The **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)** works to preserve jaguars in a set of globally significant, strategically located Jaguar Conservation Units (JCUs) that contribute to range-wide conservation of the species. On the ground this involves protecting ~ 5,000 jaguars in 400,000km² straddling multiple biomes and ecosystems from the Selva Maya through the Amazon to the Chaco (see Figure 1).

In 2019, WCS examined the impact of our interventions in 10 sites across six of our jaguar conservation landscapes and found that the populations grew steadily, averaging 6.1% per year (the paper was just submitted for publication). Each of those sites is part of a transboundary JCU. In collaboration with our government partners, practical interventions such as protected area and territorial law enforcement, careful natural resource management and outreach to reduce human-jaguar conflicts led to those positive trends. However, the stable and increasing trends in some cases, observed and recorded in these sites where WCS works and in sites where other institutions have recorded successes, are far too isolated.

Rather, the global population of jaguars is declining. Habitat loss is likely the main contributor to that decline. Using forest cover-based estimates, 4,026 jaguars (6% of the world’s jaguar population) were lost to habitat conversion in 11 years in the nine-country Amazon-Guiana Shield stronghold.¹ It’s likely that hundreds of jaguars have been lost to the synergy of combined habitat loss and direct killing in the tri-national Gran Chaco. An estimated 500 jaguars were lost in fifteen years due to habitat modifications in Mesoamerica.² Based upon estimates of 1.5 to 2.5 jaguars per 100km², the fires in the tri-national southwestern Amazon and adjacent biomes that burned in 2019 resulted in 300-500 jaguars lost in only one year.³

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¹ **Factsheet on the jaguar (Panthera onca)**

CMS COP13, Gandhinagar, India, 15-22 February 2020

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Using the criteria in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, **33 out of the 34 jaguar subpopulations qualify as Endangered or Critically Endangered.** Jaguars need large areas to move, with home ranges between 52 and 535km², and some outliers have a home range greater than 1,000km². Jaguars need large spaces to roam and those spaces usually span one or more international boundaries. Densities are usually low, ranging from 0.29 jaguars per 100km² to over 6 jaguars/100km², with some of the variance attributable to resource availability, especially natural prey. Densities of only 1.5-2.5 jaguars/100km² are common even in undisturbed intact ecosystems. Part of this is because the jaguar is at the top of the trophic chain. Its presence and status can be an indication that the chain, and the ecosystem is intact.

Given the rate of range retraction that is driven by habitat loss, and that **at least 26 of the most important jaguar sub-populations are transboundary**, inclusion of jaguars in Appendix I and II of CMS is warranted. Many of the international boundaries are remote and untraveled. Using telemetry and camera traps we know that jaguars have been using areas straddling international boundaries in the following biomes/countries: Selva Maya Mexico-Guatemala, Selva Maya Guatemala-Belize, Chaco-Chaco Paraguay-Bolivia, Chaco-Pantanal Paraguay Brazil, and Atlantic Forest Argentina-Brazil. Anecdotal poorly recorded accounts abound, including jaguars swimming across rivers that constitute international boundaries.

**2020 is a hugely significant year for jaguars.** The March 2018 High-level Forum for jaguars, held at United Nations headquarters in New York City, led to the recently completed 2030 Conservation Road Map; the Road Map provides a blueprint for the species, including conservation planning spanning all jaguar range states, and all of the transboundary JCUs and corridors connecting them. Through a collective range-wide endorsement of the Road Map by the Range States, we have an opportunity to increase the large scale, transboundary collaborative conservation that the species needs to persist.

In the context of the vast areas that jaguars require, the rapid range retraction due to habitat loss, that nearly all the most important JCUs are transboundary, and that jaguars cross borders with frequency and regularity, **we strongly recommend the inclusion of the jaguar in both CMS Appendices I and II**, as proposed by Costa Rica, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay at the Thirteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP13) to CMS, in Gandhinagar, India, on 15-22 February 2020.

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**WCS is a global conservation organisation working to save wildlife and wild places through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature.** Our field programmes in more than 60 countries in Asia, Africa, the Americas, and the Pacific build on more than 100 years of experience and scientific and technical expertise. To learn more about WCS and our conservation programmes, visit www.wcs.org.