



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

CBD/COP/14/INF/25
1 November 2018

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fourteenth meeting

Item 24 of the provisional agenda*

Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, 17-29 November 2018

SAFEGUARDING SPACE FOR NATURE AND SECURING OUR FUTURE: DEVELOPING A POST-2020 STRATEGY

Note by the Executive Secretary

INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a proposal for a comprehensive and participatory preparatory process and timetable for the follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting (decision XIII/1, para. 34). At its twenty-first meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Technical, Technological and Scientific Advice requested the Executive Secretary, when preparing proposals for the process of developing a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to make provisions for sound analytical work in order to ensure that this framework is based on the best available evidence (recommendation XX/1, para. 8).

2. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, an information document with the final version of the outcomes of the international symposium on ‘Safeguarding space for nature and securing our future: developing a post-2020 strategy’, held in London on 27 and 28 February 2018. A preliminary version of this information document was circulated for the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/36).

3. The symposium was hosted by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and the National Geographic Society (NGS), in partnership with BirdLife International, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The report is being circulated in the form and language in which it was received by the Secretariat.

* CBD/COP/14/1.

**REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:
SAFEGUARDING SPACE FOR NATURE AND SECURING OUR FUTURE: DEVELOPING A
POST-2020 STRATEGY**

1. As part of the process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and in support of IUCN Resolution WCC-2016-Res-096-EN¹ on ‘Safeguarding space for nature and securing our future: developing a post-2020 strategy’, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and National Geographic Society (NGS), in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), BirdLife International, UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), hosted a two-day public symposium from 27th to 28th February 2018 in London, UK.
2. The Symposium² brought together 250 participants from 22 different countries, including the Executive Secretary and senior staff from the CBD Secretariat, and leading conservation scientists, conservation practitioners, policymakers, business leaders, civil society and donors. The key objectives of the meeting were to: (i) review the science informing future area-based conservation targets; (ii) evaluate the implications of various policy options for delivering area-based conservation; (iii) provide balanced, evidence-based recommendations to Parties to the CBD and other intergovernmental policy processes; and (iv) raise awareness of the need for a more ambitious, holistic and effective strategy to safeguard space for nature, incorporating protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.
3. Under Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, governments have agreed that “By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape”. It is known with some certainty that this target is not adequate to halt biodiversity loss. Consequently, efforts are now underway to identify what space needs to be conserved in order to sustain humans and the rest of life on Earth and how this can be achieved. Over the next two years, governments will be reviewing implementation of the current Strategic Plan and considering the elements of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework to meet the Convention’s 2050 Vision. The symposium aimed to inform that process.
4. This information document includes a summary of the key messages that resulted from the Symposium and the papers presented for consideration by Parties to the CBD. Key messages that resulted from the meeting are:
 - (a) A revised strategic plan should include a focus on evidence-based requirements needed for area-based conservation and sustainable use, which should lead to clear area-based targets for biodiversity, ecosystem services and ecological processes with effective management. There was much discussion of the question of how much (percentage area) should be protected and conserved with widespread agreement that the current 17 per cent terrestrial and freshwater and 10 per cent marine goals were not sufficient.
 - (b) While there has been extensive and rapid expansion of protected areas reported by Parties to the CBD³, evidence suggests that Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 is unlikely to be achieved comprehensively by 2020, especially when considering the essential qualitative elements.
 - (c) When considering approaches to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, it is essential to recognise and report on all protected and conserved areas, including those conserved privately, or by indigenous peoples and local communities. Post-2020 provides an opportunity to identify, recognize and report on

¹ See IUCN Resolution [WCC-2016-Res-096-EN](#)

² See Symposium webpage <https://www.zsl.org/science/whats-on/safeguarding-space-for-nature-and-securing-our-future-developing-a-post-2020>

³ See <https://www.protectedplanet.net/c/about>

‘other effective area-based conservation measures’ (OECMs⁴) to ensure that *de facto* effective conservation beyond protected areas is supported. Many of the remaining intact areas of the planet, outside the existing protected areas estate, are held and managed by indigenous peoples and community groups⁵. Recognition of the critical importance of these lands and waters, and of the existing traditional governance systems, was a key message to take into account for future area-based targets.

(d) There is an urgent need to focus the establishment of protected areas on their ability to make a significant difference to biodiversity conservation. There is an ongoing problem of establishing protected areas primarily in locations where there is little conflict with other land uses, resulting in a bias to conserving more remote sites, both on land and sea^{6,7}. More ambitious efforts are needed to establish protected areas in places that are important for the persistence of biodiversity, and that make a conservation difference. While areas of importance for biodiversity are part of Target 11, they have not yet received sufficient attention. Areas that are of particular importance for the persistence of biodiversity are now well-defined globally, especially Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)⁸, equivalent national priorities, Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) and other priority areas determined through systematic conservation planning. These are essential sites for biodiversity conservation, albeit recognising that securing only these sites will not be sufficient for achieving global conservation goals.

(e) It is now well demonstrated that protected areas can be very effective in conserving biodiversity and they remain the key tool for in-situ conservation. However, too many protected areas are not effectively conserving biodiversity due mainly to a lack of adequate investment and support. Drivers of positive biodiversity outcomes in protected areas are not just based on their placement and size, but also their good governance, including equity and a lack of corruption, sound management, including adequate funding, staff and training, and sound ecological design, including ecological connectivity. When these elements are in place, protected areas are highly effective. The IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas⁹ is a new global standard for protected areas management and has already been used in over 25 countries.

(f) The symposium included a rich discussion and debate about the merits of percentage area targets. These included presentations on Nature Needs Half¹⁰, a comparison of the Half Earth vs Whole Earth concepts¹¹, and a call to protect 30 per cent marine reserves or no-take zones. There were site-specific presentations on the need to keep 80 per cent forest cover in the Amazon to maintain the ecosystem, on the success of Bhutan in protecting over half of the country in an interconnected way, and on enhancing nature protection in cities such as London, UK. There was also a suggestion to shift the agenda from simplistic targets to bold, ecologically defined nature retention targets.

(g) Concerns about large percentage area targets centred on the following issues: i) what is the overall goal of a large percentage area target? ii) if we protected half the earth, what happens to the other half? iii) what will be the impacts on peoples if we establish large-scale conservation targets and is this achievable or desirable from a socio-economic perspective? and iv) how can an ambitious conservation agenda be achieved given the enormous levels of projected infrastructure development and need for more land and sea for food production?

⁴ IUCN & WCPA (2018). (Draft) Guidelines for Recognizing and Reporting Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures. IUCN, Switzerland. Version 1.

⁵ Garnett, S.T. *et al.* (2018). A spatial overview of the global importance of Indigenous lands for conservation. *Nature Sustainability*. Vol. 1, pp.369-374.

⁶ Venter, O. *et al.* (2018). Bias in protected-area and its effects on long-term aspirations of biodiversity conventions. *Conservation Biology*. Vol. 32, pp.127-134.

⁷ Pimm, S.L., Jenkins, C.N., Li, B.V (2018). How to protect half of Earth to ensure it protects sufficient biodiversity. *Science Advances*. Vol. 4, pp. 2616

⁸ IUCN (2016). A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas, Version 1.0. First edition. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

⁹ IUCN & WCPA (2016). IUCN Green List Standard of Protected and Conserved Areas: User Manual, Version 1.0. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

¹⁰ See for example the [Nature Needs Half](#) campaign or [Half Earth](#).

¹¹ Büscher, B. *et al.* (2017) Half Earth or Whole Earth: Radical ideas for conservation, and their implications. *Oryx*. Vol. 51, pp. 407-410.

(h) While many acknowledged the contribution percentage area targets had made in terms of focusing on protected area growth, the primary concern with percentage area targets was that these forced a focus on quantity and not quality. There was clear agreement that both quality and quantity are needed: i) if biodiversity loss is to be halted, we must have ambitious scaling up of the percentage area targets for in-situ conservation and this should be informed by science that defines what nature needs; ii) that biodiversity conservation is part of the wider sustainable development agenda; iii) that the evolving understanding of protected and conserved areas is better accounting for People's needs and ensuring equity; iv) targets must be driven by goals that are aimed at securing quality areas for biodiversity conservation; and v) protected and conserved areas must be planned and managed as conservation networks which include areas for ecological connectivity. Finally, there was recognition that there could not be a one-size-fits-all approach to percentage area targets.

(i) There was strong agreement on an increasing focus on ecological connectivity in the next generation of conservation targets. Connectivity is required for sustaining many species in all stages of their life cycles, for genetic health and to respond to a changing climate. We need to move from individual protected and conserved areas to ecological networks. There is much good work globally on ecological connectivity, but work is needed to establish global standards and measurable targets for connectivity conservation.

(j) There was a key debate on sparing land for nature versus addressing critically important questions of how to meet rising human demands for agriculture. This debate has been primarily around the real and perceived impacts of protected areas on human populations and what this might mean with significantly increasing conservation needs and significantly increasing human populations. Evidence was presented that demonstrated that a land sparing approach coupled with restoration approaches resulted in more effective biodiversity conservation¹². There was also a range of arguments that many types of protected and conserved areas are effective at conserving biodiversity while supporting traditional lifestyles. One view is that the land-sparing versus land-sharing debate was perhaps unnecessarily polarised and there was considerable room to accommodate human needs within protected areas while making nature conservation the overarching priority.

(k) Including areas of importance for ecosystem services, including provisioning, regulating and supporting functions, should complement conservation planning. The relationship between areas important for biodiversity and areas important for ecosystem services is complex. However, some areas are important for both and can be considered conservation priorities. There is a need to use landscape scale and marine spatial planning to safeguard, buffer, connect and maintain biodiversity and the essential ecosystem functions and services that sustain human livelihoods and planetary health.

(l) The discussions around the different aspects of "space for nature" converged on the understanding that the spatial requirements of conserving the most important areas for biodiversity, in addition to essential ecosystem services, would not only be much greater than the current coverage targets under Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, but would require a more integrated strategy that extends beyond protected and conserved areas. A healthy planet requires that the most important areas are conserved, restored and connected through ecologically functional landscapes and seascapes under a range of management and governance approaches. This must also incorporate Aichi Biodiversity Target 5, Target 7 and Target 15 and recognise that the achievement of a range of other targets focused on sustainable consumption and production – including those under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other conventions and policy processes – is key to reducing the threats to and impacts on space for nature.

(m) The successful mobilisation of financial and other resources is essential to implementation of area-based targets in a post-2020 biodiversity framework and may be enhanced with innovative and international sourcing of financing for biodiversity across all sectors, as well as a focus on removing harmful subsidies and financial disincentives.

¹² Phalan, B. Onial, M., Balmford, A., Green, R.E (2011). Reconciling food production and biodiversity conservation: Land Sharing and Land Sparing Compared, *Science*. Vol. 333, pp.1289-1291.

(n) Safeguarding space for nature should be inclusive and equitable, and needs to consider all stakeholders¹³. Key to this will be the consideration of the human dimension in nature conservation and empowerment of communities to conserve their environment whilst supporting human rights.

(o) Despite some of the apparently diverging perspectives, a common ground emerged upon which to start to build an optimal framework and a transformative plan on space for nature that can be implemented from global to local scales. Positive and common messaging about the role of space for nature in the conservation of both biodiversity and ecosystem services, supported by science and coordinated public and political communication strategies, will be key to the joint development and implementation of a strong and effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

¹³ Holmes, G., Sandbrook, C., Fisher, J.A (2017). Understanding conservationists' perspectives on the new-conservation debate. *Conservation Biology*, Vol. 31, pp.353-363.