A 2018 Horizon Scan of Emerging Issues for Global Conservation and Biological Diversity

Introduction and Horizon Scanning

We present the outcomes of our ninth annual horizon scan. Our aim is to identify emerging issues that may affect biological diversity and conservation of biological diversity that are not widely known to conservation practitioners. Our approach follows that of our previous horizon scanning reports that collaboratively identify, collate, and prioritize a list of emerging issues through a transparent process that incorporates expert opinion, discussion, and consensus-seeking. We invited participation from a diverse group of conservation scientists, practitioners, students, and other interested parties, representing individuals, organizations, and institutions from a variety of disciplines, sectors, and geographic locations. We used the same methodology as our previous horizon scanning exercises (Sutherland et al. 2006, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017) to identify and prioritize a list of 15 issues for conservation biology to be considered by decision-makers and practitioners (Table 1). We provide a brief overview of these issues here.

In a now well established final horizon scanning run (expert and stakeholder) workshop, participants voted on the 15 issues from the longer list, on the basis of their importance for conservation of biological diversity and their novelty to conservation practitioners. We asked participants to vote for approximately 10 the second round of voting, participants voted for approximately 5 issues from the shortlist of issues that they felt were the most important for conservation practitioners to be aware of. We asked participants to vote for issues that they felt were important, novel, and well-evidenced (rather than speculative) and to vote for issues that they felt were important for conservation practitioners to be aware of. We asked participants