



CONCEPT NOTE

“Building back better: protecting biodiversity, combating land degradation and mitigating climate change to reduce the risks of future pandemics”

Webinar conference jointly organized by the Government of Egypt and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

10 September 2020, 3-5 p.m. (Cairo time, GMT+2)

The COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call for humanity. The degradation of ecosystems, the loss of biodiversity and its unsustainable use has increased the risk of disease spillover from wildlife to livestock and from animals to people. Climate change exacerbates this danger and increases the risks from vector-borne diseases.

Our response to the pandemic, and the way we plan and implement the recovery from its economic and social impacts, can determine whether the world continues on its unsustainable trajectory, or whether we collectively seek a new future, one of living in harmony with nature.

This webinar will highlight the links between the health of the planet and the health of people and explore how the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, combating land degradation, and fighting climate change can help to reduce the risks of future pandemics as part of an inclusive and comprehensive “One Health” approach.

The webinar will feature contributions by the executive secretaries of the conventions on biodiversity, climate change and land degradation, as well as experts from relevant United Nations agencies. It will be led by the Minister of Environment of Egypt in her capacity as the current President of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The webinar will examine the need for action in three phases:

- Taking immediate steps needed to protect the environment during the pandemic and in its immediate wake;
- Building actions to address biodiversity loss, land degradation and climate change into stimulus packages to contribute to a just and sustainable socioeconomic recovery;
- Catalysing the transformational changes needed in economies and societies to “build back better” after the pandemic.

Specifically, the webinar will address the following questions:

- What is the role of ecosystem conservation and restoration and other “nature-based solutions” in providing jobs during the recovery and in reducing the risk of future pandemics while also contributing to climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and land degradation neutrality?
- How can we ensure the harvesting, trade and use of wildlife is just, legal, sustainable and safe?
- What changes in food systems are needed to ensure food security while reducing the risk of future pandemics, and avoiding biodiversity loss, land degradation and climate change?

The outcome of the webinar will be transmitted to the upcoming United Nations Summit on Biodiversity and the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at its third meeting. It will also inform the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to

the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands at their meetings in 2021.

Links and information resources:

[World Health Organization Manifesto for a healthy recovery from COVID-19](#)

[WHO/CBD Questions and Answers on Biodiversity and Infectious Diseases](#)

[Convention on Biological Diversity Guidance on integrating biodiversity into One Health Approaches](#)

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/274b/80e7/34d341167178fe08effd0900/cop-14-afr-hls-04-final-en.pdf>

[Egyptian initiative for a coherent approach for addressing biodiversity loss, climate change, and land and ecosystem degradation](#)
