

## **Input on Area Based Conservation Measures in the context of the Development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

A submission by the Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on area based conservation measures. We look forward to participating in the upcoming thematic consultation on this matter in Montreal in early December, and we are happy to have the chance to share some thoughts and recommendations here.

The Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society are strongly supportive of an increased spatial target establishing a new global goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the planet - both land and sea - by 2030 as an interim goal towards protecting half of the earth. We also recognize the inextricable link between nature and culture and strongly support taking an approach to conserving biodiversity that fully integrates and respects indigenous leadership and indigenous rights. We encourage Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to adopt this target and approach as part of the new 10-year strategy that will be agreed to at the 15th Conference of the Parties in October 2020 in Kunming, China. In addition to helping halt and reverse species decline and revive ecosystems services that are critical to humanity's survival, scientists have noted that such a target is also needed to achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Accord. [Recent research](#) has demonstrated quantitative and qualitative progress towards meeting Aichi Target 11, the current spatial target, providing a helpful reminder of the ability of spatial targets to drive meaningful actions and progress related to biodiversity conservation.

In this submission we would like to provide more details regarding this proposed spatial target and approach, including 1) new and significant scientific justification, 2) recommendations for what additional qualitative elements this target should include, 3) the role that rights of indigenous peoples must play in the development of area based targets to conserve biodiversity, and 4) a proposed framework for how countries could work together to contribute to reaching a global goal of conserving at least 30 percent of the planet.

### 1) Scientific Justification

There is a wealth of scientific data documenting the need for increased spatial targets in order to help achieve goals related to biodiversity conservation. As we have discussed in greater detail in previous submissions, the following are merely a few examples:

- [An analysis of numerous studies and reviews](#) concluded that 25 - 75 percent of a typical region must be managed for conservation in order to meet biodiversity conservation goals;
- [A comprehensive review of the literature on marine protected areas](#) found that the average recommendation for how much of the world's ocean must be protected in order to achieve conservation related goals was 37 percent;

- The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' Beyond the Aichi Targets Task Force [surveyed 335 conservation scientists from 81 countries](#) and reported “very strong support for large-scale percentage area conservation targets, in the order of 50 percent of the Earth” in addition to overwhelming agreement that the current spatial target to protect 17 percent of the world’s land and freshwater and 10 percent of the ocean is insufficient to conserve biodiversity;
- Leading scientists, including E.O Wilson, have advocated for protecting [half of the Earth](#), noting that such action would protect 85 percent of species from extinction

In just the past six months, numerous scientific papers built on this already robust foundation of scientific evidence and further demonstrated the need to significantly increase spatial targets. Most notably, the [IPBES global assessment](#) that was released in May 2019 included a sobering description of the state of the world’s biodiversity, noting that 1 million species are threatened with extinction. Developed by 145 experts from 50 countries with input from an additional 310 experts, the report was the most comprehensive effort to date taken to assess the global state of biodiversity. Importantly, these experts didn’t merely document the extent of the problem, but indicated transformative actions needed to reverse the global trend of biodiversity loss. Among the recommended actions was “expanding and effectively managing the current network of protected areas.” This recommendation was echoed in the [Draft Summary for Policymakers of the 5th Edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook](#), which noted the progress made towards achieving Aichi Target 11 and called for “major increases in the extent and effectiveness of well-connected protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.”

The IPBES global assessment also stressed the important role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in biodiversity conservation, noting that 35 percent of the areas formally protected and 35 percent of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low human intervention are traditionally owned, managed, used, or occupied by indigenous peoples. As stated in the report “Recognizing the knowledge, innovations, practices, institutions and values of indigenous peoples and local communities, and ensuring their inclusion and participation in environmental governance, often enhances their quality of life and the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature, which is relevant to broader society.”

Another key report was published in April 2019 in *Science Advances*. In this paper, over a dozen global experts noted the need to protect [at least 30 percent of the planet’s land and ocean by 2030](#) - in addition to conserving an additional 20 percent of the planet as climate stabilization areas - in order to effectively conserve biodiversity and achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Accord. More recently, just this month, a group of [IUCN experts published a review of the literature](#) on area based conservation and - amongst other findings - concluded that “the global protection of a minimum of 30 per cent and up to 70 per cent, or even higher, of the land and sea on Earth is well supported in the literature. The call for 50 per cent of the Earth is a mid-point of these values and is supported by a range of studies.”

## 2) The Quantitative and Qualitative Elements of a Spatial Target

Based on the best available science, including that referenced above, the Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society support establishing a new spatial target to protect at least 30 percent of the planet - land and sea - by 2030 as an interim goal towards protecting half of the earth. We also support full integration and participation of indigenous peoples in the process to formulate and implement this target. This should be a global target, as it is not something that all countries will be able to meet within their own borders, but all countries do have a role to play and should develop a shared understanding of the different responsibilities related to advancing conservation in highly populated areas, open areas with lower population, and large areas with high ecosystem integrity and wilderness values, including lands managed, owned, used, claimed, or occupied by indigenous peoples. Importantly, there must be more requirements to meeting a spatial target than to simply cross a numeric threshold. We believe that the following commitments must also be part of the 2020 agreement:

- *The world's most biologically important areas have been prioritized.* In satisfying a new spatial target, nations must use systematic conservation planning or other science-based approaches and partnerships with indigenous peoples to prioritize conserving the areas that are the most important for biodiversity, including ecosystems that are still intact and key biodiversity areas. Conservation should support landscape connectivity and ecosystem resilience, and should be pursued globally, helping to ensure that the planet's system of protected and conserved areas is fully representative of our planet's diverse nature, habitats, and ecosystems, and maintains species diversity and abundance.
- *Indigenous peoples' rights are recognized and promoted.* Indigenous peoples must be central partners in the development and implementation of a new spatial target. Nations must work with indigenous peoples to ensure free, prior and informed consent in the formation of protected areas and in recognition of Indigenous and local community conserved areas. Additionally, through all subsequent actions that nations take to meet that target, indigenous peoples' rights must be respected and promoted, recognizing the tenets of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- *Only areas with demonstrable long-term conservation outcomes should be included.* In other words, protected areas need to be properly designed in full partnership with indigenous peoples, clearly defined geographical spaces, equitably governed, and effectively managed through legal or other effective means to achieve the long term conservation of nature associated with ecosystem services and benefits for people's cultures and livelihoods. On the land, these include existing or newly established formal Protected Areas (government-managed or privately managed) as well as Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs, including Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas, ICCAs) that ensure at least equivalent conservation outcomes. In the ocean, these are highly or fully protected areas (MPAs) and OECMs that ensure at least equivalent conservation outcomes. The above should all contribute to the topline numeric goal, but there must be implementation measures in place to ensure that each designated area is in fact being managed for its intended conservation goals.

- *There must be resources to support long-term conservation outcomes.* The 2020 agreement must contain a commitment to successfully finance and implement the spatial target. An interim target of protecting at least 30 percent of the planet will be unachievable until there are sufficient financial resources to ensure long-term conservation outcomes for each of the areas reported as protected or otherwise effectively conserved.

### 3) The Role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Rights

As referenced in the above sections, the Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society believe that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) must play a central role in the development of the Convention on Biological Diversity's post-2020 framework and in the establishment of a new spatial target. Specifically, we encourage nations to ensure that the area-based goals in the Convention on Biological Diversity post-2020 framework are built on full integration of IPLC views and participation.

While we encourage countries to commit to ambitious area-based goals to protect at least 30 percent of land and water globally by 2030, this target is not meant to imply a limit on respect for and acknowledgement of indigenous and local community managed, conserved, or claimed lands (e.g. OECMs and ICCAs).

As noted above, the IPBES global assessment indicated the important role that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities have to play in safeguarding biodiversity. Additionally, this report highlighted the importance of rights: "The positive contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to sustainability can be facilitated through national recognition of land tenure, access and resource rights in accordance with national legislation, the application of free, prior and informed consent, and improved collaboration, fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use, and co-management arrangements with local communities."

We appreciate the recognition that the Convention on Biological Diversity has also given this critical issue, including the following points:

- Article 8(j) of the CBD requires each Party, "subject to its national legislation, to respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge, innovations and practices."
- The Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the [Mo'otz kuxtal voluntary guidelines](#) at the 13th Conference of the Parties in December 2016. These guidelines set out a roadmap "for the development of mechanisms, legislation or other appropriate initiatives to ensure the "prior and informed consent", "free, prior and informed consent" or

“approval and involvement”, depending on national circumstances, of indigenous peoples and local communities for accessing their knowledge, innovations and practices, for fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of their knowledge, innovations and practices relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and for reporting and preventing unlawful appropriation of traditional knowledge.”

- The voluntary guidelines also state that “Most indigenous peoples and local communities inhabit areas where the vast majority of the world’s genetic resources are found. Many of them have cultivated and used biological resources in a sustainable way for thousands of years. By doing so, they have developed a wealth of knowledge linked with the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.”

We encourage Parties to continue to recognize and highlight the critical role of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities have to play in any successful strategy to safeguard the world’s biodiversity. Specifically, we support the inclusion of indigenous peoples’ priorities throughout the development of the post-2020 framework and would like to acknowledge the crucial work performed by the International Indigenous Forum on Biological Diversity (IIFB), the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and indigenous and local community groups and organizations throughout the UN’s seven recognized indigenous socio-cultural regions of the globe. We encourage all Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to fully integrate the perspectives, participation, and partnership of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the development and implementation of the post-2020 framework, including area based conservation and the establishment of a new spatial target.

#### 4) A Framework for National Contributions to a Global Spatial Target

As stated above, the Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society support the establishment of an increased spatial target that is global in nature and that - to put it generally - prioritizes the protection of the most important areas for biodiversity and respects the linkages between nature and culture. This means that when applied to particular regions, protecting 30 percent could be impossibly high on a practical level or woefully inadequate in terms of safeguarding biodiversity. An important question that this dynamic raises is how countries should work together with a shared understanding of what responsibilities they ought to assume in making contributions to this global target.

We believe that “[the Three Global Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation and Restoration Framework](#)” provides a scientifically compelling and appropriate framework to guide countries through these potentially difficult questions. We encourage Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to formally recognize and adopt this framework as a tool for countries to use in advancing their own contributions to a new and increased spatial target.

An excerpt of this framework, initially developed by Kathy MacKinnon, Chair WCPA, Harvey Locke, Chair WCPA Beyond the Aichi Targets Task Force and Stephen Woodley, WCPA Vice

Chair for Science and Biodiversity Conservation and subsequently [developed further](#) by a larger group of authors, is included below:

Ambitious area-based conservation goals are achievable but will require different strategies appropriate to local, national and regional situations. We have developed a framework that addresses the three different conditions of the world in a way that would be effective to meet the CBD's objectives to preserve and restore biodiversity wherever it occurs on earth (all premised on effective and equitable governance). These Three Global Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation and Restoration Framework apply to terrestrial, coastal and freshwater systems (we are still exploring its application to the marine realm).

The Three Conditions Framework is designed to enable ambitious action to protect global biodiversity while recognizing that different parties have different conditions and responsibilities. In accordance with Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration described above, this framework calls for simultaneous action by all countries across all Three Conditions as part of the requirement for common but differentiated responsibility to protect Earth's ecosystem.

The Three Global Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation and Restoration are:

1. The highly populated, agriculturally fertile, and developed areas: The target in this condition is to preserve all the remaining remnants of an ecoregion, rather than numerical targets. Focus on protecting identified endangered species and ecosystems, active ecological restoration, restoring connectivity, and on ecological processes that are impaired need help such as aquatic connectivity. Area-based conservation must be mainstreamed with appropriate spatial planning and sustainable production and sustainable consumption, maintaining pollinators, reducing nitrogen inputs and providing access to nature. Different sub-strategies are needed for urban and intensive agricultural areas.
2. Open landscapes with lower human population densities and grazing, fishing and some resource extraction and with large existing or potential protected and conserved areas: The target for this condition is to develop systems of protected and conserved areas in an ecologically connected way, consistent with Aichi Target 11's current language of "ecologically representative and well- connected systems of protected areas and OECMs.... integrated into the wider landscape and seascape". The system should target both areas of ecological representation and areas of particular importance for biodiversity and aim to conserve all existing native species and supporting ecological processes and ensure that the protected areas are effectively managed. Ecological restoration is also important in this condition, especially for connectivity and large- ranging mammals. An ambitious percentage target is appropriate in this condition.

3. Large areas with a high level of ecosystem integrity (wilderness), with low population densities or no humans: The targets for this condition are to protect and conserve the entire natural system as it is now (not a percentage), linear infrastructure such as roads should be minimized, and industrial development should be an exception and subject to the mitigation hierarchy. Indigenous people and communities' governance systems are of major importance in these areas. The ecological aim is to maintain intactness and a very low human footprint in order to maintain all native species and ecological processes. In addition to in-situ biodiversity conservation goals, this condition protects global-scale ecological processes including carbon sequestration, regional hydrology, and large-scale meteorological patterns.

The Three Conditions Framework provides a framework for nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and cooperation, which can be expressed in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the CBD and in National Climate Change strategies under the UNFCCC. All parties should act according to the conditions of their country and integrate protected areas in spatial and sectoral planning. Several large countries have all three conditions. Others may have only condition 1, or conditions 1 and 2 but impact more intact conditions elsewhere through their consumption patterns and could therefore contribute support to others who have conditions 2 and 3.

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide input on this important topic. The Campaign for Nature and the National Geographic Society believe that a successful and ambitious deal to safeguard biodiversity must include many elements ranging from promoting sustainability to better directing and mobilizing greater financial resources. We believe that an increased spatial target is a critical component of any successful biodiversity conservation strategy, but ultimately it is only one of many necessary elements. We also strongly believe that full participation by IPLCs and equitable integration of their views into all parts of formulating and implementing the post 2020 framework is crucial. We look forward to providing additional, substantive input on other issues, including the critical issue of resource mobilization and related questions like how much it will cost to protect biodiversity and what the cost of inaction would be.