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## COMMUNICATION FOR THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

### I. BACKGROUND

1. The zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework ([CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1](#)) recognizes the importance of awareness and communications for its implementation. The draft indicates that all actors will need to help to raise awareness of the framework. It also speaks of the need for whole-of-society engagement to implement it. This includes activities at the local, national, regional and global levels and the need to implement the framework in a way which is supportive of other relevant international processes and strategies.

2. In decision [14/34](#), the Conference of the Parties decided that the post-2020 global biodiversity framework should be accompanied by an inspirational and motivating 2030 mission as a stepping stone towards the 2050 Vision of “living in harmony with nature”, which will be supported by a coherent, comprehensive and innovative communication strategy. The draft 2030 mission contained in the zero draft is: “to take urgent action across society to put biodiversity on a path to recovery for the benefit of planet and people.”

3. The following document represents the framework against which a communications strategy can be developed to support the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, its action targets and goals, and the 2030 mission to be agreed by the Parties. The final shape of the strategy will need to be further developed, based on the final agreed text of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the relevant decision of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. After this, the strategy will need to be kept under review and updated regularly following the processes outlined in section VIII below.

### II. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK

4. The framework below should be used to guide the actions and activities of all actors and stakeholders as they raise awareness and communicate the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This initial guidance is meant to inform subsequent development of specific strategies and action plans at the global, regional, national and subnational levels, and by indigenous peoples and local communities with a view to communicating the 2030 mission of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in a manner that supports its implementation and amplifies awareness of success. The framework should be further developed once the post-2020 framework is adopted and be subject to periodic review and adjustment during the ten-year period of implementation of the framework.

### III. GOALS

5. Communications efforts in the context of this strategy need to support actions towards the 2030 mission, including those that will achieve the goals, the action targets and the theory of change that underpins

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\* CBD/SBI/3/1.

the framework. Overall, the strategy is meant to not only support the realization of the 2030 mission, but also of the 2050 Vision of the Convention. Within this context, the following are the main goals.

**A. Communicate the status of implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**

6. Show the state of implementation of post-2020 global biodiversity framework, its 2030 mission and its goals and action targets at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels. These communications should show how implementation of the framework is taking place in the context of actions being carried out by others, including the biodiversity-related conventions, other actors on the biodiversity agenda and other relevant actors. Efforts will provide a picture of the status of implementation that provides inspiration for further action towards the 2050 Vision.

**B. Urge additional actions where they are needed**

7. In connection with the first goal, communications need to promote support for additional actions related to those goals and action targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework on which actions do not demonstrate sufficient progress. Communications should promote action by supporting efforts in a positive way, offering cautions as to the consequences of failure, or demonstrating ways in which action in other domains can be emulated to produce progress towards the mission.

**C. Demonstrate the relevance of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to key global challenges including climate change, land degradation, human health and sustainable development**

8. Communication efforts will show the interlinkages between biodiversity and a variety of key issues. This includes the impacts of climate change on biodiversity, as well as nature-based solutions to climate change, in line with messages issued by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Similarly, the strategy will need to show how the work under the post-2020 global biodiversity framework contributes to work under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Messages of the Convention on Biological Diversity need to link with the agenda and messaging for land degradation neutrality of Convention to Combat Desertification as well as the goals of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.<sup>1</sup>

9. The issue of human health also represents a key area where the contribution of implementation of the framework to achieving outcomes beyond the biodiversity agenda needs to be highlighted. The linkage of work to the One-Health agenda, pandemic prevention and other health issues are key issue areas.

10. The close linkage of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> also will be an important point for messaging and for realizing synergy. The close alignment of these two agendas will make this a more straightforward effort.

11. For all these, emphasis will be on building bridges between communication efforts, and seeking synergy. Examples already exist to provide models, such as the role of biodiversity in the sustainable development agenda, biodiversity for food security, the nature-based solutions approach to tackling climate change, and the communication on the role of biodiversity in health.

**D. Support mainstreaming and promoting the relevance of the framework to actors beyond the traditional biodiversity community**

12. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework will need a “whole-of-society” engagement to implement it. This includes the need for activities at the subnational, national, regional and global levels and the need to implement the framework in a way which is supportive of other relevant international processes and strategies.” Therefore, the outreach strategy needs to target a variety of actors who have to date remained removed from the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity but whose actions, in fact, have an impact on the biodiversity agenda. Those sectors for mainstreaming identified at the thirteenth and fourteenth

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution [73/284](#).

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

meetings of the Conference of the Parties are examples of the communities that should be targets for engagement. In engaging these communities, the emphasis should be on the core issues that are of concern for these sectors and the ways in which biodiversity addresses them.

13. This approach also calls upon communication strategies to ensure a whole-of-government approach to action. While certain key ministries have already been implicated in the plans for achieving the 2050 Vision, there is a need to ensure that communications across all government ministries can be ensured, and that these efforts promote action.

14. The finance and business communities are extremely important audiences for communications efforts. As important users of biodiversity and its ecosystem services, the ability of business to support sustainable consumption and production will be crucial for achievement of the goals of the Convention. The linkage of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use to corporate social responsibility is important. More important is to communicate the business and financial case for biodiversity action. The role of business as a user of genetic resources in the context of the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit-sharing is also an important element.

#### **E. Ensure that key stakeholders are represented**

15. In addition to the mainstreaming audiences mentioned above, it is important to ensure that indigenous peoples and local communities, youth, women and important sectors of civil society are also targets for communication and also part of the communications efforts. Gender considerations need to be incorporated into all work.

#### **F. Monitoring implementation to generate further support**

16. The strategy also needs to have a dedicated element to ensure that the monitoring of implementation of the framework is transparent, and easily communicated to media and other actors. The goal will be to use communication on progress as a tool to ensure greater implementation at all levels. The Convention on Biological Diversity and national actors need to provide transparent and regular updates of progress according to the headline and other indicators in the monitoring framework, both through a central portal, linked to the clearing-house mechanism and the communication platforms of the Convention, as well as on national platforms.

17. Data on these should be made available in a format that can be easily accessed by media, both traditional and online, and then processed for media articles. The integration of this data with tools for data visualization is important. Partnerships with media outlets that are experts in this regard are important ways forward. Data sources and the rationale for all indicators should be easily available and explained in both technical and non-technical ways. Any technical expert groups established for the development of indicators should also include discussions on the communication element of this.

18. Communications related to the monitoring element should have a reporting period on an annual or biannual basis, linked to the International Day for Biodiversity, or some other suitable event. Forthcoming editions of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* should also be prepared and launched with this need to communicate implementation in mind. Budgets for the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* should be created with sufficient resources to accomplish this.

### **IV. KEY MESSAGES**

19. The message structure is to be developed, according to an iterative process, described later in this plan. There will be one overall umbrella set of messages which will apply to public mobilization and advocacy campaigns, meant to be used by all actors. Under this, there will be sector-specific messages which will be tailored for specific audiences. These will be developed by organizations which are engaged with these sectors. The messaging structure will also pursue the principle of “open source” campaign, which maintains core messaging, but also permits different organizations to customize this under their own brand. These messages are also meant to have an iteration designed for national and subnational levels. The table

below outlines the rough structure of such a message table. The messages in this table are not the final messages, but rather indicate the types of messages.

<b>TOP LEVEL MESSAGE AND “STRAPLINE” AND ASSOCIATED HASHTAGS [#COP15 and/or #ForNature]</b>	
<b>Public mobilization messages</b>	<b>Advocacy messages</b>
[message about conservation for general public]	[message for political decision makers]
[message about action target for general public]	[message for forestry sector]
[message about biodiversity and climate change]	[message for finance sector]
[etc.]	[etc.]

20. Messages for the post-2020 framework need to be consistent with previously developed messaging. This includes the messaging for the 2050 Vision, messaging on the Sustainable Development Goals, nature-based solutions, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the conclusions of the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, and the overall messaging for the Convention.

21. Messaging needs to be evidence-based and scientifically credible, drawing upon the work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and its global assessments. The messaging also needs to be consistent with and take into account relevant traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities.

22. Elements for messaging will be the following:

(a) Overall, messages should communicate general elements about the connections of people to biodiversity and support the reality that people are connected to biodiversity in almost all aspects of their lives;

(b) Messages should promote a sense of urgency for immediate action to halt the loss of biodiversity, and encourage action by stakeholders in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework as a means to achieve this goal;

(c) The messages should also highlight the longer time horizon and milestones, including the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020,<sup>3</sup> the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the time-bound targets of the climate process;

(d) The importance of achieving equity as part of the process towards the 2050 Vision should also be integrated;

(e) Messages should also link the goals of the framework with specific national development priorities, demonstrating how achieving sustainable development at the national level requires integration of biodiversity into these activities;

(f) Specific messages and campaigns should be sensitive to the values of the target audience and should express biodiversity and actions to conserve and sustainably use it in the context of these values. Therefore, audience research is a key element to any message customization;

(g) Messages will all need both a public mobilization track and a track related to motivating action for specific target groups.

## V. AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

23. Given the global audience for the Convention, it is important to identify audience segments and to link communications with each of these to the different goals of the strategy and design messages

<sup>3</sup> Conference of the Parties, decision [X/2](#).

accordingly. For the audience groups below, it is important to note that they will be both audiences receiving messages and groups that transform and/or transmit messages to other subsidiary target groups.

#### **A. Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols**

24. The Convention is implemented at the national level by national Governments, and therefore a primary key audience for communications is to the Parties. The main audience will be not only focal points to the Convention and its Protocols, but also ministries, legislators and executive officers. National focal points for the Convention and its Protocols will need the tools to reach out to ministries and other government departments and build communication coalitions to ensure that Parties are mainstreaming biodiversity into the work of other sectors. Included in this group are subnational governments and cities, which are increasingly carrying out biodiversity strategies and action plans. Parties to the Convention will need to organize national processes for communication, including relevant advisory boards.

#### **B. Stakeholders and other members of the Convention's core audience and constituency**

25. While Parties are the primary focus of the Convention, there are a number of other actors and stakeholders who provide supportive roles to Parties, or also have a discrete role to play in implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Because these actors are not Parties, communications to them will have a different character. At the same time, when these actors carry out supportive activities at the national level, they may be included in these campaigns.

26. United Nations system partners who are involved in the work of the Convention, as well as other regional organizations, are also important. These actors will not only transmit the work of the Convention to others, but also will use the opportunity to promote their own work and its relevance to the sustainable development agenda. The Department of Global Communications will be invited to create a biodiversity communications group, which will work with the Executive Secretary, to coordinate communications across the system. The Communications Division of the United Nations Environment Programme will also be invited to create a dedicated communications focal point.

27. Multilateral environment agreements, both those directly related to biodiversity, and those that deal with other issues, will be important multipliers and places for coordination. To this end, the Joint Liaison Group, the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the Environment Management Group should be invited to ensure that communication of the agenda is a permanent item on their annual agendas and focal points should be named.

28. Natural history museums, botanical gardens, zoos and aquariums are other groups whose work is key to the Convention, both in terms of specific conservation actions and in raising awareness about biodiversity. Large associations, such as the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and the European Network of Science Centres and Museums (ECSITE), will be invited to coordinate communications.

29. Large, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have national chapters are also important stakeholders for work. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and WWF International are indicative types of such organizations. The Secretariat and Parties to the Convention have an extensive history of working with both organizations. This should continue without prejudice to relationships with other NGOs.

30. Conservation NGOs are a core constituency that will retransmit the messages of the Convention and advance the conservation agenda. Partnerships of these are key.

#### **C. Indigenous peoples and local communities**

31. It is important to increase work with indigenous peoples and local communities to communicate their role in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to show how their activities contribute to the implementation of the Convention and other biodiversity-related conventions. In this regard, communication should encourage indigenous peoples and local communities to promote their activities in the context of national implementation of the Convention and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

But the work of indigenous peoples and local communities should also be seen as the source for original and inspiring messages and practices for the conservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use. In this regard, communication should seek to encourage indigenous peoples and local communities to celebrate, promote and communicate traditional knowledge related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at the local, national, regional and global levels.

#### **D. The public and important stakeholder groups**

32. It is frequently said that the work of the Convention needs to be communicated in a way that makes it relevant to the “public.” While it is true that the audience for communication is a global one and should encompass everyone, it is also clear that the notion that a single public to whom all messages could be directed is overly simplistic and hides some important differences between audience segments. The so-called “public” is in fact a number of different audience segments divided by country, gender, socioeconomic level and languages. Therefore, any attempt to reach out to the public requires an appropriate approach.

33. The most important segmentation for the public remains at the national level. An understanding of biodiversity, environmental functions and ecosystem services and their relevance to the general public is very much shaped by national circumstances and national “narratives” about people and nature and how biodiversity provides them with values. Therefore, any attempt to engage the public needs to be crafted at the national level, based on an overarching narrative. This means that national-level campaigns are an important level for organization.

34. Important ways to reach the public are through consultations, awareness campaigns and the media – radio, television and print forms, and social media in particular. In this way, the media should be seen as a multiplier and a channel, rather than an audience in itself. The media seeks to produce content that will reach the public, and, therefore, any work to engage the media should take this perspective.

35. Media partnerships should be explored at the international and national levels to develop and transmit stories related to the implementation of the strategic plan. News organizations, such as Mongabay, Now This, Thomson Reuters, Deutsche Welle, Xinhua, and the BBC, should be approached. Partnerships with film and television production organizations, such as National Geographic, Netflix and Amazon, should also be explored.

36. Media engagement can be an extremely broad effort. To ensure the best use of resources, communications efforts should focus on a number of the segments of the media that link to some of the engagement groups indicated in this strategy, including:

- (a) Media that covers environmental policy;
- (b) Media that covers consumer issues (lifestyles, livelihood and sustainability);
- (c) Media that focuses on conservation issues;
- (d) Media that is science-focused;
- (e) Media that focuses on business;
- (f) Media that disseminates current events to the wider public.

37. There are also particular stakeholder groups that require a focused engagement:

(a) Youth is a key audience as well. It can be reached via work through United Nations system-wide activities related to youth, by enhancing the Green Wave programme and other similar initiatives as tools for implementation of the Decade, through use of social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, YouTube, and via contests and competitions, including painting, photography and essays;

(b) As women are key stakeholders in both conservation and sustainable use of resources, special focus should be made in mainstreaming gender in all engagements.

### **E. Resource persons and institutions**

38. This audience segment is the variety of communities of experts and institutions in different scientific and technical domains who generate and disseminate knowledge that supports the implementation of the Convention. Reaching out to them is important to ensure that the best available scientific knowledge is being generated and used in support of the Convention. Also, this community of experts commands a great deal of respect by the public and their messages can generate a great deal of support for the Convention. It is important to ensure that their messages are aligned. This group might overlap with the core constituency of the Convention in certain regards, but it has a distinctive identity.

### **VI. THE COMMUNICATIONS “FLOTILLA” AND OPEN SOURCE PRINCIPLES**

39. The communications strategy will best be realized through the notion of open source materials shared with “multipliers,” which are actors capable of rebroadcasting messages and communications efforts to new regions, target groups and communications spaces. As the scope of the strategy is global, with important national and subnational nuances, the list of multipliers is broad. The groups mentioned in the above section are some of those multipliers, but others can be identified. An example of mobilization that should structure the work of the strategy can be found in the work of the “flotilla,” created in 2020. A description of the flotilla appears below.

40. As a result of the meeting of experts held on the margins of the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, on 21 and 22 November 2019, a group of organizations encompassing Parties to the Convention, United Nations agencies, secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, civil society organizations, youth, women and indigenous peoples and local communities coalesced into an ad hoc group for communications coordination referred to as the “flotilla.” The term comes from the Cambridge Conservation Initiative meetings of 2018.

41. The group has a low cost of participation in terms of human resources, with members free to participate in some elements and not others. The principle of open source governs the products shared by the group with inclusivity, transparency and neutrality as important elements. The focus has been on promoting the biodiversity/nature agenda with the goal of supporting the negotiations of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Messages for the group are being developed over the course of meetings and activities in the year, with different organizations providing their contributions.

42. Coordination and organization mechanisms for the group include an email list, a WhatsApp group, weekly meetings of the group and ad hoc small working groups to address different topics. If resources became available, then staff to serve as Sherpa and their support staff could be mobilized. The group identified the following tactics:

- (a) Partner activation moments: including international days and other commemorative occasions;
- (b) Produce open source content (assets, posts, pics, videos, stories);
- (c) Recognize member strengths, including model petitions, science leaders, influencer networks, network strengths and educational communities;
- (d) Focus on peak moments, major events and moments;
- (e) Media partners would be engaged by flotilla members;
- (f) Some members of the flotilla could produce a white paper and carry out other advocacy activities on behalf of a strong communications target in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
- (g) Promote new and unexpected voices;
- (h) Target-specific tactics (such as business, faith, parliamentarians);
- (i) Merge climate and biodiversity discussions.

## VII. EVENTS

43. Events represent important communications opportunities, where messages can be disseminated to a variety of audiences, in a setting which is usually media-rich and of interest to a variety of communities. Large international conferences about the biodiversity agenda have typically been the main focus of communications to date. These remain important opportunities to carry out the agenda, but they are not the only opportunities. Meetings include the following:

- (a) Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (b) Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- (c) Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the other biodiversity-related conventions;
- (d) The annual sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, including the High-level Political Forum;
- (e) Meetings of the International Union for Conservation of Nature;
- (f) Meetings of the World Economic Forum.

44. National events that may be related to the biodiversity agenda, but distinct from it, represent important communications opportunities as well. National cultural celebrations or celebrations of independence should also be used to show the linkage of biodiversity with national identity.

45. United Nations and other important international days also represent important events during which the work of the Convention can be noted and celebrated. For these international days, messaging should be aligned in a way that shows how implementation of the Convention can contribute to the goals for each day. Some of the most important days to consider include the following: World Wetlands Day, World Wildlife Day, World Water Day, International Day of Forests, International Woman's Day, World Health Day, Earth Hour, Oceans Day, Earth Day, Mother Earth Day, World Environment Day, World Day to Combat Desertification, and World Food Day.

46. The International Day for Biological Diversity, on 22 May of each year, should also be an extremely important event for implementation of any communications. Guided by the theme determined by the Executive Secretary, national-level actors should use the day as an opportunity to articulate national visions and responses.

## VIII. PROCESS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATING OF THE STRATEGY

47. The strategy will need to be developed in a participatory, iterative and flexible manner, taking advantage of the views of different organizations and stakeholders, with adjustments made at certain important moments. The development should be led by advice and consultations at the international level, led by the Executive Secretary, which then inform further consultations that take place at the regional, national and subnational levels. Throughout the consultations, the active participation of indigenous peoples and local communities is important, as is the need to ensure that gender considerations are fully incorporated.

48. The review will have, as terms of reference, the following:

- (a) Keep under review the communications strategy agreed as per the decision of the Conference of the Parties;
- (b) Outline and evaluate the major communications activities that have taken place, seeking to identify best practices, changes in baseline data on awareness and impact and effectiveness;
- (c) Identify new areas for communication, or the need to adjust existing strategies;
- (d) Track communication against progress on targets, goals and the 2030 mission;
- (e) Identify new actors or partners to be approached;
- (f) Identify resource needs.



49. Moments for review will be regular and iterative. It is suggested that they include the following times. Some of these moments can be combined if appropriate:

- (a) Immediately after adoption of the text of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
- (b) Ahead of meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation;
- (c) Ahead of meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
- (d) Once at an annual meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee for Communication, Education and Public Awareness;
- (e) On an annual basis as part of the regular meetings of the Biodiversity Communications Flotilla;
- (f) On an annual basis as part of a United Nations communications group on biodiversity;
- (g) At least biennially at meetings of the Joint Liaison Group, the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the Environment Management Group;
- (h) On an annual basis at the national and subnational levels, as part of a national review of action under the Convention.

50. The latter point shows that Parties will need to create review bodies at the national and/or subnational level. The mandate for review could also be established under existing communication bodies, or as part of existing work for national reporting or the updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

#### **IX. SOCIAL MEDIA CONSIDERATIONS**

51. The strategy will need to take advantage of existing social media and new technologies. An exhaustive list of the technologies to use is not appropriate, given that the platforms for these vary across regions and that the pace of change in the field of social media is such that certain platforms are rendered irrelevant over time. Nevertheless, implementation of this strategy should seek to incorporate the most up-to-date platforms and technologies, including through corporate partnerships. The security of data, and protection of all rights to privacy of users as covered in different legislation needs to be taken into account.

#### **X. RESOURCES**

52. The indicative level of resources for this strategy is to be determined as the plan is further elaborated. Resources will be needed at the international level for use by the Executive Secretary and relevant international actors. Resources will also be needed at the national and subnational levels for use in national level work.

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