

**Terms of Reference  
Project Assistant  
Wildlife Connect Project**

**Context**

The combined impacts of land transformation, new physical infrastructure and climate change is constraining the movement of wildlife across landscapes. This constrains nature's contributions to people with long term indirect impacts on human well-being. These impacts are predicted to become more widespread and intense in the near future. To address these issues, WWF is developing and implementing an approach we call wildlife connect.

**Why connectivity?** Wildlife's movements are at the core of what keeps our world connected and thriving, whether that be the great migrations of animals traversing the planet using navigation skills we barely understand, or the shorter passages of wildlife between core habitat areas, crucial for maintaining genetic diversity and population health as well as providing linkages between seasonal resources. These movements are the circulatory system of nature.

**Why is this necessary?** More than 50% of the planet is now human dominated. The fabric of life on Earth is unraveling as up to a million species face extinction and the cumulative impacts of human activities fragment nature and change the planet's climate. Habitat destruction and fragmentation are the primary threats to terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments. The recent IPBES report highlighted that adequately connected protected areas could cover as little as 9% of Earth's terrestrial surface.

Further expansion of agriculture, infrastructure and other human developments are making remaining migratory pathways and corridors ever more constricted, or severing connections entirely, and this is going to increase - 12 million km of roads were built since 2000, and 25 million km of additional roads are projected by 2050. In some cases, the fragmentation that results are so severe that the remaining, isolated wildlife populations are no longer able to persist. There is increasing evidence that the loss of wildlife (defaunation) as a result of fragmentation causes degradation of ecosystems, impacting their resilience to global climate change.

Wildlife depend on protected areas which provide core and secure habitat. Yet in many regions of the world, protected areas are insufficient in size to provide adequate space for wildlife to roam and meet their basic needs. In South America, there are many initiatives to expand protected area networks, and an opportunity exists to align these conservation networks with wildlife movement ecology.

Conserving ecological connectivity counteracts the threats of habitat fragmentation, allows species to move and complete their life cycles & maintains ecosystem services such

as seed and nutrient dispersal and pollination. The process of connectivity conservation which engage beyond protected and conserved areas with diverse stakeholders and land-use types. It catalyses collaborative efforts that connect people across lands and water to work together to save nature and their collective futures.

In Latin America, WWF is about to launch a Jaguar conservation strategy focused on 15 key landscapes. This strategy is part of WWF's effort to more actively engage in the conservation of this iconic and migratory species. According to date from Panthera, the jaguar corridors located in landscape la connects Brasil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, which we refer to as Pantanal-Chaco (PACHA) are among the ones facing the highest level of pressure due to expansion of the agricultural frontier.

**What is the scope and focus of the initiative:** Wildlife connect focuses on the 'connectivity zones' which are mainly outside of protected areas but connect them to each other via the human-occupied matrix of multiple land-uses and habitat types. The scope is global, but for the first phase focused on terrestrial systems. Whilst there are significant needs, challenges and opportunities in marine connectivity, to try to do both at the same time would be too thin a stretch.

**What challenge will this initiative address?** The overarching challenge is to conserve and restore functional landscapes in a warming world that enable wildlife to move, often over large distances, while ensuring that nature's benefits to people motivate them to be landscape stewards, and balancing development and carbon mitigation needs. This can only be achieved through a systems approach that addresses the ultimate drivers: a) policies and plans, particularly those related to land use, planning and sustainable use and benefit-sharing; b) multi-tiered governance; c) increased human pressure on resources from within the landscape linked to human population growth and increased international demand; and d) sustainable local livelihoods, while also tackling the immediate drivers: land transformation, climate change impacts, as well as human-wildlife conflict and over-exploitation.

Immediate challenges to address include those associated with multi-jurisdictional governance, benefit flows from nature-based enterprises to local people, and wildlife-compatible land use plans and policies.

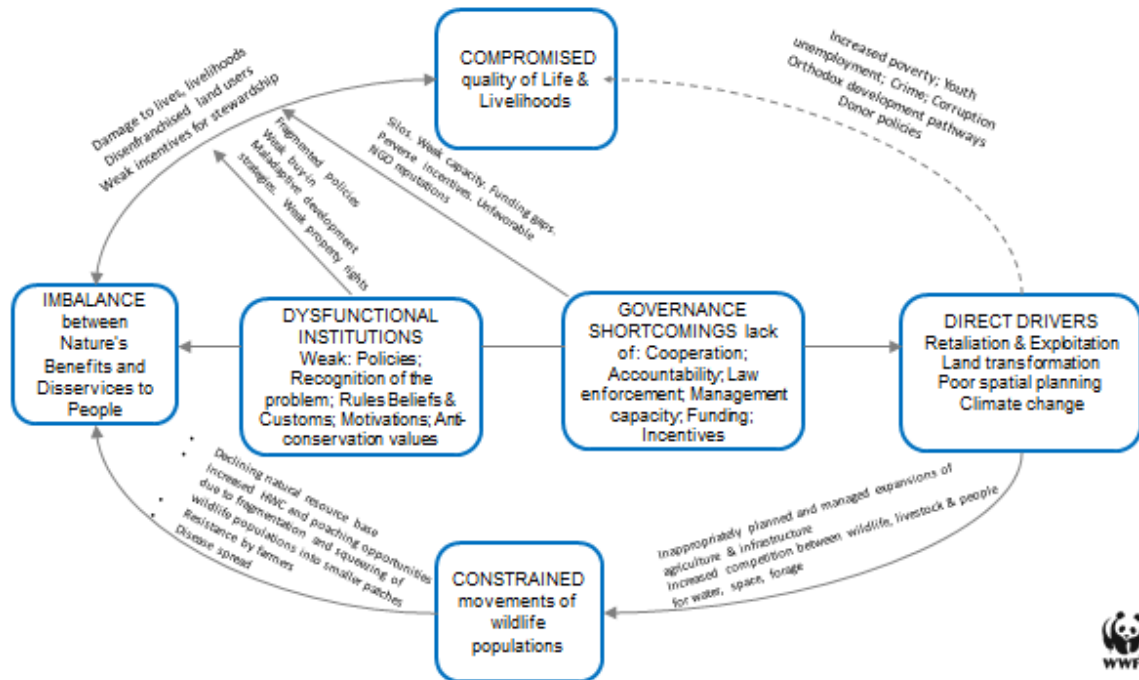


Figure 1: A system diagram illustrating the main challenges in connectivity conservation, based on the framework of IPBES

## Project Objective

In this context, WWF offices in Bolivia, Brasil, Paraguay and Argentina as well as WWF International have come together to design a wildlife connect initiative for the Pantanal Chaco (PACHA) landscape. This initiative aims to protect, manage and restore the connectivity of landscapes, thus enabling large-scale wildlife movements and linking wildlife (especially jaguar) and people. Maintaining and repairing fragmented connections in landscapes, in society and between society and nature, will have lasting benefits for ecosystems, people and wildlife. We will combat habitat fragmentation, promote the management of production lands to enable wildlife flow, mainstream biodiversity into key sectors, promote improved land use planning, create wildlife corridors and eliminate barriers to wildlife movements - from the short but crucial exchanges between populations to some of the world's most iconic migrations such as the jaguar. By ensuring movement is possible we will enable wildlife to adapt to a changing climate, thus creating long term viability for wildlife and people on earth.

## Objective of Consultancy

WWF is looking for a project assistant consultant to provide technical support for the design of this initiative. The consultant will play a key role in helping to put together the documentation and information needed for this process as well as supporting WWF's work with jaguar.

## Activities

The consultant will carry out the following activities:

- Collect, organize and synthesize information
- Identify and prioritize information gaps
- Fill information gaps from new sources
- Develop landscape description based on existing information and input received from WWF offices.
- Support development of vision, objectives, theory of change, and strategic approach, for wildlife connect in the PACHA landscape based on existing information and input received from WWF offices.
- Develop initial threat assessment for each of the prioritised jaguar corridor
- Revise vision and objectives, theory of change and strategic approach for wildlife connect in the PACHA landscape based on feedback based on existing information and input received from WWF offices.
- Organize and document online workshop to review threat assessment and agree on objectives, vision, theory of change and strategic approach
- Finalize vision, objectives, theory of change and strategic approach
- Support the mapping of funder landscape and identification of a suite of promising fundraising opportunities
- Organize and document regular team meetings to discuss progress and emerging issues
- Participate in WWF wildlife related meetings as needed and coordinate with WWF network.
- Provide technical support to conservation director and other WWF Bolivia staff on species conservation.

## Products

The consultant will be expected to produce the following products among others:

- Full suite of data and information for the PACHA landscape, including maps and analysis
- Prioritisation exercise for the corridors within the landscape, including threat assessment for each corridor
- Sistematization of online workshop to develop the vision, objectives, theory of change and strategic approach for wildlife connect in the PACHA landscape.
- Draft and final document with landscape description, PACHA vision, objectives, theory of change and strategic approach
- Initial outline of most promising funding opportunities

### **Duration and coordination**

The consultancy will last for 6 months, from June 1, 2020 to November 30, 2020. Consultant will be based in Bolivia and will work from home under the supervision of the WWF Bolivia Conservation Director.

### **Requirements**

- University degree in Biology or conservation related science preferably with experience in jaguar conservation.
- Two to five years of experience working in conservation and sustainable development.
- Knowledge of geographic information systems and socioeconomic aspects of conservation.
- Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English.
- Good communications and writing skills
- Ability to coordinate with diverse people.
- Organized and able to effectively systematize information.