panthera is co-hosting and/or speaking at several side events at COP15:

#### **24 March @11:20-12:10 PM, Campo Grande Room, Blue Zone**

Roundtable Discussion: Sustainable Funding for the Pantanal  
Pantanal in Motion: Science, Governance and Financing for the Conservation of Migratory Species

Organized by The Pew Charitable Trusts

#### **24 March @12:45-13:30 PM, Room 3**

From Local Action to Regional Impact: Strategies for Implementing a Range-wide Plan for Jaguar Landscape Conservation

Co-organized by Jaguar 2030 Committee and ICMBio, Government of Brazil

#### **24 March @18:15-19:00 PM, Room 3**

One Continent, One Jaguar: Building Transboundary Connectivity Across South America

Co-organized by OFB, France, Panthera and WWF Bolivia

#### **26 March @12:45-13:30 PM, Room 3**

Act Green: A Novel Framework to Dynamically Monitor and Assess Species Habitat and Restoration Opportunities

Co-Organized by WCS with Panthera and WWF

# # #