

# Africa Animal Welfare Conference 2020

## Theme exposition

Presented By

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- The theme of this conference is: ***Animal welfare, wildlife and environmental conservation for sustainable development in Africa: Enhancing nature-based solutions***. Since its inception, the Conference has underscored the importance of animal welfare to sustainable development processes while advocating for protecting the natural environment, preventing biological diversity loss, and maintenance of natural ecological systems in Africa.
- Planet Earth is like a living cell whereby the impact of human development activity within it affects the overall natural wellbeing of the whole planet. The key idea is to maintain a balance between keeping the environment healthy and achieving the desired goals of human development. The Conference, therefore, argues that animal welfare is a good indicator of environmental health status at local, regional and global human development levels. Indeed, themes of the last two conferences in particular focused on animal welfare under the One Health concept and also in linkages between animals, people and the environment in Africa.
- This 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the conference aims to explore the relationships between animal welfare and the emerging concept of nature-based solutions. The concept of Nature-based solutions is a notion to address the ubiquitous destruction of natural terrestrial and marine environments by human development activities is gaining recognition fast. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) defines Nature-based solutions as ***“actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecological systems that addresses societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human-well being and biological diversity benefits”***. The definition connotes agriculture and animal husbandry and farming systems under the term “modified ecological systems”.
- Emmanuelle Cohen-Shacham *et al* (2019) outlined 8 principles of nature-based solutions in understanding the IUCN definition. Nature-based solutions:
  - 1) Embrace nature conservation norms (and principles);
  - 2) Can be implemented alone or in an integrated manner with other solutions to societal challenges (e.g. technological and engineering solutions);
  - 3) Are determined by site-specific natural and cultural contexts that include traditional, local and scientific knowledge;
  - 4) produce societal benefits in a fair and equitable way, in a manner that promotes transparency and broad participation;

- 5) maintain biological and cultural diversity and the ability of ecosystems to evolve over time;
  - 6) Are applied at a landscape scale;
  - 7) Recognize and address the trade-offs between the production of a few immediate economic benefits for development, and future options for the production of the full range of ecosystems services; and
  - 8) Are an integral part of the overall design of policies, and measures or actions, to address a specific challenge.
- Nature-based solutions is an umbrella concept for ecosystem-related approaches. In framing the concept and considering its applications, it is useful to think of it as an umbrella concept that covers a whole range of ecosystem-related approaches all of which address societal challenges. These approaches can be placed into five main categories as follows:
    - 1) Ecosystem restoration approaches e.g. , ecological restoration, Ecological engineering, forest landscape restoration
    - 2) Issue-specific ecosystem-related approaches e.g. ecosystem-based adaptation, ecosystem-based mitigation, climate adaptation services, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction
    - 3) Infrastructure-related approaches e.g. natural infrastructure, green infrastructure
    - 4) Ecosystem-based management approaches e.g. integrated coastal zone management, integrated water resources management
    - 5) Ecosystem protection approaches e.g. area-based conservation approaches, including protected area management
  - Nature-based solutions are conscientious actions with measurable impact. They are meant to be easy to monitor, record accurately, provide reliable information as well as use valid methods of impact evaluation.
  - Nature-based solutions are intended to support the achievement of society's development goals and safeguard human well-being in ways that reflect cultural and societal values and enhance the resilience of ecosystems, their capacity for renewal and the provision of services. They are designed to address major societal challenges, such as food security, climate change, water security, human health, disaster risk, social and economic development.
  - Animal welfare can be ambivalent to the concept of nature-based solutions. On one side, it can serve or pose as a major cross-cutting societal challenge. On the other hand animal welfare can be a nature-based solution to other major societal challenges as well.
  - In any case, animal welfare-driven sustainable development promotes sustainable and responsible development and advocates for wise use of natural resources in order to protect the natural environment from destructive and careless human development behavior in the name of modernity and progress of humanity.

- The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of this conference aims to address nature driven experiences, lessons, ideas and aspirations in Africa.
- Thank you.