

Statement from Third World Network

The pandemic has shown that governments can mobilise funds quickly when there is political will. These **recovery funds** need to be supportive of biodiversity, in order to also contribute to health outcomes. We call on developed country Parties to the CBD to close the financing gap by providing **new and additional financial resources** to enable developing country Parties to effectively implement their commitments under the Convention.

However, the continuing debt-austerity nexus in many developing countries has fueled extractivism and impeded CBD implementation. There is a need for **sovereign debt restructuring** in line with CBD objectives, including some level of debt relief that can allow governments to invest in pandemic recovery that is just and sustainable. In particular, we call on the **SBI to conduct a study on the relationship between debt, austerity and CBD implementation, in response to the pandemic.**

Public spending on biodiversity-harmful incentives and subsidies continues to eclipse domestic and international spending on biodiversity initiatives. But, the track record shows that voluntary regulation for corporate and financial actors has had limited impact. There is therefore urgent need to regulate or penalize industries known to damage biodiversity. This means **implementing the “polluter pays principle”, including taxes or levies**, on damaging activities such as extractive industries and industrial agriculture, which may also fuel future pandemics. We also need to **legislate liability regimes** for financial actors, to build in accountability for financial flows, and to **require financial managers to disclose impacts on biodiversity** and make these impacts public. Redirecting of harmful subsidies should be **channeled to support Indigenous, peasant and smallholder stewardship of biodiversity.**

Finally, the third objective of the CBD – the **fair and equitable sharing of benefits** arising from the utilization of genetic resources – and its application to **digital sequence information (DSI)**, is particularly crucial in these times. This objective and the Nagoya Protocol on ABS ensure that when biodiversity samples, including pathogens, are shared between countries and then used to generate profits, the providing countries receive some of the benefits that can result. This can contribute to the system of international movement of pathogen samples that are **reliable for public health purposes**, and which simultaneously respect the sovereign rights of Parties in ways that **promote fairness and equity in access to medicines.**