

IUCN's position on review of progress and the post-2020 biodiversity framework

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Summary of Key Messages

Updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets and options to accelerate progress

- ✓ Despite many positive actions, most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are not on track to be achieved by 2020.
- ✓ With less than two years before the 2020 deadline, IUCN emphasizes that focused, concerted and strategic action is urgently needed.
- ✓ IUCN highlights the imperative for each individual Party to identify implementation gaps, set priority actions and call on relevant stakeholders; IUCN thus invites Parties to develop an Action Plan with national priorities to meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets using the possible options contained in the Annex to the draft decision as a useful reference.
- ✓ IUCN urges Parties to consider commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in the actions proposed, including by implementing and advancing progress on the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action.

Proposals for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

- ✓ It is essential that the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is designed and adopted as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ✓ IUCN supports the current 2050 Vision in spite of its passive nature. IUCN suggests the establishment of a small number of "long-term 2050 science-based targets".
- ✓ IUCN suggests wording for a 2030 Mission - an overall science-based target for biodiversity (an "apex target") that can be measured, quantified and tracked through implementation – along the following lines: *"Implement actions necessary to, by 2030, stabilize trends in species, ecosystems, and genetic diversity, as a contribution towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity"*.
- ✓ Specific measurable science-based targets should have clear outcomes that demonstrably contribute (add-up) to this Mission.
- ✓ IUCN supports the development of mechanisms to disaggregate global targets into specific science-based targets for uptake by individual sectors
- ✓ The IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2020 and its preparatory meetings constitute important milestones for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

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Review of progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Agenda item 8)

Updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets and options to accelerate progress

IUCN shares the concern expressed by Parties and others, that despite many positive actions, most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are not on track to be achieved by 2020. Without further substantial progress, there is a risk that the mission and vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Sustainable Development Goals will not be achieved.

Less than two years before the 2020 deadline, **IUCN emphasizes that focused, concerted and strategic action is urgently needed.** IUCN stresses that no one is better placed to identify gaps, set priority actions and bring together all relevant stakeholders than each individual Party. Each national context is different and thus implementation measures and tools must be “tailored” by and for each country.

That is why getting national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) right is so important. IUCN thus notes with concern that only few countries have adopted NBSAPs as whole-of-government instruments, few have integrated resource mobilization and communication components, and only a minority have demonstrated successful mainstreaming of biodiversity into other policies and sectors.

IUCN concurs with calls for action contained in the draft decision for this item, specifically, paragraph 8 which *urges Parties to significantly accelerate their efforts to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, in particular by addressing any gaps between the aspirations included in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the actions taken to implement them.*

IUCN agrees with the actions listed under paragraph 14 for each of the Aichi Targets, and stands ready to support national efforts to advance in their implementation.

However, IUCN reiterates that these actions are passive in nature, and there is a clear lack of concrete proposals and timelines. IUCN thus proposes organizing the actions in a manner that clearly indicates priorities, lead actors, resources, milestones and timelines for completion. Time is short now to charge the Executive Secretary to

develop such “Action Plan” for discussion by Parties at a subsequent meeting of the Convention’s subsidiary bodies; **Parties should thus be invited to develop their own action plans using the list of options in the Annex as guidance.**

- ✓ IUCN recommends that an additional paragraph 17(bis) be added along the following lines:

17(bis). Invites all Parties to consider developing an Action Plan identifying national priorities to meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets using the possible options to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets contained in the Annex as a useful reference;

In developing these action plans, IUCN proposes the following considerations for Parties’ attention. For Targets 11 and 12, IUCN supports all the actions called for in paragraph 14(i), and highlights that it is absolutely essential to assess the associated costs of implementation. Preventing human-driven extinction and improving the status of all globally known threatened species would cost on average US\$ 4 billion annually, while the current global spending on species conservation is only around one-fifth of this figure¹. **IUCN emphasises the importance of increasing financial resources to accelerate progress towards implementation of all the Aichi Targets, including Target 12, stressing nonetheless that the financial burden should not only be placed on countries with high species diversity or many threatened species but that a global effort to finance the Targets is needed.**

Targets must not be addressed in isolation. For instance, to address the scale of the challenge of achieving Target 12, the main drivers of threats to species need to be tackled through progress in a range of other Aichi Targets, such as halting deforestation (Target 5), implementing sustainable farming practices (Target 7), and addressing the threats posed by invasive species (Target 9). We emphasize the importance of paragraph *m* in the Annex in this regard.

- ✓ **IUCN recommends to add the following text at the end of the sentence in paragraph 14(i):**

¹ McCarthy et al., 2012 in [CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/32](#)

Global prevention of species loss is partly dependent on achieving other Aichi targets.

In addition, specific conservation action is necessary for some species. **IUCN recommends the following species-specific conservation measures to improve the status of threatened species: 1) identify relevant government agencies and implement existing species conservation action plans; and 2) develop new approaches to planning for species conservation that reflect the diverse range of pressures and their drivers.** These approaches would be based on species status assessments (Red Listing) and clear recovery objectives for species. IUCN, through its Species Survival Commission (SSC) stands by to provide technical support to Parties for species conservation planning and national level actions.

Similarly, improved ecosystem management can reduce risks, enhance resilience, and promote adaptation, and allow private sector and policy-makers to make informed land/water use management decisions based on robust information about risks to ecosystems. The IUCN Red List of Ecosystems (RLE) provides a transparent and scientifically robust framework for assessing the status of ecosystems that can be reviewed, updated and repeated at different scales overtime. Its use can significantly support actions 2 (c), (d), and (e), pertaining to better integration of biodiversity, and mainstreaming ecosystem perspectives on land management and other policies, and thus contribute towards the achievement of Targets 7, 8, 10, 14 and 15.

Increased efforts to restore degraded ecosystems and reduce deforestation can and need to be embedded in concrete national policies and plans, and in cross-sectoral coordination arrangements that aim to ensure the ability of ecosystems to provide key functions that are critical for species survival and human well-being.

The Restoration Opportunity Assessment Methodology ([ROAM](#)) supports the implementation of the Short-Term Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration as a powerful adaptive approach for countries to rapidly identify and analyse [Forest Landscape Restoration](#) potential in a gender responsive manner, and locate specific areas of opportunity at a national or sub-national level. With over 160 million hectares identified as opportunities for restoration through assessments covering almost half a billion hectares, countries are encouraged to seize the opportunity of generating a transformational impact that benefits

both biodiversity and human well-being, as stressed by paragraphs 2(q) and 2(t) of [SBSTTA/REC/22/4](#), Annex.

IUCN urges Parties to ensure that, as part of actions to accelerate delivery of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5 and 15, no additional areas of primary forests, including intact forest landscapes, are encroached.

Gender Plan of Action

Over the past several years, Parties to the Rio Conventions have consistently reaffirmed a commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment as necessary prerequisites to meet global development goals and to combat climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss. Reaffirming and strengthening these commitments in ongoing actions, as well as anchoring gender-responsive, coherent strategies and actions in post-2020 frameworks, is imperative for successfully progressing on toward meeting Aichi Targets, the SDGs and long-term biodiversity conservation.

IUCN remains deeply concerned by the confirmed lack of progress towards Aichi Target 14, especially as it is inherently necessary to accelerate progress on interlinked Targets, as well as the SDGs. IUCN recalls its work to embed gender into NBSAPs, which uncovered gender gaps across biodiversity sectors and aimed to empower women, and local and indigenous communities as leaders driving action on conservation.

Recalling guidance in the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action,² IUCN reminds Parties of the importance of integrating gender considerations in the NBSAP process³, including in implementation, M&E frameworks and financing.

In the same vein, IUCN recognizes the need for and supports enhanced action on Aichi Target 14 as essential to improve the starting position of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

✓ **Paragraph 12 of the draft decision on Updated scientific assessment of progress could read:**

Urges Parties and invites other Governments, as appropriate, to consider undertaking national assessments of

² <https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/CBD-GenderPlanofAction-EN-WEB.pdf>

³ https://portals.iucn.org/union/sites/union/files/doc/iucn-egi-nbsasp-report_final_jan17.pdf

biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, taking into account how those services contribute to the health, livelihoods and well-being of women, indigenous and local communities, and others living in conditions of poverty and vulnerability.

Equally, IUCN urges Parties to consider commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment in the actions outlined under paragraph 14, including by implementing and advancing progress on the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action.⁴

Long-term strategic directions to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, approaches to living in harmony with nature and preparation for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (Agenda item 17)

In addition to views already presented in [earlier submissions](#), IUCN hereby presents highlights from its evolving position on the post-2020 process and its content, as well as views and recommendations to the draft COP Decision for this agenda item.

Proposals for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The conservation imperative is more urgent than ever. To secure life on Earth, we need bold, new and transformative action, underpinned by sound science and effective policy. It is now incumbent on all to support the leadership role that the CBD must take to match this challenge with a comprehensive and achievable framework of action.

First and foremost, **it is essential that the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is designed and adopted as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** We must seize the opportunity of the existing universal SDG framework to develop a strong complementary post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

IUCN supports the current 2050 Vision in spite of its passive nature. Major revisions to this Vision are unnecessary given its 2050 timeline. However, in line with [CBD/COP/14/9](#), **IUCN suggests that the establishment of a small number of “long-**

⁴ [CBD/COP/DEC/XII/7](#)

term 2050 science-based targets” be considered as part of a global biodiversity framework. These could serve both to operationalize the 2050 Vision, and to provide “landing lights” towards which the shorter term targets to be established under the post-2020 biodiversity framework should be heading.

This is also consistent with the views expressed by experts in the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) Expert Workshop on “Effective use of knowledge in developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework”⁵. When considering the pathways to the 2050 Vision, thought needs to be given to the value and importance of recognizing intermediate stages or steps along the route to 2050 and how these should be recognized in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and used in promoting and facilitating its implementation.

IUCN highlights that much more attention should be given to the development of an ambitious, succinct, specific and time-bound, positively-framed, action-oriented, bold, and quotable Mission. **IUCN proposes that such a 2030 Mission constitutes an overall science-based target for biodiversity that can be measured, quantified and tracked through implementation (an “apex target”).** All biodiversity-related conventions (BRCs) and other relevant processes, and crucially society at large (business sector, cities, local governments, private landowners, communities, etc.) should be invited to contribute to this Mission.

✓ **IUCN suggests that such an overall science-based target/ Mission be worded along the following lines and that an enumerator be elaborated by which to measure progress and performance:**

Implement actions necessary to, by 2030, stabilize trends in species, ecosystems, and genetic diversity, as a contribution towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

Post 2020, specific measureable science-based targets should have clear outcomes that demonstrably contribute (add-up) to the Mission. They should also be able to be disaggregated into potential contributions and commitments towards their achievement by individual entities. New targets need to be supported by a clear, analytical rationale (why is the target set at a particular level?). **Outcome-oriented targets** (such as the current Aichi

⁵The meeting's report and findings [CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/31](#) and [CBD/SBI/2/INF/33](#) were presented to the meetings of the subsidiary bodies to the Convention.

Targets 12 and 13) **should be differentiated from process-oriented ones organized across a DPSIR framework.**

There remains a **need for a strong target for species and habitat conservation.** Species are one of the key elements of biodiversity, and fundamental components of ecosystems. The success of species conservation efforts is one of the outcomes by which the efforts to conserve biodiversity can be assessed in a quantitative manner.

IUCN also invites Parties to further consider spatial Targets for the post-2020 period, mirroring the current Aichi Target 11 which has elicited important responses in terms of the area of land and sea to be protected. IUCN cautions however, about the need to advance on other elements of the target that concern the quality and equity of protected and conserved areas of land and sea.

IUCN welcomes the current discussion to increase considerably the coverage of protected and conserved areas by 2050, through inter alia, establishing new protected and conserved areas in under-represented ecosystems or to address the conservation of priority species; recognizing and supporting “other effective area-based conservation measures”; and appropriately recognizing, supporting and defending territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities.

IUCN supports the development of mechanisms to **disaggregate global targets into specific science-based targets for uptake by individual sectors, companies, cities, etc. in addition to Parties. These would be a form of voluntary commitments.** Such targets have played a crucial role in giving the private sector the space to creatively innovate, advancing the worldwide response to climate change. Consideration of a “voluntary commitments approach” would have co-benefits through supporting the harmonization of the Rio Conventions and BRCs through the creation of common reporting frameworks, which may also minimize national reporting burdens.

From the outset, the **development of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework needs to include due consideration of process for review of implementation through indicators, in order to strengthen future monitoring, reporting and verification.**

The adoption of a preliminary set of indicators alongside the new targets could prove particularly beneficial for species and

protected area targets, for instance. IUCN is currently working on methodologies to help to quantify the ‘returns’ on conservation investments in terms of species recovery, and highlight which conservation actions have benefitted targeted and other species⁶.

IUCN maintains the standards underpinning many of the indicators used to track progress towards the current 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity as well as the Sustainable Development Goals, and stands ready to continue these contributions in support of the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

IUCN notes that Parties are requesting guidance on the relationship between financing and the mobilization of resources and the development of the post-2020 global framework. **A combination of both private and public finance will be essential to achievement the new targets, with a smart focus on how resources are deployed.**

IUCN emphasizes the importance of embedding gender considerations and gender-responsive strategies into the post-2020 biodiversity framework and welcomes paragraph 5 of the draft COP Decision⁷. Gender considerations should be well integrated into all aspects of framework development, including women’s equal participation; women’s empowerment as a cross-cutting theme linked to social cohesion, biodiversity access, and resource management and stewardship; and safeguards that protect against the exacerbation of inequalities.

Lastly, IUCN reminds Parties that the next IUCN World Conservation Congress will be held in Marseille, France, from 11 to 19 June, 2020. In 2019, IUCN will hold Regional Conservation Forums in all IUCN statutory regions to prepare for the Congress and discuss the new IUCN work Programme (2021 – 2024). **The Congress and its preparatory meetings constitute important milestones for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and IUCN looks forward to making good use of these and other important opportunities to shape the new framework.**

⁶ Akçakaya, H.R., Bennett, E.L., Brooks, T.M., Grace, M.K., Heath, A., Hedges, S., Hilton-Taylor, C., Hoffmann, M., Keith, D.A., Long, B., Mallon, D.P., Meijaard, E., Milner-Gulland, E.J., Rodrigues, A., Rodriguez, J.P., Stephenson, P.J., Stuart, S.N., and Young, R.P. (2018) Quantifying species recovery and conservation success to develop an IUCN Green List of Species. *Conservation Biology*

<https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13112>

⁷ [CBD/SBI/2/19](#)