

# First SUMMARY REPORT Biodiversity Workshop

**Sharing perspectives on CBD  
implementation and options for the  
post-2020 global biodiversity framework  
9-10 October 2018, Beijing**

Organized by the EU-China Environment Project



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## Summary Report

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and options for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework  
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# Executive Summary

Two years before the deadline of the Strategic Action Plan 2011-2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and with increasing indications that most Aichi targets will not be met, discussions to prepare the post-2020 global biodiversity framework are starting. It is important to multiply the occasions for involved experts to discuss the options on the table for post-2020, and share views about what could be done to improve the implementation of the CBD at the national level. An international workshop was held in Beijing on 9-10 October 2018 to discuss the success and limitations in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the options for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the links between biodiversity and poverty eradication.

Across the world, the increase of productive activities, especially in the sectors of food, fiber, and energy to meet the demands of a growing world population with a growing per capita consumption rate, have led to increasing levels of impact to ecosystems. Given the projected trends, the post-2020 framework will likely face an even more challenging context than its predecessors, and deep transformations are needed to curb the decline of biodiversity worldwide. The decisions taken at COP15 should contribute to these transformations.

## WHAT AMBITION FOR COP15 AND THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK?

Several key points concerning the ambition of COP15 have been addressed.

- ¶ **Trade offs between the number of issues to explicitly include in the post-2020 framework and its negotiability.** The more topics we will try to address explicitly in the negotiated text for the post-2020 framework, the more difficult it will be to negotiate. It is however clear that capacity building and resources need to be part of the post-2020 framework.
- ¶ **The puzzle of how to include and mobilize “non-biodiversity” actors.** The post-2020 framework needs to mobilize a wide range of actors and institutions. The challenge is to communicate clearly the contributions from biodiversity to other objectives, such as poverty eradication development, and other SDGs.
- ¶ **Not only a ten-year game.** One way to release this tension is to consider that the post-2020 decade could indeed have more focused actions, while being embedded in a more ambitious longer-term strategy, compatible with the 2050 Vision of the current Strategic Plan.
- ¶ **Distinguishing the text and the broader conversation around it, and make them converge.** Another way of “protecting the text” (e.g., trying to address too many topics in the text) while enabling a broad conversation to happen is to distinguish between the writing of text itself, limited in its length and the number of aspects it explicitly covers, and the richer conversation that will surround it different conferences, civil society fora, etc
- ¶ **Finding narratives to mobilize.** It was reminded that for climate change, mobilization was increased when the topic was linked to issues of pollution and health. For biodiversity, a similar linkage could be done for biodiversity with questions of food and health. The importance of ecosystems to mitigate (and adapt to) climate change was also mentioned. Clarifying why preserving biodiversity matters will be important.
- ¶ **Political risks for COP15.** For COP15 to deliver an ambitious outcome, it will require a strong mobilization of high-level support in the coming years. About 150 heads of States were present in Paris for COP21, and a similar high-level implication would be necessary in China. Furthermore, while the idea of biodiversity voluntary/national commitments/contributions is gaining traction, it was pointed that they presented a political risk if only few countries ended up producing one by COP15; this would both fragilize the momentum towards COP15 and send mixed signals about the willingness to implement the post-2020 framework.

## CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE POST-2020 TARGETS

- ¶ The current targets are already very ambitious. The problem is elsewhere, in the lack of actions taken to implement them. It is important to distinguish the targets themselves from the actions triggered by the targets.
- ¶ While there is a tendency to ask for fewer targets, there is also an attachment to the current set of targets, and continuity of post-2020 targets with the Aichi Targets.
- ¶ There is an appeal for targets dedicated to “classic” biodiversity measures (e.g., protected areas), but the post-2020 targets should also address broader concerns linked to the drivers of biodiversity loss, such as those highlighted by the works of IPBES.
- ¶ The new targets could be disaggregated (e.g., sub-targets) to correspond to different sectors of society and drivers of pressures on biodiversity.
- ¶ The current targets are organized with a DPSIR logic and narrative. The new set of targets could also follow an overarching logic, such as the SDGs for instance. The links with health, food, and nutrition, are possibilities.
- ¶ Current SDGs already reflect the Aichi Targets (especially SDGs 14 and 15). The next targets should be designed by taking into consideration that they could serve as the basis for the successors of the SDGs after 2030.
- ¶ It is important to find a way to compare efforts. A possibility could be to use surface (or share of total surface) dedicated to conservation, agroecology, etc., to provide an estimate of the overall effort for/compatibility with conservation on a given territory.
- ¶ An approach in terms of “Nature %” (N%), identifying the percentage of natural areas necessary to sustain human livelihoods, is currently being developed in China.

## PERSPECTIVES ON “NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS” FOR BIODIVERSITY

- ¶ **The link between national contributions and global goals.** The question was raised about what the “contributions” were contributing to, e.g., the global goals. This lack of clarity was seen as a potential problem. However, it was also noted that there was sufficient knowledge about what needed to be done for biodiversity to develop contributions that would indeed have added value.
- ¶ **Assessing and comparing efforts.** Concerns were expressed about the risk of having very large differences in the scope and content of the contributions, which would make it difficult to assess the global level of efforts and compare the different individual efforts. Ideas on criteria on which efforts could be assessed and compared comprised the “biodiversity content” of the contributions, their ability to concretely address the footprint or pressures on biodiversity, and the amount of funding for biodiversity.
- ¶ **Stock taking and review mechanism.** Discussions also stressed that voluntary contributions are meaningful only if there is reporting and review of implementation, alike the Paris Agreement, where regular stock taking and review would take place to assess progress and reevaluate efforts.



- ¶ **Links with NBSAPs.** The question of how such contributions would be linked to NBSAPs was raised. The added value to, and mutual reinforcement with, NBSAPs should be a point of attention. Voluntary contributions must strengthen NBSAPs, not undermine or replace them.
- ¶ **Timing.** The timeline was also discussed. Should the national contributions be submitted before COP15, or should COP15 lay the groundwork for national contributions? Submissions before COP15 could have the advantage of creating momentum, competition for leadership, and peer pressure. It could also help identify the topics/ areas on which commitments are being made, and thus help indicate some directions for the discussion about the post-2020 targets. If after, the advantage would be to provide more time to better link the national contributions to the global targets, the NBSAPs, and lay the groundwork for stock taking and review mechanisms (these aspects could, however, also be more precisely addressed after COP15, as is currently the case for the Paris Agreement).

## The role of China as a host country

China is well aware of the stakes of COP15 and that there are many expectations for their presidency. Organizing COP15 is aligned with China's foreign policy and the growing role of China in international environmental governance. It is also in line with Chinese domestic stakes, such as the implementation of the "ecological civilization" and, more precisely, on raising the profile of biodiversity in domestic debates.

China wishes to share its experience on several aspects of environment and development issues, support developing countries and play an important role in collective leadership.

The country has already set a preparatory Committee, under the authority of the Vice Premier of the State Council, and has already developed several streams of activities (international discussions, studies, dialogues and workshops).

Other Parties could support China in two specific ways:

- ¶ Help build consensus in negotiations on the way to COP15;
- ¶ Raise the political profile of biodiversity in their own countries, so that their leaders display biodiversity ambition to Chinese leaders.



# 1. Introduction. The added value of informal dialogues on the road to COP15

Two years before the deadline of the Strategic Action Plan 2011-2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and with increasing indications that most Aichi targets will not be met, discussions to prepare the post-2020 global biodiversity framework are starting.

Given the tight consultation and negotiation schedule leading to the COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which will be held in China COP 15 at the end of 2020, it is important to multiply the occasions for involved experts to discuss the options on the table for post-2020, and share views about what could be done to improve the implementation of the CBD at the national level. During formal meetings, it is rare for experts to have the time for thorough discussions, because of the intensity of negotiation schedules. More informal settings, such as ad hoc workshops dedicated to key issues in negotiations, are useful moments where a common understanding of issues can be built, and advances made towards consensus. Such dialogues

have proven useful in the past, especially during climate negotiations, on the road to UNFCCC COP21<sup>1</sup>.

In this respect, an international workshop was held in Beijing on 9-10 October 2018 to discuss the success and limitations in the implementation of the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and options for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The meeting was held under Chatham House rules (especially, no individual record of ideas and positions), and experts were there intuitu personæ (in their expert capacity, not representing their country or organization). The workshop gathered representatives from Austria, Canada, China, Egypt, the European Commission, France, Germany, IUCN and IDDRI<sup>2</sup>. Remote interventions and participation by the CBD Secretariat and by an IPBES Expert also took place during the workshop.

This summary report synthesizes the rich discussions that took place during the two days.



1 <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/blog-post/iddri-influential-shaping-key-elements-paris-agreement>

2 See Appendix 1, 2, and 3, for the workshop agenda, and two preparatory notes for the workshop, in English and Mandarin.

## 2. Setting the stage: Biodiversity loss continues worldwide, and we know why

In March 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) released four regional assessment reports and their summaries for policymakers. These assessments covered the regions of Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia<sup>3</sup>. They were based on several thousands of references, including indigenous and local knowledge, and received several thousands of comments by experts and governments.

A summary of the key findings of these assessments has been produced<sup>4</sup>. It identifies thirteen key findings that are common to the four regional assessments. An overall conclusion of this summary is the following:

*“While there are many common and comparative key findings among the four regions, there are also differences between the regions and within the regions on the relative magnitudes of the trends in nature and biodiversity, nature’s contributions to people, indirect and direct drivers, plausible futures and response options, amongst others. On balance there are more commonalities than significant differences between the four regions (although the differences are important as described below).”*

While all these findings are important in biodiversity discussions, since the workshop mostly focused on how the post-2020 framework could reinforce the conservation of biodiversity, we will mostly insist here on the findings pertaining to the state of biodiversity worldwide, and the causes of its degradation.

On the state of biodiversity worldwide, the Key Findings 4 and 5 depict a dire situation:

**“Key Finding 4:** *Biodiversity (genes, species and ecosystems) continues to be degraded in all parts of the world, with a corresponding loss of nature’s contributions to people, hence undermining people’s quality of life. The risk of loss of populations or extinction of species (mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish and plants) is increasing in terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater habitats in all regions of the world caused directly or indirectly by anthropogenic drivers. The situation has become markedly worse in all regions during the last 20 years. With the exception of Europe and Central Asia, just over 20% of all species assessed by the IUCN are listed in the Red List as either extinct, extinct in the wild, critically endangered, endangered or vulnerable (i.e. extinct or threatened), with endemic species even more threatened.”*

**“Key Finding 5:** *Literally all terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems exhibit some level of degradation, with wetlands, forests and coral reefs being particularly transformed in most regions.”*

To sum up: despite the two Strategic Plans of the CBD (2002-2010 and 2011-2020) and the ambitious international goals that accompanied them, the situation of biodiversity has worsened in every region, and for every type of ecosystem.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ipbes.net/assessment-reports>

<sup>4</sup> See document CBD/COP/14/INF/24, “Key findings from the four IPBES regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services”, authored by Bob Watson, Emma Archer, Luthando Dziba, Markus Fischer, Madhav Karki, Kalemani Jo Mulongoy, Jake Rice, Mark Rounsevell, Sonali Senaratna Sellamuttu, Cristiana Simão Seixas, and Maria Elena Zaccagnini, following the invitation of CBD’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

What are the causes (“indirect and direct drivers”) behind these trends? Key Findings 6 and 7 provide answers:

**“Key Finding 6:** *The emphasis on increasing the production of material contributions to people, e.g., food, fiber and energy to meet the needs of an ever-increasing population and a wealthier population has resulted in a decrease in most regulating contributions, e.g., pollination, climate, air quality, freshwater quantity and quality, and non-material contributions. For example, food production has increased in most parts of the world through the conversion of natural habitats, i.e., intensification, and unsustainable intensification. This has caused a loss of biodiversity, which in turn can threaten food production.”*

**“Key Finding 7:** *Increases in population and growth in the economy, are two key indirect drivers. Together they have resulted in an increased demand for natural resources, which in turn has resulted in the fragmentation, conversion and overexploitation of ecosystems, accompanied by pollution, invasive alien species and climate change.”*

Across the world, the increase of productive activities (especially in the sectors of food, fiber, and energy) to meet the demands of a growing world population with a growing per capita consumption rate, have led to increasing levels of impact to ecosystems. Given the projected trends, the post-2020 framework will likely face an even more challenging context than its predecessors, and deep transformations are needed to curb the decline of biodiversity and further to bend the curve of biodiversity loss worldwide. The decisions taken at COP15 should contribute to these transformations. As the authors of the IPBES assessments summary note:

*“According to the available evidence, these decisions would need to lead to societal transformation and behavioural change, if the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and sustainable development at large were to be achieved. Therefore, developing an effective, realistic and monitorable post-2020 agenda is an urgent priority.”*



# 3. What ambition for COP15 and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?

In this context, the question of the level of ambition to expect for the outcomes of COP15 is crucial, albeit not easy. Indeed, pursuing with the business as usual seems impossible. A wide range of implementation issues faced by the CBD were identified as early as 2002 (COP6, decision VI/26) and the development of Strategic Plans already constituted a response to these challenges by the international community. Simply postponing (e.g. to 2030, after 2010 and 2020) the goal of stopping biodiversity loss, without some more substantial changes in how implementation is conceived and monitored, would pose a serious credibility issue for international biodiversity governance. It would also, in all likelihood, be insufficient to face the challenge of preserving biodiversity and its contributions to human livelihoods in the next decade.

The decisions taken at COP15 must thus be ambitious, and has to match the gravity of the challenge. However, what this ambition *means*, and *how far* it can go, are still open questions. During the workshop, participants discussed how France defined its ambition for the UNFCCC COP21. The French presidency asked itself a very simple question: what would we like to see in the newspaper the day following COP21? The answer was straightforward: we want COP21 to be the signal that the decarbonation of economies has started. The Paris Agreement, and the other components of the COP21 decision, are all here to both reinforce this message and catalyze action in this direction. It is the result of a radical change of model that happened between UNFCCC COP15 (Copenhagen, 2009) and COP21 (Paris, 2016): the shift from a closed architecture, with a top-down approach to goals and commitments, to a more open architecture, with the convention playing a catalytic role and trying

to engage more with the rest of society to foster transformation<sup>5</sup>.

A similar question (what would we like to see in the newspapers?) should be asked for COP15. Given the above, the answer would be that the outcomes of COP15 should send the signal that the progressive phasing out of major drivers of biodiversity has started, and that the post-2020 framework will help catalyze action in this direction. However, with only two years left to negotiate the post-2020 framework, adjusting the level of ambition, and assessing how far we should try to go, is still delicate. This is even truer when considering the level of national implementation of the CBD so far. As was summarized by one participant, the question can quickly become a choice between “high ambition with low achievement, and low ambition with high achievement”. The workshop identified the following points of reflection to deal with the ambition question.

¶ **Trade offs between the number of issues to be explicitly included in the post-2020 framework and its negotiability.** The more topics we will try to address explicitly in the negotiated text for the post-2020 framework, the more difficult it will be to negotiate. A protective attitude will be required, so that not all of the topics (and there are many topics discussed at the CBD and in biodiversity governance in general; we face a fragmented topic with some ever-lasting controversies) enter the post-2020 discussions. However, there are non-avoidable topics that will need to be included in order to obtain a consensus, such as capacity building and financial mechanism for example (which are already supposed to be addressed by the post-2020 framework). In addition, a narrow focus on negotiation topics

5. Kok, M., Rankovic, A., Löwenhardt, H., Pattberg, P., Prip, C., Widerberg, O., Laurans, Y. (2018), *From Paris to Beijing. Insights gained from the UNFCCC Paris Agreement for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework*. PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, The Hague.

might neglect important things, for example, besides protected areas, topics such as sustainable development outside the protected areas are equally important for the achievement of post-2020 conservation targets. Pragmatism will be necessary to get to a final text, and negotiation topics should be assessed systematically with the above in mind.

¶ **The puzzle of how to include and mobilize “non-biodiversity” actors while also protecting the text.** The previous point is particularly delicate in light of the need for the post-2020 process to mobilize a wide range of actors and institutions, coming from other sectors than biodiversity, such as development, and who might want to see “their” issues and concerns being addressed in the COP15 text.

¶ **Not only a ten-year game.** One way to release this tension is to consider that the post-2020 decade could indeed have more focused actions, while being embedded in a more ambitious longer-term strategy, compatible with the 2050 Vision of the current Strategic Plan. An ambitious aim for 2050 with a more pragmatic approach in the shorter term. But in any case, this will require a strong and well-articulated framework. There is a vast amount of available knowledge on which the framework should be built, to be sound and make sure that it is indeed up to the challenge.

¶ **Distinguishing the text and the conversation around it, and make them converge.** Another way of protecting the text while enabling a broad conversation to happen is to distinguish between the writing of text itself, limited in its length and the number of aspects it explicitly covers, and the richer conversation that will surround it from different conferences, and civil society fora, etc. How to make these imaginaries converge, and ensure the compatibility of the more “limited” story contained in the text with the broader transformations being discussed outside, will be challenging but necessary to ensure convergence and momentum.

¶ **Finding narratives to mobilize.** It was pointed out several times during discussions that biodiversity was often seen as too technical, and not understood by the general public (while terms such as “nature” were). The language of negotiations (long-term and short-term targets, firework, etc.) as well. It was reminded that for climate change, mobilization was increased when the topic was linked to issues of pollution and health. For biodiversity, a similar linkage could be done for biodiversity with questions of food and health. The importance of ecosystems to mitigate (and adapt to) climate change was also mentioned. Clarifying why preserving biodiversity matters will be important. Better linking biodiversity with the implementation of SDGs could provide a narrative<sup>6</sup> - it was pointed out however that the SDGs themselves are not that well known, especially outside the UN system.

¶ **Political risks for COP15.** For COP15 to deliver an ambitious outcome, it will require a strong mobilization of high-level support in the coming years. About 150 heads of States were present in Paris for COP21, and a similar high-level implication would be necessary at COP15. Furthermore, while the idea of national voluntary commitments/contributions is gaining traction, it was pointed out that they presented a political risk if only 50 or 60 countries ended up producing one by COP15; this would both fragilize the momentum towards COP15 and send mixed signals about the willingness to implement the post-2020 framework.

The conversation around ambition questions was very lively and there seemed to be an important level of consensus. Whatever the negotiation strategy that will be ultimately adopted to develop the final text, the principles guiding it should be shared with all Parties.

6. In the summary for policymakers of the IPCC Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C, the figure SPM.4 shows an example of how the link between climate change mitigation options and the SDGs can be presented. See: [http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/sr15/sr15\\_spm\\_final.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/sr15/sr15_spm_final.pdf)

# 4. Considerations about the post-2020 targets

How should the post-2020 targets be designed? The discussions highlighted several key general considerations.

- The current targets are already very ambitious. The problem is elsewhere, in the lack of actions taken to implement them. It is important to distinguish the targets themselves from the actions triggered by the targets.
- There is already, at the CBD, a history of work on how to link global and national targets, as well as undergoing work on how to develop longer term targets (e.g., 2050) to which shorter term targets (e.g., 2030) could be linked.
- While there is a tendency to ask for fewer targets, there is also an attachment to the current set of targets, and continuity of post-2020 targets with the Aichi Targets.
- The IPBES global assessment to be released in May 2019 should provide evidence for the development of new targets. Conducting research to support future targets is critical in the next two years.
- There is an appeal for targets dedicated to “classic” biodiversity measures (e.g., protected areas), but the post-2020 targets should also address broader concerns linked to the drivers of biodiversity loss, such as those highlighted by the assessments of IPBES. Efforts should be taken to identify targets that have not been achieved well and focus on those goals in the next decade.
- The new targets should be more easily quantifiable and progress to meet them assessable. Criteria such as the SMARTness of targets are seen as possible guiding principles for new targets. Indicators for each target should be identified at the same time as targets are discussed, and targets and indicators adopted together.



Other considerations and views included the following points:

- The new targets could talk more to the general public and about the different benefits associated to biodiversity.
- The new targets could be disaggregated (e.g., sub-targets) to correspond to different sectors of society and drivers of pressures on biodiversity.
- The current targets are organized with a DPSIR logic and narrative. The new set of targets could also follow an overarching logic, such as the SDGs for instance. The links with health, food, and nutrition, are possibilities.
- Current SDGs already reflect the Aichi Targets (especially SDGs 14 and 15). The next targets should be designed by taking into consideration that they could serve as the basis for the successors of the SDGs after 2030.
- The long-term global targets for climate change (2°C/1.5°C) are easily understandable and “catchy”. Current potential equivalents for biodiversity still lack this “catchiness” and do not address human livelihoods.

- ¶ It is important to find a way to compare efforts. A possibility could be to use ratios between areas dedicated to conservation, intensive agriculture, agroecology, etc., to provide an estimate of the overall effort for/compatibility with conservation on a given territory.
- ¶ The management of areas outside of protected areas is as important as that of protected areas for achieving the conservation targets. A zoning approach is discussed which divides the land/ocean areas into three zones: areas occupied and used by humans, wild areas, and the rest of areas falling in-between, respectively. The areas outside protected areas/wild areas should be sustainably managed.
- ¶ An approach in terms of "Nature %" (N%), identifying the percentage of natural areas necessary to sustain human livelihoods, is currently being developed in China. Another idea of "N% + M%" is proposed: N% refers to the percentage of restricted protected areas, and M% refers to the percentage of areas for the surviving of all wild-life populations where human can live harmony with nature.

During the workshop, a presentation listed five principles for the development of the next targets:

#### **"1. Coordination**

Post 2020 targets should be linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing and embodying the contribution of biodiversity to human well-being.

#### **2. Connection**

It should be based on the "Aichi Biodiversity Targets" and maintain a clear relationship with the "Aichi Biodiversity Targets".

#### **3. Problem oriented**

It should focus on three objectives of the Convention, and efforts should be made to address the outstanding problems of Parties in implementing the Convention, with particular attention to areas where the Aichi Biodiversity Targets have not yet made progress.

#### **4. Flexibility**

A streamlined and flexible target system should be established to allow countries to make nationally committed commitments to their targets while setting targets to meet minimum standards.

#### **5. Easy to evaluate**

Timeliness and measurability should be made as far as possible to ensure that progress towards achieving the goals is easily tracked and quantified. For quantifiable goals, consider operability and effectiveness, set target baselines and incentive lines, and encourage completion of goals while fully affirming progress; for non-quantitative goals, consider feasibility and encouragement, adopt indicators such as policy directions, paths, actions, etc."

As evident in this summary, the questions of ambition and of the future targets have multiple resonances. They also both resonate with the discussions that took place on the idea of having national contributions for biodiversity.

# 5. Perspectives on “national voluntary commitments/ contributions” for biodiversity conservation

The discussions also addressed the idea of having national voluntary contributions for biodiversity conservation. They covered several challenges and points to clarify.

¶ **The link between national contributions and global goals.** The question was raised about what the “contributions” were contributing to, e.g., the global goals. This lack of clarity was seen as a potential problem. However, it was also noted that there was sufficient knowledge about what needed to be done for biodiversity to develop contributions that would indeed have added value.

¶ **Assessing and comparing efforts.** However, concerns were expressed about the risk of having very large differences in the scope and content of the contributions, which would make it difficult to assess the global level of efforts and compare the different individual efforts. Ideas of criteria on which efforts could be assessed and compared comprised the biodiversity content of the contributions (e.g., number and area of protected areas), their ability to concretely address the footprint or pressures on biodiversity, and the amount of funding for biodiversity.

¶ **Stock taking and review mechanism.** Discussions also stressed that such contributions should be integrated within a broader architecture, alike the Paris Agreement, where regular stock taking and review would take place to assess progress and reevaluate efforts. It was pointed that the Paris Agreement architecture had yet to bear concrete results, but that for national contributions to be useful, such elements are mandatory.

¶ **Links with NBSAPs.** The question of how such contributions would be linked to NBSAPs was raised. It took several years to develop the last version of NBSAPs, and aligning NBSAPs to the post-2020 framework will take time as well. National contributions would represent an additional effort, and thus its added value to, and mutual reinforcement with, NBSAPs should be a point of attention. It was also pointed that NBSAPs could be seen as a broader vehicle to link biodiversity to the other Rio conventions and other MEAs during implementation.

¶ **Timing.** The timeline was also discussed. Should the national contributions be submitted before COP15, or should COP15 lay the groundwork for national contributions? Submissions before COP15 could have the advantage of creating momentum, competition for leadership, and peer pressure. It could also help identify the topics/ areas on which commitments are being made, and thus help indicate some directions for the discussion about the post-2020 targets. If after, the advantage would be to provide more time to better link the national contributions to the global targets, the NBSAPs, and lay the groundwork for stock taking and review mechanisms (these aspects could, however, also be more precisely addressed after COP15, as is currently the case for the Paris Agreement).

## 6. The role of China as a host country

Unprecedented importance was given to ecological conservation and green development since the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2017, and in March 2018, the concept of ecological civilization was written into the Constitution. Hosting COP 15 in 2020 will be an opportunity for China to mainstream biodiversity in the country, reinforce its biodiversity policies, as well as providing a platform for China to participate in global governance and demonstrate China's commitments and achievements.

In China, there are several domestic challenges where an ambitious outcome at COP15 could help reinforce biodiversity policies. These include, on a legal level, the absence of a stand-alone biodiversity law and the need to integrate biodiversity in other laws and policies. China has so far focused relatively more on other environmental issues, with a relatively smaller emphasis on biodiversity conservation. Article 30 of the new Environmental Protection Act of 2015 first mentioned the term biodiversity, although a number of prior laws (e.g., the Wildlife Conservation Law, the Forest Law, the Grassland Law, and the Animal Husbandry Law etc.) already contained elements related to biodiversity conservation.

There is also a difficulty to receive consolidated reports from all sectors. The Ministry of Ecology and Environment is the leading national administration for biodiversity conservation in the country, while many other departments are involved in the related work (e.g., the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Forest and Grass Bureau). Discussions, during the workshop, have highlighted that a strong outcome from COP15 would help China better implement its biodiversity policies, through a stronger mobilization of all sectors and setting standards in the private sector. Furthermore, the goal of achieving biodiversity can also contribute to poverty reduction, and thus fulfill the sustainable development goals.

Given the importance of the post-2020 framework for the future of international biodiversity

governance, COP15 is a COP with very high stakes for the CBD. Accordingly, China already feels a lot of expectations from other Parties and observers, and is working on building its vision for COP15, its first hosting of a biodiversity-related MEA event.

The discussions have highlighted a series of elements. China has been actively engaged in the international discussions on the post-2020 framework, including discussions at CBD and IPBES meetings, Bogis Bossey Dialogues for Biodiversity, UK CCI Expert Workshop, Triparty dialogues between China, Japan and Korea, etc. This dialogue process has accelerated after COP14. Associated studies have been conducted including the Special Policy Study by CCICED (China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development), and on Aichi Targets formulation process and key issues and trends in CBD negotiations.

China is aware of the links between the post-2020 and the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda more generally, climate change, and issues of national development. China is well aware of the negotiation constraints mentioned in Section 1, and will probably encourage other Parties to focus on set of key topics (not try to tackle everything at COP15), and look for as many synergies as possible with other MEAs.

Several expectations from China as a host country are perceived and include (1) **Experience sharing:** bringing up experience and lessons learnt as a country that has passed through poverty after rapid economic development and the process of pollution along with development, and fostering new developmental idea and governance pattern. (2) **Demonstration effect:** the construction of ecological civilization in China could be a role model for sustainable development globally, similar role as China has played in the frontier of climate change. (3) **Substantial contribution:** sharing resources with other developing countries, including financial and technical resources. (4) **Collective leadership:** building the widest coalition possible, coordinating other leading countries, international organizations

and social entities to make concerted effort, sending a clear signal to the world to raise political will.

China could contribute to the discussion through several aspects, for example, demonstrating its ability and experience to develop long-term plans (e.g., building a well-off society by 2020 and modern country by 2050), and sharing policy tools, such as ecological red lining and ecological functional zoning, as well as practices in ecological compensation and ecological poverty alleviation. China has the willingness and capacity to set up models and standards during its social and economic development (e.g., green Belt and Road Initiative, and green urbanization), and join hands with other parties to help renewing/improving the financial mechanism and technical cooperation mechanism of CBD

Concretely, the preparations are ongoing: a preparatory Committee has been established. It is

chaired by the Vice Premier of the State Council, and its Deputy Chairs are the Minister of Ecology and Environment, the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Deputy Secretary- General of the State Council. Its members are part of 25 different ministries and directions, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and National Forestry and Grassland Administration. The Committee reports to the Vice Premier, and is supported by the Municipal Government of Beijing, and an Expert consultancy group composed by national and international experts.

China expressed the hope that the process towards post-2020 be transparent and multi-participatory. Participants addressed how the other Parties could help China in their work. Two specific answers were given: helping build consensus in negotiations on the way to COP15 and Pushing their leaders to take biodiversity seriously and raise the issue in high-level fora.



# 7. Conclusion – From the Pyramids to the Great Wall of China

The phase that will open in the beginning of 2019 will see intense discussions take place. There are many points to discuss to develop the post-2020 framework. The road between COP14 and COP15 will be long, but the time is short<sup>7</sup>.

However, the discussions during this workshop showed that a lot of work and thinking is already available, and that there is appetite for change among some influential Parties.

The workshop enabled participants to freely exchange views and start to concretely think about the negotiation document that they will have to produce together until COP15. Given the quality of the interactions and discussions, all participants have express enthusiasm about renewing this discussion format.



# 8. Appendixes

## First Biodiversity Workshop

### Sharing perspectives on CBD implementation and options for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

9-10 October 2018, Beijing

Meeting Room 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Beijing Grand Skylight Catic Hotel  
Address: No. 18, Beichen Dong Lu, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China  
Organized by the EU-China Environment Programme

#### 1- MEETING PURPOSE AND CONCEPT

Two years before the deadline of the Strategic Action Plan 2011-2020 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and with increasing indications that most Aichi targets will not be met, it is time to reflect on the options for the international governance of biodiversity after 2020.

An international workshop will be held in Beijing on **9-10 October 2018** to discuss the success and limitations in the implementation of the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and options for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This will help stir ideas and build a shared understanding of issues, and contribute to identifying the challenges and opportunities on the road to COP14 and COP15.

The meeting will be held under Chatham House rules (especially, no individual record of ideas and positions). A summary of discussions will be produced afterwards.

The meeting will happen in Beijing on:

**October 9<sup>th</sup> afternoon (2:00 PM to 5:00 PM) and on October 10<sup>th</sup> (9:00 AM to 5:00 PM)..**

## 2-AGENDA

### October 9<sup>th</sup> PM

**Welcome Lunch** :12 :30 Dining Room V18, floor 2

**Chairperson: Mr. Pei Xiaofei**, Deputy Director General, Policy Research Center of Environment and Economics (PRCEE), Ministry of Environment and Ecology (MEE), China.

**14:00-14:10 Introduction**, by Chair person, Mr. Pei Xiaofei.

**14:10-14:20, Opening Remark**, Department of Nature Conservation, MEE.

**14:20-14:30, Opening Remark**, Delegation of the European Union to China.

**14:30-14:45, Key-note speech** by Prof. Markus Fischer (University of Bern): The drivers of biodiversity loss: a worldwide view based on IPBES findings.

**14:45-15:00, Key-note speech**, by Mr. Zou Yueyu, (Foreign Economic Cooperation Centre, MEE): COP 15 in 2020: International Expectations and China's effort.

**15:00-15:15, Key-note speech**, by Prof. Qin Tianbao, (Wuhan University): Legal and policy framework for CBD implementation.

**15:15-17:00 Discussion topic N°1**: Taking stock of the successes and limitations in biodiversity conservation and the contributions/shortcomings of the current Strategic Plan (2011-2020). Exchanging perspectives on the post-2020 framework.

**Dinner**: 18:00 TAI-CHI Chinese Restaurant, floor 2.

### October 10<sup>th</sup> AM

**9:00-9:15 Introductory speech**, by David Cooper of CBD Secretariat: An overview of the outcomes of SBI-2 regarding current implementation and the post-2020 framework, and perspectives on COP14 regarding the current and future frameworks.

**9:15-9:30 Introductory speech**, by Xu Jing, (Chinese Academy of Environmental Sciences): Initial study on post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

**9:30-12:00 Discussion topic N°2**: What are the proposed options for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and how could they build upon the strengths of the CBD and alleviate its limitations? What are the possibilities to address them, and what lessons could be drawn from other environmental agreements (e.g., climate change) for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?

**Lunch** Elysee Western Restaurant, floor 1.

**14:00-14:15 Introductory speech** Introductory speech by Dr. Aleksandar Rankovic (IDDRI): The possible contribution of biodiversity policies to poverty eradication and the implementation of all SDGs.

**14:15-17:00 Discussion topic N°3**: How to better link the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to issues of poverty eradication and the implementation of all SDGs?

**17:00-17:10 Chairperson**: Workshop conclusion and summary of discussions.

**18:00-20:30 Discussion on The 2020 COP on Biodiversity in China/Networking**

Elysee Western Restaurant, floor 1, Grand Skylight Catic Hotel (drinks and fingerfood will be provided).





# Towards the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: An overview of submitted options for the preparatory process and topics to be discussed about CBD implementation

Discussion note for the *Biodiversity Workshop - Sharing perspectives on CBD implementation and options for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, organized by the EU-China Environment Project, Beijing, 9-10 October 2018<sup>1</sup>

After SBI-2 in July 2018, the Executive Secretary of the CBD invited Parties and stakeholders to submit “*views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework*” (notification 2018-063). Submissions on the *preparatory process* were expected by August 15<sup>th</sup>, while submissions addressing the *scope and content* of the post-2020 framework are expected by December 15<sup>th</sup>. For the submissions on the preparatory process, the notification specifies that “*respondents may wish to give specific consideration to the options for strengthening implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including means of fostering commitments and building political momentum, as well as on the need for, and modalities of, voluntary commitments.*” Accordingly, the submitted material thus contains elements addressing both the preparatory process *per se*, but also several topics pertaining to the implementation of the CBD. This note is based on a review of the material submitted following notification 2018-063<sup>2</sup> and provides a short synthesis of the most salient points concerning the process leading to the adoption of a post-2020 framework, and of topics related to implementation that are being addressed in the submissions.

## 1. VIEWS ON HOW TO ORGANIZE THE PROCESS TOWARDS COP15

**Broad structure of the timeline towards COP15.** COP13 requested that the Secretariat prepares an indicative timeline to be considered at SBI-2 (see

annex 1 of document CBD/SBI/2/17). Overall, the logic of the proposed timeline is to have a two-phase structure. First, a broad consultation on views about the post-2020 framework, followed by a phase of consolidation and iterative refinements based on a first draft framework, made available for global consultation during the first half of 2020. The draft framework would then be negotiated by Parties at SBI-3 (May-June 2020), to prepare for COP15 at the end of 2020. In the latest submissions, the expressed views are suggesting to clarify the overall principles guiding this process (e.g., Party led, inclusive, transparent, efficient, and result oriented), and to clarify the work organization during the two phases.<sup>3</sup> In the suggestions that are made, a first phase would start early in 2019, and would consist in several consultations based on the submissions received by December 15<sup>th</sup>. This would last up until summer 2019, at which point synthesis draft would be discussed during an international workshop. A consolidation phase would then take place, up until SBI-3 where formal negotiations of a draft by Parties would start.

**Consultations and synergies with other MEAs.** The latest submissions further stress the importance of having transparent guidelines for the organization of consultation workshops, and some make proposals as to when to schedule such workshops. After COP14, and throughout 2019, several regional and one global wide-reaching consultation workshops are considered, which could help identify key issues to be solved during negotiations. Follow-up discussions, to help find consensus among Parties, could

1 Note prepared by Dr Aleksandar Rankovic, IDDRI. Contact: aleksandar.rankovic@iddri.org, WeChat ID: r29031986

2 See <https://www.cbd.int/post2020/submissions.shtml>, last consulted October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

3 See, in particular, the joint submission from Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, and Norway, and the submission from Switzerland.

take place at SBSTTA and SBI meetings. Several of the latest submissions also stress the importance of coordinating with other environmental MEAs as soon as possible, and of possibly using the COP meetings of these other MEAs as occasions for discussing options for the post-2020 CBD framework.

**Advisory group(s).** SBI recommendation REC/2/19 has requested that the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the COP Bureau, explore options to provide high-level political guidance throughout the development of the post-2020 framework. Received submissions call for the formation of an “Advisory Group” or “Preparatory Group” for the post-2020, and discuss the possible composition of such a group (inter alia, questions of regional balance, multi-stakeholder dimension, etc.). Such options will be considered at COP14 and the decisions should be implemented early in 2019.

**Voluntary biodiversity commitments.** In REC/2/19, the draft decision for COP14 encourages Parties and invites other stakeholders to consider developing, prior to COP15, voluntary “biodiversity commitments” that “may contribute to an effective post-2020 biodiversity framework”. When it comes to the process, the latest submissions suggest developing a process and timetable at COP14 for the development of commitments, which could be announced at COP15, or before.<sup>4</sup>

**UN General Assembly.** In REC/2/19, the draft decision for COP14 invites “the United Nations to convene a high-level biodiversity summit at the level of Heads of State/Heads of Government in 2020”. Submitted contributions tend to point towards the September 2020 UN General Assembly for such a summit, but earlier occasions such as the Forth Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4, 11-15 March 2019, in Nairobi) and the September 2019 UN Climate Summit are also considered to be opportunities to give biodiversity high-level visibility in UN fora.

## 2. VIEWS ON TOPICS CONCERNING CBD IMPLEMENTATION

**New global targets.** Submissions tend to stress the importance for the next targets to be “SMART” where possible, for indicators to be discussed simultaneously with targets, and for national targets

to be better linked with the achievement of global targets. Submissions suggest this last point should be reflected in the post-2020 NBSAPs.

**Synergies with SDGs.** Several submissions stress the importance of linking the next generation of CBD targets to SDGs, both to benefit from the dynamics around the SDGs but also to strengthen the narrative of biodiversity underpinning the realization of the 2030 Development Agenda. Furthermore, as the Aichi Targets form the basis of the biodiversity-focused SDGs (14 and 15), which will expire in 2020, and biodiversity-related elements in other SDGs, which will expire in 2020, the post-2020 framework should be taken into account in the implementation of these SDGs. Submissions also propose to include biodiversity-related targets in existing non biodiversity-focused SDGs.

**Voluntary commitments.** The scope, structure, and content of voluntary commitments are considered in several submissions as a topic to be discussed during COP14. How non-State actors could be involved in the process, either by making their own commitments, contributing to the elaboration of State commitments, or being involved in the review of commitments, are also addressed. Several submissions discuss the necessity for such instruments to represent an added value to existing instruments (e.g., NBSAPs).

**Mainstreaming and resource mobilization.** The question of the mainstreaming agenda is also mentioned in several submissions, notably in terms of how it can contribute to better engage different sectors (such as agriculture, energy, and transportation) as well as how it can help create better ownership of the post-2020 framework by economic actors. The capacity to mobilize private funding for biodiversity is also addressed, as a means to fill the financial resource gaps for biodiversity policies.

**Action agenda for biodiversity.** Since the preparatory process will most likely be inclusive of a wide range of stakeholders, this is seen as an opportunity for different actors to support the ambition of the post-2020 framework and its implementation by displaying their own initiatives for biodiversity, making more commitments, and engaging in more action in the years to come. To harness this energy and to channel it towards the development of the post-2020 framework, several submissions suggest the creation of a “Biodiversity Action Agenda”, analogous to the action agenda established within the UNFCCC activities.

4 See, especially, EU, UNEP, IUCN.

# Biodiversity and poverty: A tale of six stories

**Discussion note for the Biodiversity Workshop - *Sharing perspectives on CBD implementation and options for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework*, organized by the EU-China Environment Project, Beijing, 9-10 October 2018<sup>1</sup>**

Biodiversity and poverty eradication have complex relationships. While it is tempting to look for and to propose “win-win solutions” between poverty eradication and biodiversity conservation, both being necessary to sustainable development, it is necessary to bear in mind that these two objectives have very often been in conflict in the past and can still be today. This note starts by signaling three ways in which poverty eradication and biodiversity conservation can be in conflict; then, it highlights three positive synergies that can be found between the two objectives; and finally, it sums up how the connection between the two topics has been dealt with at the CBD and in the SDGs.

## **1. WHEN POVERTY ERADICATION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION DO NOT WORK TOGETHER**

***When exiting poverty harms biodiversity.*** In many places in the world, and throughout human history, enhancing the livelihoods of people has often come at the expense of ecosystems. Currently, for instance, the fast expansion of certain cash crops, while sometimes enabling small-scale farmers to survive or exit poverty (even if they receive only a fraction of the revenues generated through global value chains), is a major threat to tropical forests or other biomes. This has been observed in many countries with a variety of high value « cash crops », including palm oil, soybeans, sugarcane, shrimp, in a variety of ecosystems (such as savannas, mangroves, etc.). However, unsustainable practices (erosion of natural capital) call into question the lasting nature of such poverty eradication, and the reduced delivery of (other) ecosystem services may disproportionately impact the poor.

## ***When higher income levels harm biodiversity.***

Beyond exiting poverty *per se*, the relationship between biodiversity and development has often been tumultuous. Population growth in developing countries, urban development in particular (and infrastructure in general), poorly planned agricultural intensification, increased fishing, and, overall, the increase in consumption levels per capita, are all powerful drivers of biodiversity loss locally and globally. As with other environmental issues, addressing the tension with “development” has been identified as a challenge for the sustainable development agenda since the 1980s, and is at the heart of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD) adopted in 1992 at the third Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro – also known as the “United Nations Conference on Environment and Development”, indeed.

***When conservation harms the poorest.*** In the history of conservation, and it is still occurring nowadays in some cases, conservation decisions, such as the creation of a protected area, can happen at the expense of local residents, especially the poorest, by neglecting the impact on livelihoods and not ensuring that ecosystem services benefit vulnerable groups. Populations can be expelled from their lands, or can suffer from hunting prohibition, for instance<sup>2</sup>. While practices that are harmful to biodiversity likely constitute an even greater threat to the poorest (for example, the threats posed by deforestation to indigenous and local communities), this dimension has received increased attention by international donors and particularly the EU but still needs to be scaled up.

1 Note prepared by Dr Aleksandar Rankovic, IDDRI. Contact: [aleksandar.rankovic@iddri.org](mailto:aleksandar.rankovic@iddri.org). WeChat ID: r29031986

2 See Martin, A. (2017). *Just Conservation. Biodiversity, Wellbeing and Sustainability*. Routledge, Earthscan Conservation and Development Series, Abingdon and New York, 206 pp.

## 2. WHEN POSITIVE SYNERGIES EXIST BETWEEN CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY AND POVERTY ERADICATION

**When fighting poverty helps biodiversity.** Though reducing poverty can be at the expense of biodiversity (for example, as described above), it can play a very positive role and should not hide the fact that poverty has even worse impacts. In some areas, poor populations can rely on natural resources in an unsustainable way due to short term needs and an absence of sustainable alternatives, for instance for fuel or construction wood, or for meat from wildlife, leading respectively to forest degradation, poaching of wild animal populations and an increase in insecurity and wildlife trafficking.

**When preventing biodiversity loss benefits the poorest.** An important fraction of the global poor are still concentrated in remote rural areas, which increases their dependence upon ecosystems for their livelihood. For the poorest, ecosystems have been estimated to account for around 40 to 90 per cent of their revenue, and the benefits from ecosystems have thus been coined the “GDP of the poor”<sup>3</sup>. For such populations, the preservation of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems is very important to safeguard livelihoods and address global challenges such as climate change adaptation and water provision.

**When conservation helps alleviate poverty.** There are cases where poor populations can gain various types of benefits from conservation. Community-based conservation, when linked to tourism, or some specific cases where conserving an ecosystem to sustainably use its biodiversity is generating revenues, or payment for ecosystem services, are examples of such possible instances. Some countries are trying to develop a “wildlife economy”, whereby national policies aim to make historically disadvantaged populations benefit from the sustainable use of wild species of animals and plants.

Even though this topic can seem ancient, a lot of work can still be done to improve knowledge of how those links play out in the field<sup>4</sup> and scale up best practices.

## 3. BIODIVERSITY AND POVERTY AT THE CBD AND THE SDGS

At the institutional level, much effort has already been made to integrate biodiversity conservation and poverty eradication. Given the importance of the synergies highlighted above, there is much to gain, both for biodiversity and poverty eradication, from a better coordination. At the CBD level, an explicit attempt was made at COP12 (Pyeongchang, 2014), with the welcoming of the Chennai Guidance for Implementation of the Integration of Biodiversity and Poverty Eradication (decision CBD/COP/DEC/XII/5). The Chennai Guidance offers guidelines on how to identify the synergies and proposes several approaches to integrate both issues, ranging from ensuring a better recognition of both issues in their respective dedicated policies (e.g., guidelines 1. (b) and 1. (c)), minimizing adverse impacts (2. (a)) to issues of capacity-building and funding (3.).

Still, given the trends of biodiversity loss worldwide, additional efforts are probably required to better address cases where the two objectives are in conflict. For the post-2020 framework, a stock taking of best international, national and local practices could help maximizing the synergies between biodiversity conservation and poverty eradication, while analyzing the main drivers for the discrepancies that can remain in how the two objectives are pursued and linked in the real world. This would also benefit the implementation of SDGs, which needs to follow the principles of interconnectedness and indivisibility, which is challenging in practice.

3 ten Brink, P., Gantioler, S., Gundimeda, H., Sukhdev, P., Tucker, G., Weber, J-L. (2011). “Strengthening Indicators and Accounting Systems for Natural Capital” in P. ten Brink (ed.), *TEEB in National and International Policy Making* (pp. 113-118), London and Washington: Earthscan.

4 Roe, D., Fancourt, M., Sandbrook, C., Sibanda, M., Giuliani, A., & Gordon-Maclean, A. (2014). Which components or attributes of biodiversity influence which dimensions of poverty? *Environmental Evidence*, 3(1), 1–15.



# First Biodiversity Workshop

Summary Report

**Sharing perspectives on CBD implementation and  
options for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**  
**9-10 October 2018, Beijing**

Organized by the EU-China Environment Project

