

High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and links to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Annex - Possible key messages for inclusion into the 2021 HLPF Voluntary National Reviews, presentations and related statements

Considering the SDGs under review and the synergies with the process of developing the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, participating countries in the HLPF may wish to consider using the following key messages, adjusted to their own Voluntary National Reviews and their NBSAPs:

- re-emphasize the essential role of biodiversity in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity in post pandemic recovery efforts;
- express support for the ongoing process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, of developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework as the global policy framework for achieving accelerated action and transformative pathways for biodiversity in the coming decade, and as an essential contribution to the UN Decade of Action on the SDGs;
- note the importance of the 2020 UNGA Biodiversity Summit, and further the political momentum for an ambitious and practical post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2021.
- highlight that the full enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food and water, depends on the services provided by ecosystems.

In addition, the following messages could guide statements and proposals to be made for the HLPF:

Health¹

- Biodiversity is a key environmental determinant of human health, and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can benefit human health by maintaining ecosystem services and options for the future. Its loss jeopardizes the achievement of many of the Sustainable Development Goals and undermines the web of life, increasing the risk of disease spillover from wildlife to people.
- The underlying causes of pandemics are the same global environmental changes that drive biodiversity loss and climate change.
- Reducing deforestation and the loss, degradation and fragmentation of habitats in general, and assessing options across the health and agriculture sectors to mitigate the encroachment of people and livestock into biodiverse areas, are likely to reduce pandemic risk.
- Ecological restoration, which is critical for conservation and sustainable use, climate adaptation and provision of ecosystem services, should integrate health considerations to avoid potential increased disease risk resulting from increased human-livestock-wildlife contact;
- There is a need to improve the regulation and management of the use of, and trade in, wildlife, such that it is safe (from a human health perspective) as well as being legal and sustainable.
- Global strategies to prevent pandemics based on managing land use change and wildlife trade and increasing One Health surveillance are estimated to cost one or two orders of magnitude less than the damages pandemics produce.

¹ More details are provided in the documentation prepared for a special virtual session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, on “Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19”.

- The fair and equitable access and benefit sharing derived from genetic resources, including pathogens, remains important as do continued efforts to ensure rapid sharing of microbial samples to facilitate vaccine and therapeutic development.
- It is critical to facilitate dialogue between health and environment agencies, to strengthen monitoring capacities to anticipate, prepare for and respond to public health threats from ecosystem change, to consider health-biodiversity linkages in various health and environmental assessments, and to consider the need to strengthen capacity to address health-biodiversity linkages to support preventative approaches to health

Zero hunger, sustainable agriculture

- Biodiversity contributes to food security and nutrition by providing nutritionally diverse foods:
 - Cultivated species are an important source of nutrition, yet of the more than 6000 plant species that have been cultivated for food, only 9 species account for 66% of total crop production.
 - Wild species are also an important source of nutrition, rich in micronutrients, for many households around the world, yet many are under threat from overexploitation and habitat loss.
- The Sustainable Agriculture Transition presented in the 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook highlights how incorporating a greater diversity of crops and livestock, creating and maintaining well connected habitat for associated biodiversity, practicing sustainable soil management and avoiding the use of pesticides and excess fertilizers, can increase biodiversity and ecosystem services in food production systems.

Food systems

- Food systems encompass all activities related to food, including production, processing, transportation and consumption. Many of the worlds food systems are currently unsustainable and vulnerable to external shocks, in part due to biodiversity loss.
- Biodiversity underpins the ecosystem functions and services that are essential for the productivity and sustainability of our food systems. Examples of ecosystem services provided by biodiversity include, pesto control, pollination, water and air quality regulation, soil fertility and climate regulation, amongst others.
- Food systems based on the sustainable use of biodiversity have the potential to provide food security and livelihoods in a sustainable manner, making them an important lever in attaining the SDGs.
- The Sustainable Food Systems Transition, also presented in the 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook, recognizes the importance of enabling sustainable and healthy diets with a greater emphasis on a diversity of foods, mostly plant-based, and more moderate consumption of meat and fish, as well as dramatic cuts in the waste involved in food supply and consumption.

Decent work and economic development

- While the dependencies of people everywhere to nature are important, the rural poor depend more directly (up to 85% according to the reports on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)) on biodiversity as source of food, health, materials, income and insurance against various risks, such as external economic shocks, environmental disasters, impacts of climate change, and food insecurity.
- The recently launched Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity calls for changes in how we think, act and measure economic success to protect and enhance our prosperity and the natural world. There is a need to build back in an inclusive green economy, expanding options

and choices for national economies, and using targeted and appropriate fiscal and social protection policies. A recent report (World Economic Forum: The Future of Nature and Business) suggests that a nature positive recovery could generate annual business opportunities worth USD 10 trillion and 395 million jobs by 2030.

- Climate change
- Climate change, biodiversity, land and development are deeply interconnected. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Rio Conventions among others explicitly link conservation of biodiversity with the provision of ecosystem services to support sustainable development and poverty reduction. Further, climate change affects biodiversity with negative consequences for human well-being and is likely to become one of the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss by the end of the century or earlier. The conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems can lead to significant avoided greenhouse gas emissions, and the restoration of degraded ecosystems can lead to increased sequestration of greenhouse gases.

Partnerships

- It will be crucial to support nature-based partnerships both within the UN and in the private and public-private sector, given the interconnections and underpinning of biodiversity in economic, social, and ecological systems, as the infrastructure supporting life on Earth, the Sharm to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People (<https://www.cbd.int/action-agenda/>) seeks to build awareness on commitments and actions that promote systems transitions and mainstreaming of biodiversity across socio-economic decision making. The effective mobilization of resources for the implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will also require new partnerships.
- Upcoming partnerships both within the UN and new public-private ones should fully incorporate and promote the benefits nature provides to people. Mainstreaming nature and ecosystem services into the decision-making framework of the finance sector is of particular importance; the work towards the Task Force on Nature-Based Financial Disclosures (<https://tnfd.info/>) and rising work under the CEB for biodiversity (<https://unsceb.org/topics/biodiversity>) are two key examples.
