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**Australia's Submission to CBD Notification 2019-075**

**CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)**

**NOTIFICATION 2019-075**

Submission on the structure of the post-2020 global biodiversity  
framework

Submission by Australia



**Australian Government**

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**NOTE: Information provided in this response has been drawn from Australian  
Government agency input**

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**Notification 2019-075: Submission on the structure of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**

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Australia thanks the Secretariat for the invitation to submit proposals on the structure of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as communicated in Notification 2019-075 Ref: SCBD/OES/CCP/JMF/88326 of 6 September 2019.

To build on the discussions and outcome of the recent Open-Ended Working Group meeting in Nairobi (27-30 August 2019), Australia has utilised the non-paper submitted by the Co-chairs of the scope and structure discussion group titled *Possible elements of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework for further discussion*<sup>1</sup> as the basis of this submission.

**Overarching comments**

A challenge in achieving the 2050 Vision is expanding the current narrative around biodiversity conservation to encourage and facilitate tangible action by all actors through an ambitious and inclusive framework.

The structure chosen by Parties must be one which offers the flexibility to implement the new global biodiversity framework (GBF) in line with national circumstances; be clear, concise and communicable; and inclusive in that the framework needs to be one in which can accommodate contributions by all actors.

Current cross-cutting issues such as those related to gender, youth and the contributions of business and indigenous peoples and local communities need to be incorporated as elements throughout all levels of the GBF. Across the CBD, we need to ensure both the engagement of women and girls through the lens of recipients and recognise their role as agents of change. More generally, we should be looking to the important role mainstreaming biodiversity with other sectors has in achieving the 2050 Vision and the success of the GBF.

We also need to further strengthen our partnerships with indigenous peoples and local communities and look to recognise their important contributions, through multiple mechanisms and at all levels, to the achievement of the 2050 Mission.

**Rationale and scope**

The co-benefits that biodiversity provides and the critical links that exist between biodiversity, human health and economic stability should be front of mind as we look to determine the underpinning rationale and scope of the GBF.

The transformative change sought through the development and implementation of the new GBF should be underpinned and guided by those issues that link biodiversity to broader society.

Moving forward we need to be cognisant of the interconnected nature of biodiversity. As such, issues such as the importance of ecosystem services and biodiversity and the implications the current state of biodiversity has on human-health should not be discounted as areas of focus.

Beyond this, we need to consider how we can collectively address the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

Implementation of the new GBF will be key and we will need to ensure the lessons learned and challenges associated with the implementation of the current Strategic Plan are not forgotten.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/6f62/5c58/b51c8ebb49511787cc3e972d/wg2020-01-nonpaper-02-en.pdf>

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These lessons and challenges are not limited to activities focussed on implementation on-ground, but include those related to the communication of the CBD more broadly and the development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. As we look to develop the GBF, the creation of products that bring everyone on the biodiversity journey and provide the flexibility for implementation as appropriate to national situations should be at the forefront of our minds.

### **2050 Vision**

Australia agrees the 2050 Vision remains relevant and elements should be used to inform development of the global biodiversity framework. While some of the elements of the Vision could be further unpacked as part of the development of potential goals and targets, Australia is generally supportive of the 2050 Vision as it currently stands and that clarification through other components of the framework could be explored as a possible solution.

Australia notes the role partnerships play and will continue to play in our efforts to realise the 2050 Vision. As the GBF is developed we need to recognise and strive to further strengthen partnerships with all actors – governments, non-government environmental groups, indigenous people and local communities, women, youth, business and industry.

### **2030 Mission and/or apex goal and milestones**

In revising this element of the global biodiversity framework, we should be continually asking ourselves the following questions – what is the purpose of the mission/apex goal, what are we seeking to achieve as a result of its development and are we developing something all actors can easily understand and see themselves contributing to.

We need a 2030 Mission or an apex target that is inspirational and motivating. It needs to be engaging and easy to communicate.

We appreciate the efforts that have gone into capturing the discussion at the Open Ended Working group and note that while the list provided in the non-paper is not exhaustive, there are several elements raised during the Open-Ended Working Group meeting that Australia would like to ensure are considered during the development of the 2030 Mission or apex goal.

Australia strongly support alignment of the new global biodiversity framework with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other multi-lateral environmental agreements, with particularly consideration that several of the biodiversity related SDGs are due to expire well before 2030. However it is unclear how these might feature in a mission and suggest consideration in other elements of the GBF.

As we work to determine the elements that comprise the 2030 Mission or apex goal, we need to be wary of trying to create the detail of a mission/apex goal before the 'lower' levels of the GBF (i.e. goals, targets) are known. Taking a top-down approach where the mission/apex goal guides the goals/targets, could lead to the creation of a 2030 Mission/apex goal much like the current Mission – one that tries to capture everything but does not assist in communicating what we are seeking to achieve.

### **Goals, targets, sub-targets, and indicators**

Australia would again reiterate its support of ensuring the three objectives of the Convention are reflected in this element of the GBF.

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Australia notes the five direct drivers of biodiversity loss (changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change; pollution; and invasion of alien species), as well as the indirect drivers (production and consumption patterns, human population dynamics, and trends, trade, technological innovations and local through global governance), as outlined in the IPBES report, provide a clear and concise list of areas where the GBF could look to focus, however consideration should be given to where these elements would fit best – influencing the goals or the targets.

Australia notes the inclusion of facilitating/enabling implementation as an area for consideration in this element of the GBF. Australia recognises the critical role implementation will have in the delivering the post-2020 GBF, however such as element would be better placed and considered in the context of the means, instruments and mechanisms for implementation and enabling conditions. This would ensure stronger status of implementation rather than a goal or target to work to achieve.

On issues for consideration during the development of the GBF targets, Australia reiterates its support for:

- targets that are specific, measurable, achievable, results-based, and time-bound (SMART);
- complementarity to other relevant international agreements, including multilateral environmental agreements, biodiversity-related conventions, the Rio conventions, the Paris Agreement, relevant international organizations and other relevant processes;
- striving to align and not duplicate other processes.

In considering whether the inclusion of sub-targets is appropriate for the GBF, we need to be mindful of ensuring the inclusion of such an element does not complicate the implementation, monitoring or communication of the GBF. We would be interested in exploring the benefit gained by the inclusion of sub-target, as well as exploring the possibility of meeting that need through the development of indicators. Ultimately, we need to be working to ensure the GBF is something that is more easily understood and accessible, rather than over complicating where possible.

### **Means of implementation and enabling conditions**

With regard to the heading of this element, Australia queries whether ‘functions’ or ‘means’ would be more appropriate than ‘conditions’, noting this alternative language could better convey the active nature of the element.

Australia notes the important role many of the enabling conditions identified in the non-paper have and will continue to have in the implementation of the 2050 Vision.

Australia is supportive of several of the issues identified in this section of the non-paper being considered and included in the GBF.

### **Cross-cutting issues and approaches**

The cross-cutting issues identified in the non-paper encapsulate the broad range of actors that need to be engaged in the both the development and the implementation of the GBF.

Mainstreaming biodiversity across all sectors will be critical in ensuring the achievement of both the 2050 Vision and the goals of the post-2020 Framework. There should be a focus on

mainstreaming relevant biodiversity issues across all sectors, including the agriculture, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, energy and mining, infrastructure, health, education and manufacturing and processing sectors.

Embedding consideration of nature and the importance of biodiversity in other sectors will also support and encourage new partnerships. The scale of the challenge to bend the curve of biodiversity loss is not something that governments alone cannot achieve, as such we need a participatory framework that leverages the efforts of all actors.

Australia notes the need to recognise and strive to further recognise partnerships with IPLCs and the critical role they play in contributing to the three objectives of the Convention and look for opportunities to better recognise this across the entire framework. We strongly support efforts to build on this work and our continued efforts to partner across sectors and with a range of individuals, communities and organisations.

Australia also notes the need to better recognise the important role women and girls play in the protection and conservation of biodiversity, and we reiterate the need to strive for a gender responsive post-2020 process and framework. This need has been echoed in the commitments made by CBD Parties, the Secretariat, and the broader CBD community. We strongly support the inclusion of gender considerations in the post-2020 strategy and targets, and believe that gender expertise should be encouraged throughout the post-2020 process.

Recognising and encouraging the significant contributions of all actors in a new framework, such as those from IPLCs, women, youth, business and industry, will be critical to achieving the success that we are all striving for through the GBF.

### **Transparent implementation, monitoring and reporting mechanism**

Ensuring the implementation, monitoring and reporting mechanisms utilised by the CBD are transparent and easily understood will be important for pursuing progress under the GBF.

Australia is supportive of retaining and strengthening (in line with national circumstances) National Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plans as the main mechanism for implementing the Convention at the national level. NBSAPs remain an adaptable and flexible mechanism for Parties to implement the objectives of the Convention within their own national jurisdictions and circumstances.

Australia is supportive of reconsidering the approach used as the national reporting mechanism to ensure it is useful and able to provide the information required to monitor progress against the GBF while allowing flexibility for Parties.

We should be looking to the lessons learned from other Conventions and other international instruments. However it should not be a one-way street, the CBD should be looking to include the lessons learned from our Convention. We should not only be looking to learn from our failings but also look to capitalise on our successes.

### **Outreach, awareness and uptake**

Australia is supportive of the development of a coherent, comprehensive and innovative communication strategy for the GBF; and actions to raise awareness of the GBF to ensure its alignment with other international processes and strategies.

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We strongly support development of a GBF that is easy to communicate to a range of audiences and actors who will be critical to mainstreaming biodiversity and creating a better understanding of the role biodiversity plays in our everyday lives.