

# SYNTHESIS OF VIEWS FROM SUBMISSIONS REGARDING AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES IN THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

## BACKGROUND

1. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its fifteenth meeting, in Kunming, China, October 2020, is expected to consider for adoption the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. In decision [14/34](#), the Conference of the Parties adopted a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 framework.
2. Parties and observers have expressed a range of views on the possible scope and content of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework. These include views on: the ambition level for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; the relationship between the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the current Strategic Plan and other relevant processes; the relationship between the Convention and its Protocols; the elements of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, including the conceptual framework, the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, its mission, its strategic goals, biodiversity targets, tools and mechanisms for implementation, review processes, and indicators; participation; mainstreaming and synergies; communication and outreach; and gaps in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 that could be addressed in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. A summary of these views was made available to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting,<sup>1</sup> and an updated version was presented to the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.<sup>2</sup>
3. As part of this ongoing process, it was agreed that regional consultations and thematic workshops would take place as a platform for discussions. The first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group took note of a preliminary list of meetings, consultations and workshops for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and requested that this be further developed and updated.
4. The Thematic Workshop on Area-Based Conservation Measures for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework aims to provide the Co-Chairs of the Working Group with specific and practical inputs to the process. This workshop will elicit views on elements related to area-based conservation measures for inclusion in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. To the extent feasible and appropriate, these proposals will cover the different elements of the framework with particular focus on goals, targets, indicators and baselines, with regards to area-based conservation measures.
5. On several occasions,<sup>3</sup> Parties to the Convention, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations were invited to submit views on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. By November 2019, there were more than 220 submissions received, including 61 from Parties. Of these, at

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<sup>1</sup> [CBD/SBI/2/17](#)

<sup>2</sup> [CBD/POST2020/PREP/1/INF/1](#) and [CBD/POST2020/PREP/1/INF/2](#)

<sup>3</sup> See notifications [2018-063](#), [2019-008](#), and [2019-075](#).

least 48 were related to area-based conservation measures.<sup>4</sup> Some submissions were joint submissions from several Parties and organizations and some Parties and organizations provided more than one submission.

6. The present document has been prepared to support the ongoing post-2020 process, in particular to support the discussions during the Thematic Workshop on Area-Based Conservation Measures. This document synthesizes the views submitted in response to the notifications noted above, specifically those that pertain to area-based conservation measures, and their reflection in goals, targets, sub-targets or indicators for the post-2020 framework. This synthesis does not replace earlier documentation or the submissions on this issue but complements them. It is not intended to be limiting or to prejudge the outcomes of the process for developing the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework but, rather, to facilitate discussion. A compilation of all specific target proposals, including those for area-based conservation measures, was presented to the Twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.<sup>5</sup>

## OVERVIEW OF SUBMISSIONS

### Quantitative targets

7. A majority of submissions regarding an area or site-based conservation target for the post-2020 framework proposed quantitative targets, though nearly all of these also recognised the need for an increased focus on aspects of quality ([see below](#)). The most common quantitative target was a call for 30% (or at least 30%) by 2030; however, one submission recommended tripling the existing targets (to 51% terrestrial and 30% marine) and one called for 35% of land surface to be protected and relatively intact. Some called for this quantitative target to be considered within the wider context of 100% conservation and sustainable use or calls for 100% healthy oceans. There were several submissions referencing a target of 50%, though these were generally referring to a long-term proposal for 2050. Some made reference to the fact that much more than 50% would be required for the maintenance of critical ecosystem services—though these need not rely solely on protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs).

8. Some submissions referred to quantitative targets, not globally, but at the ecoregion or ecosystem/habitat level, for example:

- (a) 15% of each ecoregion;

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<sup>4</sup> Comments related to area-based conservation measures were received from four Parties: Chile, Costa Rica, Nigeria, and Rwanda; as well as from 35 Observers: 30X30 Ocean Alliance—Conservation International, Campaign for Nature, National Geographic Society, Oceans 5, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and Wildlife Conservation Society; Avaaz; BirdLife International; BirdLife International, Conservation International, Fauna & Flora International, Global Wildlife Conservation, National Geographic Society, Natural Resources Defense Council, The Nature Conservancy, Panthera, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund International, Wyss Campaign for Nature, UN Foundation, and the Zoological Society of London; Campaign for Nature; Center for Large Landscape Conservation; Center for Large Landscape Conservation (CLLC) and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW); China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development; EcoNexus; EcoNexus and the Global Forest Coalition; Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand; Friends of the Earth International; Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales; Future Earth; Global Partnership for Plant Conservation; Global Wildlife Conservation; Greenpeace International; GRULAC Non-Governmental Organizations. Buenos Aires meeting; International Coral Reef Initiative; IUCN; IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas; KBA Partnership; National Geographic Society; National Geographic Society, Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, Wyss Foundation, Resolve and the Center for Large Landscape Conservation; PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency; Pew Charitable Trusts, Natural Resources Defense Council, Ocean Unite and Greenpeace; Secretariat of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative at the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability; The Nature Conservancy; Tompkins Conservation; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS); Wildlife Conservation Society; WWF Germany; WWF International; and WWF Switzerland. All of the submissions received are accessible from <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/submissions>.

<sup>5</sup> [CBD/SBSTTA/23/INF/6](https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/submissions)

- (b) 75% of areas important for plant diversity;
- (c) 40% of each type of marine ecosystem/habitat;
- (d) Ensure area protected is in the range of 25-75% per ecoregion;
- (e) 30% of each marine habitat.

9. Some submissions referred only to overall land surface, while others, following the language of Target 11, included terrestrial and inland water environments or referred to freshwater areas. It is not clear if these were suggesting separate targets or indicators for terrestrial and inland waters. For quantitative marine targets, reference was generally to the entire ocean and a few submissions explicitly referenced the need to focus on high seas protection.

10. Many of the submission referenced both protected areas and OECMs. In some there was also specific mention of territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) and locally managed marine area (LMMAs), as well as broader calls for the recognition of the contribution to biodiversity of areas managed by indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC). Some submissions also referred to the need for a future target to specify fully or highly protected areas, which relates to the degree of extractive or destructive activities allowed. In one submission a distinction was made between protected areas under IUCN category V and VI, OECMs, and other protected areas where biodiversity outcomes may be different, and it was recommended that these distinctions be recognised in a post-2020 biodiversity framework.

11. At least two submissions recommended separate targets for protected areas and OECMs. One recommended 20% in OECMs in addition to 30% of land and sea in protected areas; another recommended a target of 15% coverage by OECMs in addition to 30% of terrestrial and inland waters and 40% of each marine ecosystem/habitat in fully protected areas.

12. Some submissions raised concerns regarding too much focus on global percentage targets. Some noted that a global target focused only on area will be insufficient, some called for thinking beyond simple percentage-based targets. Some examples of concerns mentioned include:

- (a) That a focus only on percentage area targets would create perverse incentives;
- (b) Focus on percentage area targets might draw attention away from the much more important focus on quality aspects;
- (c) Universal percentage targets are inappropriate due to the uneven distribution of biodiversity globally;
- (d) The call for 30% by 2030 is not the most relevant aspect regarding area or site-based conservation;
- (e) Percentage area targets cannot be considered in isolation from quality;
- (f) One simple percentage target does not fit all the various conditions of the world (see below for discussion of ‘Three Global Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use’);
- (g) No global goal or target that addresses only the areal extent of protected areas is going to be large enough or sufficient to achieve a global conservation agenda that includes a critical focus on the intactness (and connectivity) of ecosystems. A goal for the increased extent of protected areas should be seen as essential but insufficient on its own.

13. Many submissions indicated that goals or targets should be established based on desired outcomes, for example “halting biodiversity loss by 2030”. Many included some version of an outcome-oriented target along the lines of: “*document, retain and restore the value of all sites of significance for biodiversity, including key biodiversity areas, through protected areas and other effective area-based*”

*conservation measures,*” in some cases also adding the 30% quantitative figure (e.g. “covering at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water environments and 30% of marine environments”).

### Quality aspects

14. There was near unanimous support for the increased focus on aspects of protected area quality. The following paragraphs summarise some of the information contained in submissions regarding elements of quality to be considered for inclusion. These could, for instance, be reflected in the target itself, or in specific sub-targets (both options were mentioned in submissions).

15. Many submissions referenced the need for systems of protected areas and OECMs to be ecologically representative. Several called for minimum coverage targets to be set for each ecoregion, and a few specified their recommended percentage targets for each (see above). It was also recognised that the same target may not be appropriate for all ecoregions, as some will require higher levels of protection given their importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

16. It was noted in one case that ecoregions are too broad to capture the variability in species composition and endemism, as well as other core elements of biodiversity such as genetic variation and ecological and evolutionary processes. A number of submissions noted that representation needs a focus on species, while others included all biodiversity elements (populations, ecosystems, and ecological processes) as necessary for assessing representation. There were also several mentions of ecological processes in the discussion on representation.

17. Some submissions also specified a range of ecosystems, for which protected areas and OECMs should be representative, for example: coastal, marine, freshwater, terrestrial or forests, grasslands and savannahs, rivers, etc. Others mentioned aspects of biodiversity that are often under-represented, including soil biodiversity, the high seas, and deep sea beds.

18. The majority of submissions made reference to the need for protected areas and OECMs to focus on areas critical for biodiversity, and focus on biodiversity outcomes. It was noted that protected areas and OECMs need to be located where they are most needed, not just where they are easy to declare. Among submissions listing a specific means to identify areas of global importance for biodiversity, the most commonly referenced was key biodiversity (KBAs); this was followed by Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs). There was also some reference to important marine mammal areas (IMMAs), important plant areas (IPAs), areas of high species richness, or areas that are critical for threatened species or ecosystems.

19. There were several calls for the post-2020 target to focus on indicators beyond mere coverage of KBAs, for instance the percentage of KBAs or other sites of global significance for biodiversity in favourable conservation status, or the percentage of species groups and ecosystem types with KBAs comprehensively identified. KBA pressure, state and response monitoring could be used to provide some of this information. It was noted in at least one submission, that KBAs will be necessary but not sufficient to conserve all biodiversity, suggesting that a sub-target be developed for KBAs to complement a broader overarching spatial target.

20. Several submissions also mentioned areas of importance for ecosystem services with respect to the appropriate siting of protected areas and OECMs. However, it was noted that conserving important ecosystem services will often require area-based conservation measures in locations that differ from those of highest biodiversity significance, with local and global benefits not necessarily in the same place. There was also mention that much more than half the Earth’s terrestrial area would be required in order to provide the ecosystem services that people need and currently use. It was noted that maintaining important ecosystem services will require the retention and restoration of remaining natural or near-natural ecosystems outside of protected areas and OECMs.

21. Other suggestions to prioritise the placement of protected areas and OECMs included:

- (a) Focusing on areas of high pressure (in marine environments);
- (b) Including sites important for IPLCs;
- (c) Areas with important populations of threatened or endangered species.

22. There was also some discussion in the submissions regarding targeting highly intact ecosystems for siting of protected areas and OECMs, which was not directly covered in Aichi Target 11 (although it could have been considered under areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services). There was also reference to areas with high ecological integrity and ecologically intact wilderness areas.

23. Several submissions proposed a target for “zero loss of intact ecosystems” and one proposed including a target stating “at minimum, 2020 levels of ecological intactness are maintained or enhanced” and calling for a focus on the most intact areas. However, these specific target proposals, together with the numerous calls to retain and restore remaining natural or near-natural ecosystems are not solely related to protected areas and OECMs, though area or site-based conservation measures would be an important component for achieving these targets.

24. Most submissions indicated that protected areas and OECMs need to be well-connected, and a few made reference to both functional and spatial connectivity across systems. Some submissions argued there should be a specific sub-target for ensuring connectivity, highlighting the need to develop ecological networks and mitigate fragmentation. There were also many references to the need for systems of protected areas and OECMs to be managed, where appropriate, as ecological networks. Some submissions related the importance of connectivity to the maintenance of ecological processes, and in adapting to climate change.

25. There was some indication that a target for ensuring ecological connectivity, may not need to be limited to protected area networks. For example, one submission recommended using connectivity conservation as a model for cross-cutting targets and indicators (outside of just one component of a target on area-based conservation).

26. Some submissions also indicated that a post-2020 target, or sub-target, should include reference to large scale conservation networks that include connectivity, consideration of the movement needs of species, the important of connecting habitats, maintaining climate refugia, and ensuring networks of marine protected areas are ecologically coherent.

27. There were references to the need for effective management, effective protection, or the need for protected areas and OECMs to be well-managed in the majority of the 48 submissions. There was also some reference to the fact that management needs to be sufficient to maintain biodiversity and for achieving conservation outcomes. Some submissions suggested there should be a specific target for fully or highly protected areas. Some focused on specific outcomes, for example:

- (a) Indicating that management needs to ensure functional and healthy ecosystems;
- (b) Should maintain favourable conservation status for target biodiversity features;
- (c) Ensure thriving wildlife and ecosystems;
- (d) Reduce the loss and degradation of natural habitats.

28. In the same vein, there were many submissions highlighting specific aspects important for effective management:

- (a) Better enforcement;
- (b) The need for allocating resources for comprehensive management, including adequate financial resources;

(c) A call for including plans to quantify and mobilize resources sufficient to achieve management objectives;

(d) That the post-2020 GBF should require quantified investment or resource mobilization plans commensurate to the scale of sites' conservation value and its challenges;

(e) That the encroachment of biodiversity-rich protected areas cannot be allowed;

(f) Mechanisms are needed to monitor how effectively the global protected area estate is managed and report on management effectiveness;

(g) Reporting on progress for should avoid counting 'paper parks'.

29. Regarding equity in protected areas and OECMs, many submissions followed the language of Target 11, calling for them to be “equitably managed”, others called for them to be equitably protected and/or conserved. Other language related to equity mentioned in some of the submissions included:

(a) Should be demonstrably equitable, and yielding social outcomes;

(b) There should be a focus on indigenous peoples and local community (IPLC) rights;

(c) Protected areas and OECMs should be managed with all local stakeholders;

(d) Should involve participation of all interest groups;

(e) Strategic capacity development is needed to support effective governance and equity;

(f) There needs to be a respect for human rights.

30. Several submissions also included the importance of governance, one aspect that was not specifically listed in Target 11, though was often discussed in relation to the ‘equitably managed’ component. For example, submissions highlighted the importance of effective governance, the need for protected areas and OECMs to be ‘well governed’, to ensure effective participation, or to ensure the equity and effectiveness of governance.

31. There were fewer references to integration, though at least one-quarter of submissions included some mention of this element. A few submissions called for clarification of “integration into the wider landscape and seascape”, as included under Aichi Target 11. It was noted that the majority of biodiversity exists outside of protected areas and that production landscapes can maintain essential ecosystem functions. There was some mention of the need for landscape and seascape-level conservation at ecologically-relevant scales, or that spatial planning and development activities should be conducted at the landscape/seascape, range-wide or flyway-scale.

32. The importance of sustainable use and/or sustainable management in surrounding production landscapes and seascapes was also noted in some of the submissions. There was also mention of the need for protected areas and OECMs to be mainstreamed within appropriate spatial planning, sectors, and sustainable production and consumption.

33. As noted above, the submissions regarding targets for area-based conservation measures often mentioned that in order for these to be effective, they would need to be included in the context of 100% conservation and sustainable use. There were also several calls for a ‘whole landscape approach’ or a “whole earth” approach, where remaining natural or near-natural ecosystems are retained and restored, and protected areas and OECMs are integrated alongside corridors, buffer zones, and socio-ecological production landscapes.

34. One submission noted that restoration areas are not currently a part of protected area or OECM definitions, though it was not clear whether they were recommending that it should be included.

35. There were several submissions that mentioned the fact that levels of human modification vary significantly from place to place, implying that different types of conservation action and different targets

for area-based conservation measures may be necessary. These submissions often followed the ‘Three Global Conditions for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use’ or a related approach as a practical implementation framework for area-based conservation and sustainable use. According to this proposal, the world can be divided between:

(a) Highly populated, highly modified area, which require mainstreaming protected areas and OECMs, appropriate spatial planning, sustainable production and sustainable consumption, etc.

(b) Open landscapes with moderate human modification, where systems of protected areas and OECMs should be developed targeting ecological representation and areas important for biodiversity, conserving all existing native species and supporting ecological processes, etc. Ecological restoration may also be necessary for ensuring connectivity;

(c) Wild places, where the aim is to maintain ecological intactness, all native species and ecological processes, in addition, protecting global-scale ecological processes.

36. A similar concept discussed in one submission is ecological-functional zoning, where areas are divided between ecological, production and living spaces, which reflect a gradient of human impacts and justify different conservation goals.

37. Other issues that were mentioned in submissions included:

(a) Areas with semi-intact ecosystems where IPLC live should be recognised as OECMs, and such areas should avoid being marked as protected areas;

(b) The critical role of IPLC needs to be recognised with respect to OECMs, as does the importance of traditional/local knowledge;

(c) There should be implementation of a “non-regression principle”, for example avoiding reductions, loss of status, etc., which could be captured by assessments of protected area downgrading, downsizing, and degazettement (PADDD);

(d) Guidance is needed on the establishment of protected areas and OECMs based on their importance for biodiversity, representation and management effectiveness.

38. Regarding indicators it was noted that they need to be measurable and unambiguous, and should be focused on outcomes. There was concern raised in one submission that where an indicator does not align closely with the desired outcome, actions tend to focus on maximizing the value of the indicator, rather than seeking the desired outcome, and recommended measures of ‘quality’ (e.g., species abundance, biodiversity intactness, or forest degradation) rather than indicators of areal-extent. Other issues that were raised relating to indicators included:

(a) Using percent cover of protected areas, without further qualification, is inappropriate;

(b) There is a need for better quantitative ways to measure and track all elements, not just percent cover (with a focus on biodiversity outcomes);

(c) There is a need for measurable indicators for representativeness;<sup>6</sup>

(d) Indicators should be explicitly quantified at the national scale;

(e) Indicators should be based on data that can be measured regularly.

39. Some more specific indicator suggestions included:

(a) Percent of KBAs in favourable conservation status;

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<sup>6</sup> The submission indicates that they have developed a method to quantify representativeness; though it was not included in the submission.

- (b) Percent of species groups and ecosystem types with KBAs comprehensively identified;
  - (c) PADDD as key performance metric for protected areas and OECMs;
  - (d) Indicators focused on the state of biodiversity could include species abundance, biodiversity intactness, and degradation, among others;
40. There were also a range of indicators suggested for assessing connectivity conservation:
- (a) The number, percentage, and total area of protected areas and OECMs that are connected, where necessary and appropriate, to each other;
  - (b) Number of individual, and combined proportions, of connectivity conservation areas in terrestrial, marine, and freshwater habitats;
  - (c) Rate of decrease in fragmentation, and increase in restoration and connectivity of terrestrial, marine, and freshwater habitats;
  - (d) Number of countries, their laws, regulations, and policies, and the number of implementing initiatives that discourage fragmentation and encourage connectivity conservation;
  - (e) Number of countries, communities, and partners working on and encouraging connectivity conservation;
  - (f) Number of linear infrastructure development projects that avoid connectivity conservation areas, and/or, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for reducing the risks to ecological connectivity.
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