

Statement by David Cooper, Acting Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Ministerial Meeting

Environment and climate sustainability: land degradation, ecosystem restoration, biodiversity and sustainable and resilient integrated water resource management

28 July 2023

Honourable Minister Shri Bhupender Yadav,
Excellencies,
distinguished delegates,

Let me express my sincere appreciation to Minister Yadav for welcoming us all here in this beautiful country, so rich in biological and cultural diversity, for his leadership of this G20 process and for the opportunity to deliver an address at this meeting.

It is fitting that the G20 be led by Indonesia, India and Brazil, three of the most biodiverse countries on the planet – countries that are also currently demonstrating strong leadership in protecting biodiversity and using it for sustainable development.

This G20 meeting comes at the halfway point to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are seriously off-track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and we know that the ongoing loss of biodiversity accentuates inequality and jeopardizes further progress.

Consequently, alongside climate action and efforts to combat land degradation, pollution and waste, we must halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity.

Last December, in Montreal, the world community came together and adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework with a mission to do just that.

This was a major success for multilateralism. I would like to acknowledge in that regard the efforts of all G20 countries, and China and Canada, in particular.

The G20 and its members must now play a leading role to build upon the success of Montreal and ensure that we move from agreement to action.

In this context, we very much welcome the strong support for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework reflected in the draft outcome document.

Going forward, we need two things: first, bold leadership at the national level; and second, continued and strengthened international cooperation.

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Turning first to the national level, each country must now translate the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework into national targets, update their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, develop policy measures and concrete actions to achieve the targets and mobilize the resources needed.

To be effective, this must be done through a whole-of-government approach, engaging all ministries beyond that of the environment. It must also be done through a whole-of-society approach, with the active participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society and business, among others.

This is a major opportunity to ensure synergies with national plans addressing climate change, land degradation, water security, sustainable agriculture and food security.

This also provides an opportunity for reforming subsidies and other incentives to lever the transformation of economies and enable a just transition towards sustainability. Currently, most countries spend more on destroying biodiversity than on protecting it, and this must change.

This is a time for G20 countries to lead by example, and to inspire others to act.

We hope that all G20 countries will complete their national targets and national biodiversity strategies and action plans and share the results well before the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in October 2024.

Turning to the international level, we need to further strengthen cooperation, so that countries can support one another to advance implementation.

Over time, countries will report on their national targets and actions to achieve them, and the Conference of the Parties will periodically review progress, starting at its sixteenth meeting, so that responses may be adjusted as needed.

This review will provide opportunities for countries to learn from the experience of others, and benefit from the strengthened mechanisms for capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation mandated by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting.

Perhaps most obviously, international cooperation is needed to mobilize the financial resources to support and enable action.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework includes specific targets to mobilize \$200 billion by 2030 from all sources, including \$30 billion in flows from developed to developing countries by 2030, with a near-term target of \$20 billion by 2025.

We need to see early progress towards these targets from G20 members. To foster confidence among all Parties, I hope that we can find ways to increase information and transparency about the contributions of countries.

The recent agreement by the Global Environment Facility Council to establish the new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund is an important step forward. That the Global Environment Facility was able to respond positively to the request from the Conference of the Parties within six months is, I believe, a sign of the determination among Parties to make the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework a success.

We now need to capitalize and operationalize the new Fund, and we look forward to further progress at the Global Environment Facility Assembly in Vancouver, next month. Hopefully, the first projects can be approved before the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, next year.

Countries will also need to work together to further facilitate resource mobilization through the advisory committee that the Conference of the Parties has set up for that purpose.

Countries must also find common ground to further develop the multilateral mechanism for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund. This would not only support the implementation of the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol, but also facilitate the work under other international agreements on agriculture, health and biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Achieving the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework will not be easy, but it is necessary.

It is necessary to ensure food security and water security, to reduce the risk of future pandemics and to contribute to climate action and the fight against desertification. It is necessary to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The world is looking at G20 countries for leadership.

Comprising the world's largest economies, the G20 members have the biggest impacts on biodiversity, and several members are megadiverse countries.

This group, therefore, has a major responsibility to ensure the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

With bold national action and stronger international cooperation, we can halt and reverse biodiversity loss and put nature on a path to recovery.

I thank you.
