



## Inputs for Preparations of the Post-2020 Strategic Plan

September, 2017

IUCN presents inputs and observations for consideration by the Secretariat in response to CBD notification “Preparations of the Post-2020 Strategic Plan” of June 15, 2017.

In making suggestions for consideration for the post 2020 Strategic Plan, IUCN acknowledges that the current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 has many strengths and that a great deal for biodiversity conservation has been achieved following its adoption. It should also be noted that there is a need to continue to work urgently towards achievement of the current set of Aichi Targets because evidence at this point shows that we are still far from reaching them.

### The conservation imperative

The conservation imperative remains. Biodiversity loss continues; the *Earth's sixth mass extinction* is so severe that humanity must take measures to address the decimation of biodiversity immediately. Conservation actions are having significant impacts in reducing this loss, but are not yet implemented at sufficient scale to stabilise and ultimately reverse current trends.

The loss of biodiversity can lead to loss of ecosystem services, loss of well-being, loss of livelihoods and have severe consequences for humanity. Resource scarcity and its implications for livelihoods are not the sole cause of violent conflict but it is clear that they contribute to insecurity, conflicts and migration flows by increasing the vulnerability of certain populations.

IUCN believes that a new thinking about biodiversity is necessary to ensure that we have “business unusual”. There will be a need for the new post 2020 framework to be bold and daring, while being rigorously underpinned by science.

In looking forward, IUCN believes that we will need to consider not only the content of the Strategic Plan (the **what**) but also **how** it will be achieved. It is also important to articulate **why** biodiversity conservation is important. We believe that in addition to ‘fostering commitments and strengthened implementation’ this will require new approaches and thinking that builds on demonstrated successful approaches and introduces new modalities.

### The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), biodiversity conservation and sustainable use need to be understood in a way that places and leverages the value of biodiversity conservation at the heart of the development mainstream.

The post-2020 global framework for the conservation of nature must therefore not only be fully aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development but also tracked systematically to demonstrate its contributions towards achievement of the SDGs. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 recognised that maintaining biodiversity is essential for sustainable development but this is not yet universally appreciated. A high level of ambition for the conservation of nature will be necessary in order to achieve the SDGs, and this must be made explicit, supported by compelling arguments that it can also be effective.

During the negotiations for the SDGs, IUCN consistently argued for policy coherence between the SDG targets and the Aichi Targets, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure coherent and supportive action. Given that a majority of the Aichi Targets are either fully reflected or echoed in the SDGs (in most cases with a 2020 timeline), IUCN believes that once a new post-2020 biodiversity target framework is agreed those Goals and targets concerned should not only be updated but also be strengthened and meaningfully taken up in the SDG process.

More specifically, IUCN feels that comprehensive analyses are required to determine:

- What must be done for biodiversity conservation to achieve the SDGs (across the entire 2030 Agenda)?
- What are the synergies and trade-offs between intact nature delivering ecosystem goods and services, biodiversity conservation, and delivery of the SDGs? How will these change with regard to the projected increase in the world's population and in the climate change context?
- How can the SDGs be implemented in a 'biodiversity conscious' manner? (in other words, we need to identify and mitigate the activities that could be damaging to biodiversity and thus compromise the achievement of some SDGs, but that support implementation of others).
- Are all aspects concerning the links between biodiversity and sustainable development captured in the SDG targets or are there important elements missing?

IUCN believes that such analyses (with options) would inform the content of the new Strategic Plan and enhance the synergies and policy coherence between the two frameworks; we urge that this issue be addressed under Agenda Item 3 of SBSTTA21.

In addition, IUCN believes that it is essential to build synergies in both implementation and reporting. Following agreement of the new biodiversity framework (at CBD COP15 in 2020) a mechanism should be agreed that allows simultaneous reporting towards the SDG Goals and targets.

### **The Vision for 2050**

IUCN agrees that the Vision for 2050 needs to be 'translated' into more tangible terms as intended with the discussion at COP14 on the "long-term strategic directions to the 2050 Vision for biodiversity". The current Vision is, in terms of content and scope, satisfactory; it is nevertheless phrased in passive and not active language. We feel that a long-term Vision for biodiversity conservation needs to be more specific, forward looking and enabling; more of a 'call to action'. It should communicate why all of this matters to people. It should be coupled with the possibility of enabling political and tangible commitments to be offered by Parties to facilitate implementation (see below).

IUCN believes strongly that a link needs to be clearly established between the Vision and Mission in a new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

### **The Mission for 2030**

IUCN believes that the new Mission for the post-2020 Strategic Plan needs to be amended relative to the current one. A new Mission statement for a post-2020 biodiversity framework should be discussed early on; this element is not mentioned in part V. of the Information Note prepared by the Secretariat.

Here are a few considerations on the Mission.

- The post-2020 Mission should constitute an overall science-based target for biodiversity that can be quantified and tracked through implementation;
- For instance, an appropriate equivalent of the 2°C/1.5°C temperature rise cap agreed under the Paris Climate Change Agreement could be explored;
- It is important to recognize however, that the need for more accurate and better scientific information needs to be tempered by the *precautionary principle* and the recognition that action is necessary when threats to biodiversity become apparent and not wait until exhaustive scientific studies have been completed; this is in line with Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration and the CBD's preambular paragraph 9 which reflects such "precautionary approach";
- The Mission should be time bound; the timeframe should be for 2030 to link to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Such a link to the SDGs would in turn make explicit why the Mission is so important - "contributing to achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals";
- We believe that the Mission (like the Vision) should be framed positively;
- It should be succinct (ideally one sentence, if necessary supported by qualifying information);
- Implementation (as now: *take effective and urgent action*) should be upfront;
- Achievability vs. ambition needs to be balanced: establishing a link to the 2050 Vision would allow more ambition; and
- It might help to add specificity and measurability by focusing on the component parts of the definition of biodiversity (i.e. species, ecosystems, genetic diversity).

## **The five Strategic Goals and the Aichi Targets**

**The five Strategic Goals** (encompassing tackling the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, alleviating the direct pressures, improvement of biodiversity status, enhancing the benefits to all, and supporting implementation of responses) is considered by many to be conceptually robust and coherent. IUCN agrees with this view; the five Strategic Goals align well with the widely-used and intuitive DPSIR framework (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impacts, Responses), which we see as valuable in providing logical structure to the current Strategic Plan, and important to retain. Some of the current Aichi Targets, however, are misplaced among the Strategic Goals, e.g. Target 11 on protected areas is clearly an element of response, not of state.

In terms of implementation, it has been observed that progress towards some of the Aichi Targets is more advanced than others. Indeed, the midterm review of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 concluded that that there had been encouraging progress towards meeting some elements of most Aichi Targets; in most cases, however, this progress would not be sufficient to achieve the targets unless further urgent and effective action was taken to reduce the pressures on biodiversity and to prevent its continued decline. IUCN believes that, in line with Decision XIII/1, full analysis of

the reasons for this is carried out. One feature of achievable targets has been the level of quantification and attribution that is possible. Targets that clearly state a measurable goal and ensure accountability by Parties are much further advanced.

Altogether, IUCN considers the full package of the 20 Targets to be well conceived. However, there are some obvious flaws, including imbalances in approaches used in setting the Targets. Below are a few illustrative examples:

- Target 2 on valuation was driven by the high profile of TEEB in 2010; currently the valuation agenda is driven by work on 'natural capital'. There was insufficient information in Target 2 on how biodiversity values were to be incorporated into national accounting systems, and so implementation and reporting have been weak.
- Target 3 on the elimination of harmful subsidies seems to be politically too difficult for countries to have achieved by 2020; going forward, much more information will be needed on formulating practical steps to help achieve such a target.
- Target 11 on protected areas: It is recognised that action has resulted from the incentive to increase coverage of protected areas in response to the % elements of this Target. However, this has often neglected the importance of other elements of the Target critical to, for example, safeguarding key biodiversity areas, and ensuring the vital role of equitable governance.

## **New approaches**

As mentioned, it is time for bold, new and even radical thinking and so it is fortunate that there is a great deal of discussion and interesting creative thinking currently in the post-2020 deliberations.

- Space for nature

The IUCN Hawai'i World Conservation Congress [Resolution 096 Safeguarding space for nature and securing our future: developing a post 2020 strategy](#) anticipated Decision XIII/1. It invites CBD Parties to initiate the process to develop an ambitious post-2020 strategy and calls for the definition of science-based targets. It also calls for a thorough consultation with all sectors and the development of a mechanism for jointly implementing such a strategy to support the SDGs, the UNFCCC, World Heritage and other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and calls on the Director General of IUCN to promote and support the development of this new 2020 strategy.

In recent years, there have been calls to dramatically scale up area-based conservation with calls for large proportions of the planet to be protected in an interconnected way. At the IUCN World Parks Congress in 2012, the Promise of Sydney called for full protection of 30% of the oceans and in the same vein [IUCN Resolution 050](#) from Hawai'i "encourages Parties to the CBD to consider a new process for developing post-2020 targets to increase the percentage of marine areas highly protected to 30% by 2030". These large area-based targets are a significant departure from the existing Aichi Target 11 of at least 17% of land and freshwater and 10% of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Such movements are providing an interesting and positive momentum to the debate and there is no doubt that protection for nature needs to be scaled up. However, such calls have the danger of encouraging the protection of large areas that are under relatively little threat and may not include the most important areas for biodiversity. Post-2020, there will be a need to increase the level of ambition of protected area targets. Far more attention will also

need to be paid to the other elements of Target 11 (or its equivalent) to ensure genuine gains for biodiversity conservation - to ensure the protection of areas of importance for biodiversity conservation in the critical locations where they remain unprotected. Attention will also need to be given so such area-based measures do not inadvertently lead to negative social outcomes.

- National maps

The answer to the question ‘how do we find enough space to feed the world, ameliorate climate change, and conserve biodiversity’ is being debated. Ultimately this “need” must be translated into a geographically explicit rendering of the targets at national level, so that it is clear where the action is needed, and who has the responsibility to take action. In some cases, these spatially explicit goals are included in national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), but it is also clear that most NBSAPs do not translate these goals at a national level, and in many cases, the nationally determined targets are less ambitious than those that Parties have agreed to globally.

- Engaging sectors

There is a compelling case for translating the Aichi Targets to the level of specific businesses and sectors, local and national governments, and other entities. This could facilitate genuine operationalization in practice. Methods to translate such overall targets into specific science-based targets for businesses and other entities need to be developed. This would also facilitate voluntary commitments to be recorded by these entities, and would also enable tracking of performance against commitments and against the overall national and global goals. Interesting progress has been advanced in the development of specific science-based targets for actions by companies and other entities to contribute towards addressing climate change; the development of equivalent specific science-based targets would be hugely beneficial for biodiversity conservation.

- Enhancing the idea of common responsibility by fostering voluntary commitments

Fully aware of the emphasis the CBD places on the responsibilities of each State to conserve and protect biological resources within their national jurisdictions, IUCN is of the view that more weight must be given to the obligation of all States to conserve biodiversity as it constitutes a “common concern” of humankind. In other words, we are all responsible for the fate of our planet’s natural resources. This message could be strengthened by giving more prominence to the importance of national voluntary commitments commensurate with national circumstances but equally bold and ambitious.

- Engaging cities and citizens

Cities can present a wide range of opportunities for the recovery of biodiversity. Nature is also a source of well-being for urban populations and an imperative for cities to adapt to climate change. Citizens should be more aware of their role in enhancing biodiversity through their consumption choices and their daily actions. Incentive policies should be encouraged. Biodiversity must not be only a priority for States and supra-national institutions but also for individuals and communities, ideally, again, through the development of relevant, equitable, specific science-based target.

- Conservation Futures

Other debates taking place focus on the issue of whether the conservation movement should continue to focus on scaling-up of present efforts or whether there is potential for a substantially different approach. These discussions have not yet concluded but IUCN

believes firmly that the answer to this question is that we need both. In other words, conservation needs both qualitative change (to increase the level of response to that required to reverse trends) and quantitative change (to address unanticipated threats such as ocean acidification, novel pollutants such as microplastics and neonicotinoid pesticides, emerging diseases, etc).

- Closing the financial gap

According to estimations, annual global conservation needs are estimated to be USD 300-400 billion, including approximately USD 80 billion to reduce extinction risk for threatened species and safeguard key biodiversity areas, very far from the current flows of funds to conservation estimated around USD 52 billion per year, the greatest part of which being domestic government budgetary spending. Public sector finance and philanthropic capital alone are not sufficient to address the gap and the mobilization of the private sector must continue. An assessment of harmful incentives and regional and national roadmaps for their reform have to be established. Appropriate indexes have to be defined to measure the impacts of investments on biodiversity in order to facilitate the choice of investors in favour of conservation and to unlock significant investment flows into biodiversity initiatives.

### **What is missing?**

IUCN emphasises that the current structure and formulation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Targets have enabled significant progress in biodiversity conservation. However, from IUCN's perspective, some elements are 'missing' from the current Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets and should be considered, as follows:

- Under Strategic Goal B, an extension of Target 6 to encompass sustainable use of terrestrial species would seem to be imperative (this was an issue that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - CITES felt strongly about prior to the adoption of the current targets).
- Under Strategic Goal D, several topics are not explicitly mentioned in the current Plan and could be considered, for instance:
  - The contributions of biodiversity to human health. An additional target on the contributions of biodiversity to human health (pharmaceuticals, medicinal plants, nutrition, ecosystem stability and zoonoses, mental health, health promotion);
  - Links between biodiversity, peace, conflict, and the migration of peoples;
  - Services delivered by soils and their biodiversity;
  - The role of nature in cities;
  - Community (and women) land tenure related issues; and
- Throughout, more attention needs to be given to conservation of biodiversity in freshwater and in the High Seas.

### **Increasing commitments from Parties and stakeholders**

The links between the global targets and the national level targets within the 'flexible framework' needs to be addressed. There is a need to increase a sense of responsibility,

accountability and commitment from Parties and Stakeholders for implementation (i.e. action) without hindering national sovereignty.

Very few Parties have 'mapped' the targets in their NBSAPs to the whole Strategic Plan. It has been IUCN's position for some years now that Parties should be encouraged to develop NBSAPs mapping their proposed contribution at the national level to the global level targets.

In our view, this should be a requirement in the post-2020 period. Each national target should be mapped against all global targets (as appropriate) so that it is clear what the national level contribution to the global target is likely to be. A template could be developed for an "ideal" NBSAP to facilitate this. Monitoring effort needs to be scaled up to assess the likelihood that the national level targets would 'add up' in terms of their impact to the intent of the global target. If, together, the national level targets are not likely to achieve the global target in question, the relevant Parties should be requested to scale up their level of ambition.

IUCN believes that it could be useful to recall the existence of commitments that countries have made across other Conventions which, if implemented, could also positively impact biodiversity. In this way, countries can identify additional sources of progress regarding biodiversity targets when implementing agendas under the umbrella of other key topics such as climate change or desertification. This is also linked to advancing the synergies agenda as mentioned below.

**A lack of information** about achievements at national level (lack of information/ incomplete national reporting) is a constraint. The 'lag time' it takes for biodiversity to respond to, for instance, an improved management regime (and for such an improved status to be measured) is also an issue.

## **Lessons from UNFCCC**

IUCN agrees that there may be useful lessons to learn from the experience of the UNFCCC process in developing the Paris Agreement. Inviting (Intended) Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) from Parties is an example. If appropriate, the necessary decisions could be taken at CBD COP14 in December 2018 calling for the development of 'Biodiversity NDCs' to be submitted by CBD COP15, setting up a process analogous to that which was adopted in the lead up to UNFCCC COP21. This 'bottom up'/ 'voluntary' approach could, if designed carefully, help transform the political landscape of the CBD in a more positive direction by promoting country-led action and collaboration, and provide a more productive template for international/N-S cooperation on biodiversity conservation in the post-2020 period. Likewise, putting in place a rules-based process for conducting 'global stocktakes' to monitor progress on implementation against agreed global biodiversity targets at period intervals, and for countries to periodically enhance global ambition and action over time, could be considered.

Such an approach would also have the benefit of harmonising the Rio Conventions and, ideally, create common reporting frameworks that would maximise synergies and minimise national reporting burdens. Similarly, the CBD could also have useful lessons to take from the Global Climate Action/Marrakech Partnership process to more systematically engage, and take into account the efforts of, non-state actors in contributing to greater biodiversity conservation action on the ground.

## **Synergies**

There is a need to substantially enhance coherence and cooperation between the CBD (and its Protocols), the other two Rio Conventions, and the other biodiversity-related conventions. How can they be leveraged to support the development and implementation of the post-2020 Strategic Plan? IUCN recommends that consideration be given to how these conventions can contribute to the design and planning of the next biodiversity plan so that there is genuine buy-in from their own constituencies and the new targets reflect concerns within those agreements (and not only “respond” to CBD Parties)? This links to the progress of the ‘synergies’ discussion.

IUCN believes that conservation including sustainable management of natural resources is a force for a number of global priorities such as peace, security, food, development, etc. For too long we have talked about these different issues separately. We cannot pull them apart and expect we can deal with one and not the other. We should start to look at how we can cross sectoral lines and be more holistic. That is the key to integrated solutions.

### **In the run-up to 2020**

It is important to note that the next [IUCN World Conservation Congress](#) is scheduled to take place in 2020 (exact place and date will be decided upon in Spring 2018). As part of the preparatory work towards the Congress, IUCN will hold in 2019 so-called Regional Conservation Forums in all IUCN statutory regions. At the RCFs IUCN Members discuss all preparations towards the Congress including matters pertaining to the work Programme of IUCN for the next quadrennium, the potential policy motions to be submitted to the Congress for approval, etc. It is expected that discussions during the 2019 RCFs will also help to inform IUCN’s position vis-à-vis the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

In the run-up to the adoption of a post-2020 biodiversity framework, IUCN Commissions have started to organize themselves to provide technical advice and contribute to IUCN’s efforts in this respect. For instance, the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Species Survival Commission (SSC) have set up dedicated Task Forces to follow-up to this important process.