

# Resilient human-wildlife co-existence:

Background research for developing a standard



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## Preface

Conflicts between humans and wildlife are increasing, as human populations continue to grow and activities such as agriculture, ranching and forestry extend steadily into natural ecosystems. These conflicts commonly include direct competition for food, such as crop raiding or predation of livestock, but can also result in direct threats to human life through physical attack or the increased risk of disease transmission from wildlife to humans. There are many other examples, ranging from the dangerous to nuisance, throughout the world.<sup>1</sup> Conservation organisations are in the thick of the debate about human-wildlife interactions, given their role in encouraging wildlife populations, and there are active attempts to move conflict to acceptable co-existence.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the term “human-wildlife conflict” is increasingly seen as problematic<sup>3</sup> and terms like co-existence, which inherently includes both positive and negative impacts of these interactions, are now generally preferred. We talk about co-existence in this analysis.

With this in mind, the Luc Hoffmann Institute has partnered with Griffith University and in collaboration with various agencies, including the IUCN, WWF, Conservation International, and others, first in identifying the range of issues involved,<sup>4</sup> and currently in the development of a standard for human-wildlife co-existence. Equilibrium Research has been asked to provide some input into a range of strategic questions relating to the proposed standard. Nine key questions were identified, and these are examined in the following short report. The report also contains outline notes on funding.

## Background

This report is part of a wider effort to develop and implement standards aimed at reducing conflict between humans and wildlife. The final scope of the standards is still not completely determined. But they will at this stage focus specifically on human-wildlife issues, rather than more general issues of environmental conflict. Wider questions – such as those relating to establishment of protected areas, extension of existing protected areas and resource-use agreements within protected areas for instance – will only be addressed in the specific context of human-wildlife co-existence.

The standards will however aim to address the full gamut of issues relating to co-existence, focusing particularly on the more broad-ranging social, economic and policy responses needed to address the more intractable “wicked” problems relating to human-wildlife conflict. The challenges in doing this are acknowledged. The standards will be applied initially to some known sites where conflict is ongoing and long entrenched, in other words there are already some specific target areas. However, the standards will also be tested in places where conflict has largely been avoided or addressed, to ensure that they are not setting an unattainable level of ambition. Once completed, they will be available for application in any site, probably in collaboration with other existing standards.

It will be a lot easier to plan the content and framework of the standards once there is an agreed vision for their objectives and scope. In particular, whether they are primarily a stand-alone accreditation system that might also be adopted as a component of other standards, or a set of criteria and indicators that will mainly be used as an input to existing standard-setting processes.

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## Executive summary

The Luc Hoffmann Institute and Griffith University are collaborating with WWF, Conservation International, and IUCN on a human-wildlife co-existence standard, focusing on social, economic and policy responses. Equilibrium Research has been asked to provide some input into a range of strategic questions relating to the proposed standard. Nine key questions were identified, and these are examined in a short report, along with some recommendations. Our overarching recommendation is outlined immediately below and then looked at in more detail in the different sections.

Recommendation: develop the co-existence standard as a standalone product, with principles and elements. Apply primarily as a component of suitable voluntary accreditation systems, such as IUCN's Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas and Conservation Assured, while keeping the option to use separately, probably without an associated accreditation system.

### 1. Why are standards more powerful than guidelines to achieve management outcomes, better management practice and outcomes for conservation and communities?

Guidelines *direct management* by suggesting good practices, mainly as an educational tool. Standards *evaluate a site's management* against peer-reviewed, quantified good practices. Some of the key differences are outlined below, note that the distinctions are not always clear-cut.

Comparison of guidelines and standards

Issue	Application in guidelines	Application in standards
Format	Usually, general advice and case studies	More specific advice and clear management targets
Measurement	Usually, unquantified	Usually, quantified and with a baseline
Verification	Through self-assessment, comparison with management plans etc.	Through external, expert-driven assessment
Process	Staff training, use in specific projects	Regular, repeated assessments every few years

Standards tend to be more rigorous and quantifiable enough to allow independent verification that: (i) evidence of compliance is accurate; (ii) information gathering is thorough and transparent and (iii) standards are met. Standards create rigour but imply extra time, costs and bureaucracy: start-up costs, committees, expenses (and fees?) for reviewers. One risk is that standards are only adopted by the best sites; this can be addressed by encouraging donors to make application of standards a prerequisite of funding.

### 2. What are the strengths and limitations of a standalone standard?

- Benefits include a more focused approach: (i) standards and process are tailor-made; (ii) human-wildlife coexistence experts can be engaged in development; (iii) the process avoids (or defers) long negotiation with other standard bodies; and (iv) a focus on the most important sites.
- Costs are extra time and resources: (i) the standard must be developed from scratch; (ii) it might be seen as competition; (iii) processes for implementation, accreditation and management must be developed; and (iv) a stand-alone system will probably reduce the number of sites engaged.

### 3. How viable is it to develop the co-existence standards as a standalone standard?

To run a full standalone standard accreditation system needs, at least: (i) a process to agree and share a set of global standards; (ii) a system for documenting area-based adherence to the standards; (iii) an independent verification process; (iv) a process to monitor any changes in site conditions; (v) a transparent and independent governance process; (vi) outreach and communications; (vii) a system to monitor results and check that they are having a beneficial impact on conservation; and (viii) funds.

### 4. How can coexistence standard be combined with other conservation standards? Four options:

- Fully voluntary, no extra benefits: can be applied to any standards but has the disadvantage that applicants take on extra work for no apparent gain.
- Fully voluntary, extra certificate: a protected area completing the Green List, for example, would get extra recognition for the full co-existence standard – possibly another certificate, logo etc.
- Fully integrated: as a permanent part of an existing certification scheme.
- Obligatory in some circumstances: for instance, if particular donors, or governments insisted.

Planning the standards will be easier once it is decided whether they are primarily a *stand-alone accreditation system* that might be adopted as a component of other standards or a *set of criteria and indicators that will mainly be used as an input* to existing standard-setting processes.

Recommendation: develop as a separate entity, to avoid missing key issues not within existing standards, as a set of principles and key elements of co-existence standards, but with a full understanding of what other standards would require.

Recommendation: apply *primarily* with existing standards, particularly the Green List and Conservation Assured, but which are also capable of being used as a standalone standard, perhaps without the associated accreditation system. This will involve:

- Discussion and coordination with selected standard-setting organisations
  - Exploration of mutual recognition
  - Sharing of expertise (particularly to ensure that verifiers understand co-existence issues)
  - Agreement on accreditation processes and standards.
  - Protocols covering working practices, competition, disagreements etc, leading up to MOUs
- Costs would be for developing the standard, avoiding setting up a whole accreditation system.

Recommendation: considering ISEAL's *Principles for Credible and Effective Sustainability Standards Systems* and the *Conservation Assured Principles*.

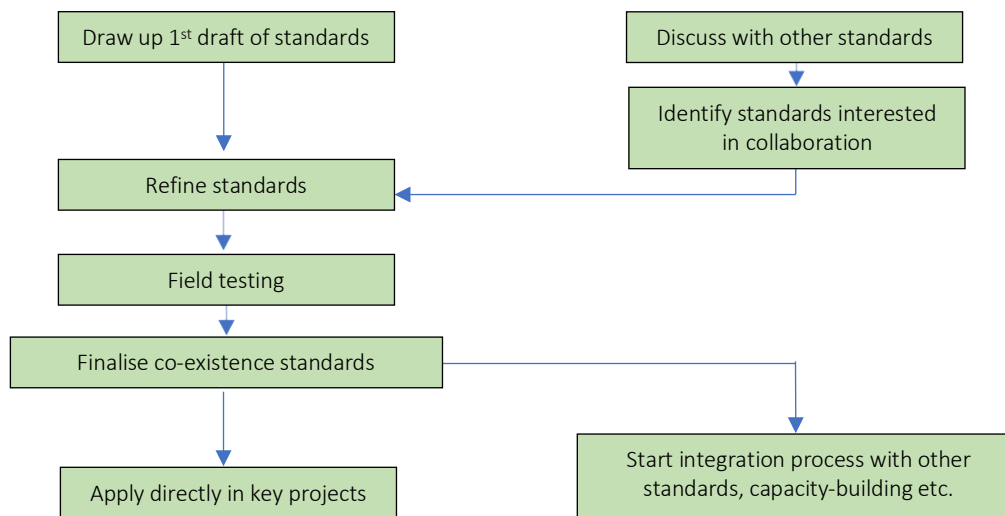
### 5. What other standards and agreements, including on communal livestock, agriculture and ecotourism, should / could the standard link to?

1. IUCN's Green List: developed with technical support from IUCN WCPA.
2. Conservation Assured: currently fully implemented for tigers and being developed for jaguars, river dolphins and (planned) for lions.
3. The Certified Wildlife Friendly® and Predator Friendly® Production Standards.
4. Fairtrade standard and similar: set standards to ensure communities receive equitable benefits.
5. Ecotourism standards: there are multiple ecotourism standards, often set at national level.
6. Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, Roundtable on Responsible Soy, organic standard etc.

There are also some relevant *guidelines*, such as the WWF SAFE System and draft guidelines from SSC.

Recommendation: Green List and Conservation Assured are the clearest link, however, all others should also be considered.

One possible pathway for establishing human wildlife co-existence standards is shown below.



One option for setting and establishing a standard

## 6. How should the standard link to existing work on Human Wildlife Conflict?

Several other initiatives also address human wildlife conflict and co-existence, e.g., the IUCN SSC Human Wildlife Conflict Task Force, and WWF’s Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework. Recommendation: ensure the co-existence standards are compatible with these other key tools.

## 7. What scale will the standard be operating on?

The co-existence standard is currently being developed for use at an individual site, although some broader-ranging questions might be more suitable for a system aimed at something like a protected area agency. Standards aimed at policy may be difficult to integrate into existing site-level standards. Recommendation: focus on developing a site-level system and for now note any key issues that need to be addressed at a system or policy level.

## 8. What IUCN processes and stakeholder groups should be engaged in developing a standard?

The project is interacting with the Green List and IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force. Additionally:

- Relevant SSC Specialist Groups (SGs), e.g., African Elephant, Asian Elephant, Cat, Hyaenid.
- IUCN Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), particularly the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULI).
- IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), particularly through the Management Effectiveness SG Capacity Development SG.
- Regional projects, including BIOPAMA, working on assessments.

## 9. Which stakeholder groups beyond IUCN should be considered? Some options:

1. Key development agencies, e.g., GIZ, NORAD and DFID.
2. International NGOs, particularly CI, WCS and The Nature Conservancy.
3. The Global Environmental Facility and implementing agencies such as UNDP and The World Bank.
4. Groups representing Indigenous People.
5. The International Rangers Federation.
6. The High Conservation Value initiative is important because its works with many standards.



## 1. Why are standards more powerful than guidelines to achieve management outcomes, better management practice and outcomes for conservation and communities?

Guidelines are extremely useful in helping to build good management and the capacity of staff of protected and conserved areas, and others involved in conservation projects. But standards take the process one important step further and create an additional layer of rigour and cross checking to verify that guidelines are in fact implemented on the ground.

Focus: Guidelines direct management approaches by suggesting good practices and are primarily an educational tool, often as a self-education tool for practitioners. Standards evaluate a site's management approaches against peer reviewed and often quantified global good practices. Guidelines *tend* to be more general and without quantifiable boundaries, standards *tend* to be more rigorous and *must* be quantifiable enough to allow verification by independent assessors.

Verification: Although processes vary, most guidelines are voluntary; where they include verification, this tends to be project-based and does not involve accreditation or certification by third parties. Standards usually involve some kind of formal accreditation/certification process with multiple steps to ensure compliance to the standards, often in accordance with industry wide protocols (e.g., ISEAL)<sup>5</sup>. This usually means that a third party looks at: (i) whether the evidence that standards have been met is an accurate reflection of the situation; (ii) that processes to gather this information are thorough and transparent and (iii) whether or not the standards have been met. This adds a critical layer of regular checks, thus ensuring that standards are both achieved and maintained over time. Accreditation/certification schemes vary in the process followed, time and expense required (Fig. 1).

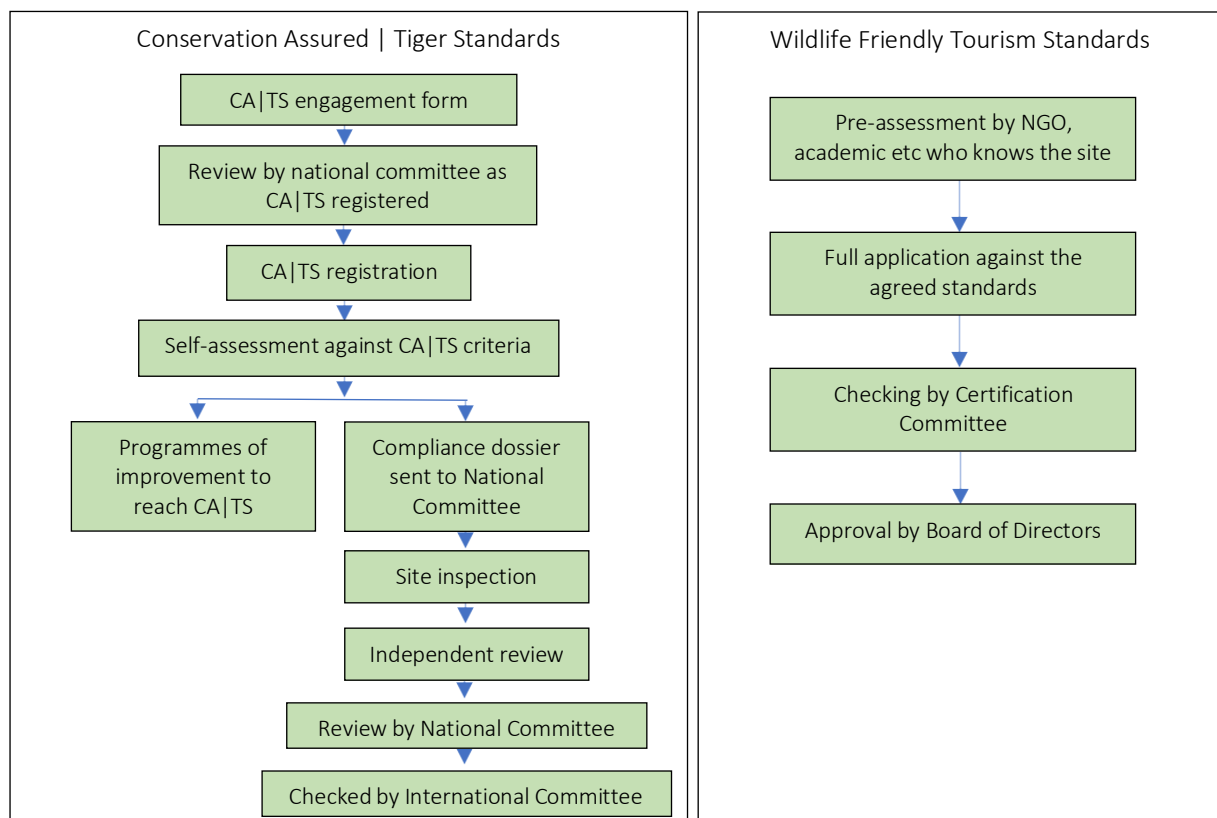


Figure 1: Comparison of different verification approaches



Some of the main differences between guidelines and standards are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Comparison of guidelines and standards.

Issue	Application in guidelines	Application in standards
Format	Usually, general advice and case studies	More specific advice and clear management targets
Measurement	Usually, unquantified	Usually, quantified and with a baseline
Verification	Through self-assessment, comparison with management plans etc.	Through external, expert-driven assessment
Process	Staff training, use in specific projects	Regular, repeated assessments every few years

Costs: Standards create additional rigour in the process although this also implies extra time, financial costs and bureaucracy. Precise estimates of costs are difficult; so much depends on the process chosen, local costs, whether or not the system uses volunteers or paid consultants as inspectors. Some key determinants are outlined below:

- An assumption that there is a system in place that people want to use.
- Start-up costs (expert workshops, possibly paid consultants to write standards).
- Some regular costs, for example for a full-time or part-time team to act as a secretariat.
- Costs of committees (e.g., Green List EAGL, CA|TS expert groups) – these are mainly voluntary but there will be some start-up costs; most operate remotely.
- Independent reviewers –the Green List pays consultants; CA|TS uses (mainly retired) volunteers although there are still travel and subsistence costs involved.
- Then there may be, potentially major, costs of addressing gaps identified by the assessment.

Risks: One constant risk with accreditation schemes is that the standards are only adopted by the best sites/programmes and therefore simply reward successful projects and do not lead to overall change. Some of these dangers can be avoided through collaboration with other partners, for example encouraging donors to make application of standards a prerequisite of funding or providing other incentives to take part.

Safeguards: in addition to standards and guidelines, there is increasing emphasis on safeguards as a mechanism taken to protect someone or something or to prevent something undesirable. WWF uses safeguards to identify, avoid and mitigate any negative social and environmental impacts within its work. The WWF Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework establishes a common set of standards, policies, planning and implementation mechanisms, and compliance systems that govern how activities on-the-ground are carried out. Their Safeguards Screening Tool (SST) has been developed for use by country teams to screen projects at the landscape/seascape level.<sup>6</sup> Whereas guidelines and standards are focused on site management, the safeguard process is increasingly developed by organisations to fund activities in protected areas, and to screen sites and projects before implementation for any issues around human rights abuses, conflicts etc.

## 2. What are the strengths and limitations of a standalone standard?

On balance, our advice would be to develop a standalone product first and then match it to existing systems, so that it can either be used separately or in combination (see recommendations under question 4 below). But there are costs involved in doing this and these need to be carefully considered before making a final decision.

Benefits include a much more focused approach to the subject matter:

- Standards and process can be tailor-made for the subject matter; this is important because some aspects of human-wildlife conflict / coexistence require relatively long-term responses, and more input from social and conflict resolution specialists, than some other protected area standards.
- Human-wildlife coexistence experts can therefore be engaged directly, both in developing the standards and in application on individual sites; the individual or team sent to verify a site under one of the existing standard-setting processes will often not have that expertise.
- Conversely the development process avoids (or at least defers) lengthy negotiation with other standard-setting bodies and speeds up development of a workable standard – although in the current case there has already been extensive collaboration with potential partner standards.
- By running a standalone system there is the opportunity to focus on the most important sites; these are not the “best” sites (which probably don’t need the standards) but those sites with serious conflict. The latter may well not be at the stage of being interested in an overall certification such as the Green List. In addition, the Green List is driven by national processes; so far sites have been Green Listed in 15 countries worldwide, although 50 countries are now involved in the Green List Initiative.<sup>7</sup>

Costs are mainly but not only associated with the additional time and resources needed in development:

- The whole standard will need to be developed from the beginning, without an existing framework; while this is liberating it also implies more time and resources needed. That said, given the existing Green List and Conservation Assured standards, guidance from ISEAL and other related standards (see below) there is considerable material to draw from.
- A separate standard could also be seen as competition with other systems unless at least some of the negotiations for mutual recognition and combined use had already taken place.
- Processes for implementation, verification and overall management (of the governance, implementation system, data, processes, etc.) will need to be developed (see below for details).
- A completely stand-alone system will also almost certainly reduce the number of sites that can engage and may end up simply creating another under-used tool.

## 3. How viable is it to develop the co-existence standards as a standalone standard?

Agreeing a standard, and to an even greater extent setting up a verification system, is a long and complicated task. To run a full standalone standard verification system needs, at least:

1. A process to agree and share a set of global standards (which will probably need to be tailored to individual situations), based around good management practices that can be widely shared.

2. A system for documenting area-based adherence to the standards, which means a system of record-keeping, probably a database, and a process for reviewing and if necessary, updating the standards over time.
3. An independent verification process to assure adherence to the standards, which means standards committees, inspectors (who probably need training and certainly logistical support).
4. A process in place to monitor any changes in site conditions which might impact adherence to standards.
5. The governance processes to manage the system, which have to be transparent and independent and would involve something along the lines of trustees, international committee and a secretariat.
6. Outreach and communications to “sell” the system and encourage uptake – a platform for measuring and assuring conservation achievement.
7. A system to monitor results and check that they are having a beneficial impact on conservation, in a format that can be easily communicated.
8. Funds to be able to do the above, which means both start-up funds and (assuming that most sites/projects will not be able or willing to pay for the process of standard application themselves) regular funds to expand and repeat standard application over time.

Those setting up the coexistence standard will need a standalone process for setting the standard and ensuring its revision as experience in its implementation and conservation practices develop. There may be a need for some kind of additional verification system to add specific expertise of these issues into the process and to ensure equivalence of standard implementation across the sites and countries it is applied to. There will also still need to be a fairly major outreach programme to raise awareness of the coexistence standard and advocate its use.

#### **4. How can the coexistence standard be combined with or complement existing conservation standards?**

It is planned that a main, or the main, use of the co-existence standards will be as a voluntary or obligatory addition to one or several existing standards. This will depend to an extent on whether the existing standards organisation advocates for the co-existence standards or fully integrates it. CA|TS for example, advocates for several additional standards within its systems (e.g., the tiger-specific tourism standard TOFT)<sup>8</sup> but achieving CA|TS Approved status is determined by reaching the CA|TS standard with these additional standards being seen as contributions to the evidence base but not a fully integrated part of the system. There is a risk therefore in simply having the standards as optional extras, experience suggests that most applicants will not make their lives more difficult by doing things that are inessential. But this problem could be at least partially overcome if for instance major donor bodies, such as GEF, bilateral national donors or major NGOs, insisted on application of the standard to reduce the potential for conflict. Some options are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Options for complementing existing standard systems.

Option	Notes
Fully voluntary, no extra benefits	Lowest transactional costs, can be applied to any standards system which advocates for it, but has the disadvantage that it is asking applicants to take on additional work for no apparent gain.
Fully voluntary, extra certificate	Here a protected area completing, for example, the Green List would receive additional recognition if they also underwent the full co-existence assessment – possibly an additional certificate, logo etc.
Fully integrated	In theory, an existing certification scheme might find the co-existence criteria and indicators so important that they are made a permanent part of the standards. This is unlikely though, standard setting organisations and understandably are reluctant to add many additional asks to existing systems.
Obligatory in some circumstances	The co-existence standards could become an obligatory addition for particular donors, or governments, wishing to emphasise the need to address human wildlife conflict and co-existence issues.

Questions remain as to whether the emphasis should be in linking to a particular standard or whether it should be adaptable enough to be used in a range of circumstances. The co-existence standards seem to be an obvious complement to the Green List and Conservation Assured. They may also have important roles to play in some tourism standards and other standards focusing on wildlife. Some options are examined in more detail later in this analysis.

Relationship with other standards: One important question is whether the standards should start as a separate entity, and later be retrofitted onto other standards and processes, or be developed from the beginning as a contribution to standards such as the Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas (hereafter “The Green List”)<sup>9</sup> and Conservation Assured.

- Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas: The Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas (Green List) is an initiative of IUCN, to improve effectiveness through developing a global standard for management. The Green List has been developed with technical support from the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and a coalition of professionals with expertise in relevant areas. It has four main components: 1) achieving conservation outcomes through good governance; 2) sound planning and 3) design; and 4) effective management. Each has a number of criteria and indicators. Countries wishing to implement the Green List have to adapt the global standard to the national context. Once this adaptation is approved by IUCN, individual sites are subject to the governance framework for the Green List initiative and assurance procedures being developed. It is linked conceptually with the Red Lists of Species and Ecosystems and Green Status for species.
- Conservation Assured: Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) was launched in 2011, to help prevent tigers becoming extinct in the wild. CA|TS is a distillation of good practice from expert-driven and peer-reviewed standards, covering all aspects of management. Sites first register to take part in CA|TS and listed as *CA|TS Registered*. They are audited against a set of standards; if these are met sites are accredited as *CA|TS Approved*. CA|TS is governed by a broad partnership of area experts. It has seven “pillars”; five relating to general species protection (Conservation Assured) and two relating to tigers and their prey (Tiger Standards). CA|TS aims to register all the world's most important tiger areas and develop programmes which mobilise

support and capacity for management. Related standards are under development for jaguars, river dolphins and (planned) for lions. Human-wildlife conflict is a key issue in all these standards.

Our advice (see below) is that the core principles and components should be developed as a standalone product, to avoid the risk of missing out key issues if they are not within the remit of existing standard-setting processes and allows for a more flexible approach to linking with other international or national standards if the situation arises. But in addition, that they should from the start be planned particularly for use with existing standards. It is therefore also important to know what these other standards require, and how they operate, to ensure a smooth match and that the overall objectives, and we assume high standards ensuring compliance, are maintained.

In this case, there will be a need for:

- Early discussion with selected standard-setting organisations to ensure they are in broad agreement with the development and use of a co-existence standard.
- Coordination with the existing governance structures of the various standards during the process of development.
- Exploration of mutual recognition (with the Green List this would probably entail some form of approval of the standards by the Standards Committee and then a formal approval of the coexistence standard and agreement to promote the standard as an addition to the Green List) once draft standards have been agreed.
- Exploration of how these standards could work together with CA|TS.
- Sharing of expertise (particularly to ensure that if existing standards are used, verifiers have sufficient understanding of co-existence issues), which will involve some level of training and capacity building (possibly online courses).
- Agreement on accreditation processes and standards.
- Protocols covering working practices, competition, disagreements etc., eventually leading up to MOUs with key institutions.

Existing guidance: In this regard, it would be worth considering existing guidance for developing standards, e.g., ISEAL's *Principles for Credible and Effective Sustainability Standards Systems*<sup>10</sup> around which the Green List is based (see Box 1) and the *Conservation Assured Principles* (see Box 2 overleaf). The International Organization for Standardization (ISO)<sup>11</sup> also provides guidance at a global level.

Box 1: The ISEAL Credibility Principles (main headlines only)<sup>12</sup>

- Sustainability
- Improvement
- Relevance
- Rigour
- Engagement
- Impartiality
- Transparency
- Accessibility
- Truthfulness
- Efficiency

Box 2: The Conservation Assured Principles (edited version)<sup>13</sup>

1. Standards should be developed in close cooperation with other international initiatives.
2. Standards should ensure the recovery and survival of the conservation target and the management of major threats.
3. Standards include all the relevant areas outlined in Conservation Assured Framework.
4. Standards have been developed with broad engagement of experts.
5. A process is in place to update/adapt the standards to reflect new developments in conservation.
6. A system for documenting area-based adherence to these standards is in place.
7. An independent verification process is in place.
8. A process is in place to monitor any changes in site conditions which might impact adherence.
9. The governance process is transparent, independent, diverse and includes known experts.
10. Consideration is made for the level of conservation interventions needed to meet the standards.

Aiming to get the best of both worlds – a standard and collaboration

A compromise position would be to develop a standalone standard, but simultaneously engage with a range of other standards to ensure that application would be mutually beneficial. The stated aims (see above) could reflect a preference for this type of approach but recognise the need for a standalone system if the standard were to operate in a country not yet part of the Green List portfolio (or that of other systems such as Conservation Assured). The aims could also state the preference for developing a Green List or similar approach in these countries before implementing the standalone coexistence standard, or perhaps implement the standalone coexistence standard as part of a phased approach to standard implementation in a country with the coexistence standard being the first step in the approach. The main steps are outlined in Fig. 2 below.

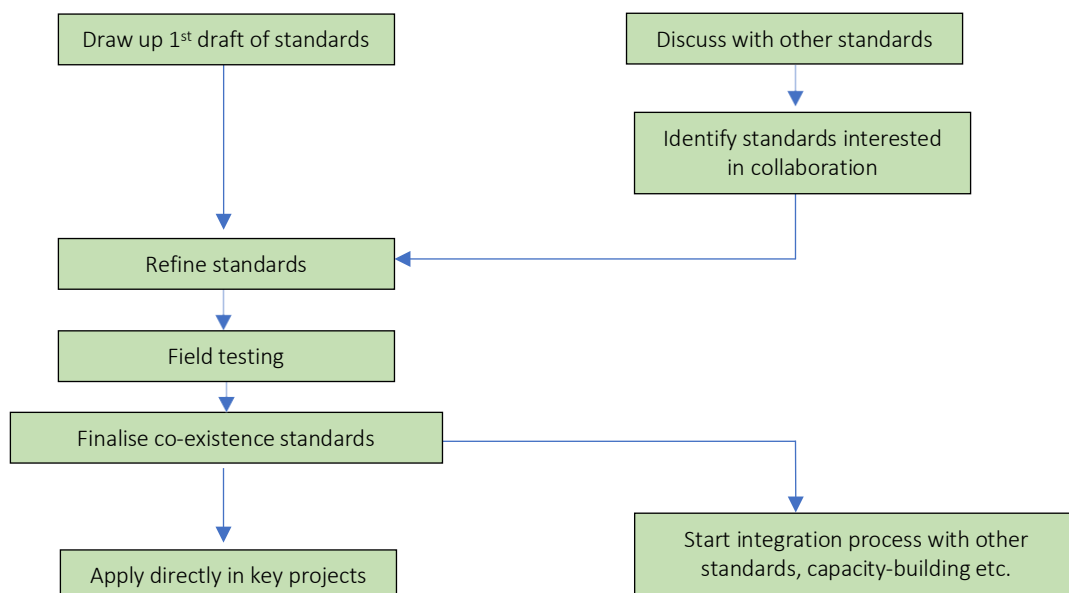


Figure 2: One option for setting and establishing a standard.

In this approach the main costs will be the costs of developing the standard itself, the time and energy needed to discuss with multiple potential partners, field testing the standards and further refinement;

further down the road there may also be costs associated with training and capacity building of partners. Avoided costs are the whole framework, described below, needed to develop a full accreditation system. However, there are also some disadvantages; namely that there is less control over the system, which will eventually be used (or not) by other players. To avoid this there may be some additional costs in terms of advocacy and time working to ensure the standards are properly adopted and rolled out. Much will depend on whether the coexistence standard is advocated as an additional good practice for sites to consider or fully integrated.

Recommendation: develop as a separate entity, to avoid missing key issues not within existing standards, as a set of principles and key elements of co-existence standards, but with a full understanding of what other standards would require.

Recommendation: apply *primarily* with existing standards, particularly the Green List and Conservation Assured, but which are also capable of being used as a standalone standard, perhaps without the associated accreditation system. This will involve:

- Discussion and coordination with selected standard-setting organisations.
- Exploration of mutual recognition.
- Sharing of expertise (particularly to ensure that verifiers understand co-existence issues).
- Agreement on accreditation processes and standards.
- Protocols covering working practices, competition, disagreements etc, leading up to MOUs.

The costs would therefore be solely for developing the standard, avoiding costs of setting up a whole accreditation system.

Recommendation: considering ISEAL's *Principles for Credible and Effective Sustainability Standards Systems* and the *Conservation Assured Principles*.

## **5. What other standards and agreements, including on communal livestock, agriculture and ecotourism, should / could the standard link to?**

The Green List and Conservation Assured have already been identified as potential partners (see Box 3). However, a number of other standards operate inside protected and conserved areas.

Additionally, although the standard is initially aimed at protected areas, it is likely that conserved areas (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Mechanisms – OECMs and others) outside formally protected areas will also be included in future area-based conservation targets and will therefore increase in importance. At this stage, many more standards will become relevant. Some of the main ones are listed below, with examples of potential reasons for engagement.

- The Certified Wildlife Friendly® and Predator Friendly® Production Standards: [wildlifefriendly.org/standards](http://wildlifefriendly.org/standards):<sup>14</sup> certification schemes particularly for ecotourism ventures and farming, aiming to reduce detrimental impacts on wildlife from management, poaching and other pressures. Many standards exist, aimed at species or groups, and most will experience human-wildlife conflict issues at some stage, so this might also be a major partner for the initiative.
- Fairtrade standard and similar: set standards to ensure that farmers, workers, small-scale traders and communities receive equitable benefits from their production. Fair trade<sup>15</sup> focuses on social and economic standards but also embraces environmental issues, encouraging those involved to work with rather than against nature. However, the environmental standards do not cover

wildlife or biodiversity and the only obvious link seems to be with the potential for crop damage in particular commodities such as cocoa, coffee and tea.

- Ecotourism standards: there are multiple ecotourism standards, often set at national level although many international standards also exist.<sup>16</sup> These cover a wide range of issues but most focus primarily on ensuring that tourism supports rather than undermines conservation efforts and, in the more complete systems, that local people get an equitable share of the returns. The number of schemes has long caused confusion,<sup>17</sup> although some coherence is developing around the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.<sup>18</sup>
- Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil:<sup>19</sup> it is unlikely that any palm oil operations would be inside protected and conserved areas, but they can have important impacts on wildlife at the edges of such areas or adjacent to wildlife corridors, e.g., conflicts arise between elephants and palm oil producers along the Kinabatangan River in Sabah, Borneo. Inclusion of wildlife co-existence standards within RSPO could be useful in these cases. Similar issues relate to the Roundtable on Responsible Soy,<sup>20</sup> Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels,<sup>21</sup> and similar commodity agreements.
- Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef: in theory this might be applicable in some conserved areas with low grazing pressure; this is for example the main conservation strategy being followed in the Northern Great Plains region of the United States and Canada. However, the criteria appear to be very general and reference to wildlife minimal: *“The beef value chain contributes to the maintenance or enhancement of native plant and animal biological diversity”*.<sup>22</sup>
- Organic standards: organic agriculture often takes place close to or even within protected and conserved areas – organic systems are a common management aim within IUCN Category V protected areas for instance, and wildlife conflicts presumably occur. IFOAM standards (the umbrella standards that all recognized national standards should meet) include a requirement to *“design and implement measures to maintain and improve landscape and enhance biodiversity quality, by maintaining on-farm wildlife refuge habitats or establishing them where none exist”*, including a wide range of habitats.<sup>23</sup>

Box 3: Protected area standards: There are many standards for specific elements of management (e.g., tourism) but two fairly new initiatives are most relevant to protected and conserved areas; IUCN’s Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas and Conservation Assured, initially developed by WWF. Both start from an assessment of management effectiveness (usually a self-assessment); then build on this through application of standards developed through a peer-review process and an assessment by local or international experts.

- Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas standards address area-based conservation in any site through development of a global standard for management.
- Conservation Assured standards address area-based conservation of high conservation-value species, particularly those attracting poaching pressure.

Both standards documents are freely available but to be accredited sites need to sign up to take part in the programmes.

Recommendation: Green List and CA|TS are the clearest link, all others should also be considered.



## 6. How should the standard link to existing work on Human Wildlife Conflict?

The standard is not appearing in a vacuum; several other initiatives are also addressing human wildlife conflict and issues of co-existence. The IUCN Species Survival Commission has a Human Wildlife Conflict Task Force,<sup>24</sup> which is preparing best practice guidelines on the issue. Their position statement lays out six key principles:

1. Interventions that focus only on reducing damage are not transferable from one case to another.
2. Poorly informed human-wildlife conflict mitigation attempts can make the situation worse.
3. Context awareness and understanding of social and political backgrounds is crucial.
4. Conflict mitigation and damage reduction interventions must be designed and managed collaboratively.
5. Long-term solutions need to incorporate landscape-scale ecological, economic and physical patterns.
6. Conflicts are not always negative, but words and language matter<sup>25</sup>.

WWF's Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework, mentioned above, is another important response, which includes addressing issues of human-wildlife conflict.<sup>26</sup> Both these organisations are already actively engaged in the development of the co-existence standards; ensuring a good match with the best practice guidelines in particular will be an important step in harmonising approaches. Additionally, WWF's Safe System is an assessment tool consisting of 60-questions on issues around the Human Wildlife Conflict which is loosely based on the WWF Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (i.e., a question with four rates responses under a set of overarching themes).<sup>27</sup>

Recommendation: ensure the co-existence standards are compatible with these other key tools.

## 7. What scale will the standard be operating on?

Is the co-existence standard aiming at the level of an individual site or something like a protected area agency, or both? Most standards operate at the level and within the constraints of what can be achieved on the site. Some of the aims of the co-existence standard – to address the root causes of human-wildlife conflict – seem to stray into changes at the level of national or at least institutional policy. While a site manager could advocate for such changes, they do not have the power to enforce these changes. Standards at policy level would be difficult to integrate with site-level mechanisms such as the Green List. Once the co-existence standards have been drawn up, one further stage in the development process may be to identify which of the elements can be applied within a site-based approach and which, of any, require a different approach with government. The potential for accreditation of government departments or donor agencies might be worth investigating.

Recommendation: focus on developing a site-level system and for now note any key issues that need to be addressed at a system or policy level.

## 8. What IUCN processes and stakeholder groups should be engaged in developing a standard?

The project is already interacting with the Green List Initiative and the IUCN Species Survival Commission Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force. There are a number of other specialist groups within the Commissions that would also be worth contacting:

- The most relevant SSC species groups, including the African Elephant, Asian Elephant, Cat, Hyaenid, Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe, etc.
- IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), particularly the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULI)<sup>28</sup>.
- IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), particularly through the Management Effectiveness Specialist Group and the Capacity Development Specialist Group (which might also be an important group to include in discussions about the standards).
- Regional projects, including BIOPAMA, working on assessments.

## 9. Which stakeholder groups beyond IUCN should be considered?

This will need to be strategic, there are literally thousands of groups involved. Some of the most important are suggested below. Institutions listed under numbers 1-3 would have the influence to insist on application of standards in their projects if they were convinced these would be beneficial.

1. Key development agencies, particularly those with a strong social focus such as GIZ in Germany, NORAD in Norway and DFID in the UK (not a complete list).
2. International NGOs, particularly Conservation International (now with a major focus on sustainable use), Wildlife Conservation Society and The Nature Conservancy.
3. The Global Environmental Facility and major implementing agencies including UNDP and The World Bank.
4. Groups representing Indigenous People and (especially) pastoralists groups, e.g., the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee,<sup>29</sup> ICCA Consortium,<sup>30</sup> etc.
5. The International Rangers Federation could be a key partner in both developing and implementing standards.
6. High Conservation Value initiative is important, because it works with many standard-setting organisations and looks explicitly at conservation amongst the pillars that make up HCV. The HCV network<sup>31</sup> is going through a period of innovation at the moment and might be a useful partner.

## 10. Which donors and funders may be willing to fund the development of the standard?

This is not our area of expertise, but some outlined suggestions follow.

1. Global Wildlife Conservation – new organization with a strong emphasis on field work with communities and Indigenous people.
2. PAMS Foundation and [www.coexistence.life](http://www.coexistence.life) initiative, working in East Africa.
3. Various conservancies in East/South Africa promoting coexistence.

4. Any large donors associated with the Oxford International Conference on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence (e.g., UNDP, GEF, WB).

An additional financing option would be to consider some of the new innovative financing mechanisms which are beginning to appear around conservation. Impact investment bonds have been specifically linked to the development of standards, as verified implementation of standards provide the type of evidence base required by bonds (Box 4).

Box 4: Impact investment bonds

A bond is a tradable financial security representing a promise that the organisation that sold the bond will pay the holder of the bond a prespecified interest payment at defined intervals over the bond's lifetime, and also pay the face value of the bond upon maturity. Essentially, selling a bond is a way to borrow large amounts of finance, the bond issuer must pay back the face value of the bond plus a pre-specified amount of interest once it has reached its full maturity.

When used for conservation the main benefit of the bonds approach is that it transfers the risk of funding conservation from donors (outcome payers) to impact investors by linking conservation impact to financial performance. Thus, impact investors pay upfront for the implementation of conservation strategies, with "outcome payers" committing at the outset to reimburse investors their capital plus interest if the conservation target is achieved and independently verified. "Green bonds" have emerged as one of the tools to raise capital for environmental protection, environmental services and conservation, and are becoming popular in climate, forest and clean energy projects. The first species-linked investment bond, the Rhino Impact Bond (RIB), was launched in 2019. The RIB is looking for investors in the US\$50m bond who will be paid back their capital and interest if African black rhino populations in five sites across Kenya and South Africa increase over five years.<sup>32</sup>

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