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BORN FREE'S VIEWS ON THE INITIAL DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Born Free welcomes this new opportunity to provide comments on the process, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This response is our first written submission on the matter and it is based on the [initial discussion paper](#) and [supporting document](#) made available for review by the Secretariat.

ABOUT BORN FREE

We are an international non-profit organisation committed to protecting wildlife and the wild spaces in which they live, inspiring behaviour change, and ending any activities that exploit and negatively impact wild animals around the globe.

Through science-based research, conservation action, policy advocacy and educational outreach, we seek to enhance the survival of threatened species in the wild while respecting the needs and safeguarding the welfare of individual animals, for their own intrinsic value and for the critical roles they play within the biosphere that sustains us all.

For more than 35 years in over 20 countries, Born Free has been building partnerships, delivering projects and supporting activities aimed at developing and implementing national wildlife laws, enhancing enforcement efforts in protected areas or areas at risk of illegal and/or unsustainable harvesting of wildlife, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, effecting attitudinal changes to species conservation and welfare, and providing livelihood benefits to local communities.

Born Free advocates for better recognition of wildlife protection as key to the future of humanity. We promote a compassionate and highly precautionary approach in the best interest of people, animals and nature. Our work delivers meaningful sustainable development outcomes, as our efforts to bend the curve of biodiversity loss aim at achieving a flourishing, sustainable and co-existent future.

Born Free engages and collaborates with governments, policy-makers, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders to inform better decision making and action on both species-specific and crosscutting policy issues concerning wildlife conservation, welfare and trade. We actively participate in international policy forums including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

We look forward to constructively engaging further in the process leading to the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and call upon the CBD to consider the recommendations below.

RESPONSE TO NOTIFICATION 2019–008

Key recommendations

- Despite increased recognition and understanding at high levels of governments of the multiple devastating impacts of biodiversity loss, political commitments and policy action still fall far short of the necessary transformative change required to reverse the trend. The negotiations of the post-2020 biodiversity framework represent a unique opportunity to scale up ambition and progress towards protecting biodiversity that the global community cannot afford to miss.
- An ambitious but achievable post-2020 strategy (ambitious aim for 2050 with a more pragmatic approach in the shorter term) should be developed using transparent, inclusive and participatory governance approaches. Multi-stakeholder engagement throughout the negotiation process will ensure a greater sense of ownership over implementation and outcomes.
- A clear overarching 2030 ‘apex goal’ should highlight the diverse values of nature and reflect the fundamental role of biodiversity in sustaining development, human health and well-being, and in achieving climate resilience. There needs to be stronger recognition that protection of wildlife and ecosystems is key to any endeavour towards sustainable development. While matching the gravity of the challenge, the 2030 goal should be action-oriented and positively framed.
- The reviewed and renewed biodiversity-related goals and targets to be agreed as part of the post-2020 framework need to better address the root causes and drivers of biodiversity loss, as shown by IPBES ‘Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services’ (IPBES/7/3).
- To ensure effectiveness and measurability, targets in the new framework should clarify the actions needed and be quantifiable. More attention needs to be placed on how implementation is conceived and monitored. The post-2020 framework should include adequate means of implementation, capacity building and resource mobilisation plans, as well as a credible accountability mechanism by which governments and other stakeholders can be held to account.

Structure of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) follow an overarching logic and provide a facilitating framework for incorporating biodiversity into all the different activity sectors involved – development, environment, social welfare, gender equality, education. While its process for determining national targets, implementation and reporting needs to be better defined, alignment between the post-2020 framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will ensure actions are mutually supportive and reinforcing.
- The post-2020 global biodiversity framework should be coherent and synergistic with other processes, and should therefore constitute an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In doing so, and because several of the biodiversity-related targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have endpoints of 2020, there will also be an opportunity to review and strengthen those SDG targets.

Ambition of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

- The post-2020 framework should serve as a call to action, focus on implementation, have the capacity to support effective implementation and be monitorable at all scales.
- Preventing of biodiversity loss and recreating biodiversity in areas where it has been degraded is what we would like to see it aim for and achieve. It should constitute its main message and be considered a high priority by governments and other stakeholders. We need a framework that encourages sectors to work together for transformational changes.
- The post-2020 framework should set the bar high for the decades ahead, be aspirational, anchored in the Sustainable Development Agenda, foster strong ownership, and galvanise high-level political will while remaining flexible and able to respond to national needs and contexts.
- Given that many of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 will not have been met by 2020, and that projected trends foresee an even more challenging context than its predecessors, the post-2020 framework should however adopt a more pragmatic approach in the shorter term.

2050 Vision for Biodiversity

- The principle of Living in Harmony with nature, which entails adopting holistic and integrated approaches and actions that lead to the long-term protection and integrity of the Earth system, should be core to the post-2020 strategy.
- Governments should be required to translate and adapt this concept according to their national circumstances and incorporate it into their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).
- Intermediary milestones (for 2030 and 2040) should be introduced as a way to avoid actions being postponed if 2050 was considered the single endpoint.
- In order to achieve the 2050 Vision and halt biodiversity loss, the diversity of species needs to be preserved and we need to improve the survival probability of all species.

Mission statement

- An actionable 2030 mission statement should be inspiring and concise and should convey a clear message about what we want to see achieved by 2030, in order to generate political and public interest.
- It should emphasise the role of biodiversity as a foundation for sustainable development, and clearly communicate biodiversity contributions to other objectives (including other SDGs). It needs to cover key issues such as halting species extinctions, reflect the need for deep transformations needed to reverse the decline of biodiversity worldwide, and make clear links between biodiversity protection and human health and well-being.

Biodiversity Targets

- The post-2020 framework could build on the already ambitious Aichi Biodiversity Targets and modernise them. The new targets should be clear, time bound, measurable and realistic, with associated indicators of progress and performance. They should be easily adaptable to national and subnational contexts, and disaggregated to address each of the drivers of biodiversity loss.
- Each target should have a headline goal, an implementation plan with at least one key measurable action as well as a resource mobilisation strategy.
- To ensure effectiveness, targets also need to be more quantitative and responsive to geographical locations. There is need for few basic targets, with wide applicability, and the development of sub-targets, in different operational and geographical levels, to assist implementation.
- The targets should better recognise trade-offs between biodiversity conservation and other SDGs, and should be linked to the mandate and work of the other biodiversity-related Conventions

E.g., Alignment of updated NBSAPs with national SDG implementation plans, as relevant; alignment with CMS objectives: enhance bilateral, regional and international cooperation, recognising that species do not respect international borders.

Voluntary commitments and contributions

- Voluntary commitments and contributions can be meaningful and reinforce NBSAPs as long as there is robust reporting and review of implementation, in order to regularly take stock, assess and review progress.

Relationship between the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and other relevant processes

- We would support the creation of a centralised forum that would enable a holistic approach to biodiversity governance and facilitate integration mechanisms between the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and all other relevant processes. This coordination body would complement

Mainstreaming

- Alignment of the post-2020 framework with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will promote better mainstreaming of biodiversity into other global economic and social agendas.

Relationship with the current Strategic Plan

- In order to avoid any delays, the current Strategic Plan should serve as a baseline. Its level of ambition should be maintained, however there is room to improve its consistency, coherence and synergies with other biodiversity-related agreements and processes.
- Certain issues could also be better reflected in the new framework, including: illegal wildlife trade, habitat connectivity, transfer of technology, capacity building and resource mobilisation.

Indicators

- The adoption of shared biodiversity indicators for the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) would create a globally harmonised approach to reporting which would be beneficial.

Implementation and NBSAPs

- The post-2020 framework should include a mechanism to review NBSAPs and share best practice, as well as develop more practical instruments for governments and other stakeholders to improve national implementation.

The financial gap and resource mobilisation

- The post-2020 framework should aim at achieving a co-existent economy including by identifying resources beyond traditional aid flows. Deploying and scaling-up innovative financing approaches to support conservation would be beneficial.
- Conservation bonds, where proceeds are utilised for financing environmental investments, projects or activities, and which are focused on performance-based payments, from a landscape-scale approach and with a range of developmental indicators, support the emergence of sustainable wildlife-based economies.
- Increasing synergies with resource mobilisation for other areas of sustainable development should also be pursued.

Review process

- The current framework lacks consistency and continuity. The post-2020 framework needs to include a robust regular process for reviewing implementation and ensuring transparency and accountability.
- This process should be subject to independent oversight (establishment of a group of experts) and should be automatic (e.g. every two years).
- Such a mechanism could cherry-pick elements from the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process used by countries at the annual High Level Political Forum to assess national progress on the SDGs.
- The role of community-based monitoring and information systems in tracking progress should not be overlooked.
- The post-2020 framework could also look to harmonise reporting systems among the biodiversity-related conventions.

Integrating diverse perspectives

- The post-2020 framework should adopt a 'whole of society' approach' and look to integrate diverse perspectives in a transparent, accommodative, inclusive and gender-responsive manner.

- Civil society has a central role to play in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of policies and action plans adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Enhancing and supporting civil society participation in relevant meetings and events, and encouraging contributions from NGOs, youth, women, indigenous peoples and local communities, would be highly valuable in ensuring the effective delivery of the post-2020 framework.

Communication and outreach

- There is a need for a new wider societal narrative around biodiversity. Public awareness of the global crisis facing wildlife must increase, in order that policy-makers prioritise the issue at international and national levels.
- With a short and easily communicated mission statement, the post-2020 framework needs to clearly demonstrate to the public and political leaders why preserving biodiversity matters for them and why it is essential for achieving sustainable development.
- Increasing awareness, appreciation and understanding of the multiple values of biodiversity (incl. intrinsic, aesthetic, cultural) is key to changing mind sets. Born Free believes that taking due consideration of the welfare of individual animals, for their own sake and as key members of animal families, societies, cultures and wider ecosystems, is key to wildlife conservation and management. Through our campaigns, we find that the public often responds better to the plight of individual animals. Instilling a sense of compassion in people represents a big step towards achieving greater outcomes for wider biodiversity.

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