

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD) NOTIFICATION 2018-063

Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Submission by Australia



Australian Government

NOTE: Information provided in this response has been primarily drawn from Australian Government agency input

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Notification 2018-063 - Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Australia thanks the Secretariat for the invitation to submit initial views on the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (including the resource mobilization component), as communicated in notification 2018-063 Ref.: SCBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538 of 16 August 2018.

Part One:

Parties have been invited to provide initial views on the aspects of the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including

- (a) the scientific underpinning of the scale and scope of actions necessary to make progress towards the 2050 Vision; and
- (b) a possible structure for the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

Part Two:

Parties are invited to review their experiences in implementing Aichi Biodiversity Target 20 as well as the strategy and the targets for resource mobilization, and in using relevant guidance. Parties are asked to build on this review to submit views on the scope and content of the resource mobilization component of the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

Key Points

Australia is pleased to see the outcomes of the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP14) regarding the process to develop a new strategic plan post-2020. Parties need to now translate the agreed processes into that which is appropriate to guide regional, national and sub-national action. Australia is committed to inclusive and broad domestic consultation including: governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), non-government organizations (including those which represent women and youth) and the business and finance sectors, to inform the development of the strategic plan. This consultation will inform Australia's position on the specifics of the new plan and targets.

A key aspect of the post-2020 process will be the consideration of the Article 8(j) work programme and associated institutional arrangements. IPLCs will be engaged early and at critical points along the process, not only in regards to the Article 8(j) process but also the development of the post-2020 framework. IPLCs offer a unique and critical perspective on biodiversity protection and conservation across the world.

It is important to first determine overarching principles for the new framework before discussions get too detailed regarding numbers, percentages and targets. We propose the following high-level approaches to developing the scope and content of the post-2020 framework:

- Build on existing efforts, lessons and successes, domestically and as an international community;

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- Undertake robust and inclusive consultation to inform our position, domestically and as an international community;
- Strive to develop and agree an ambitious but strategic framework, which is flexible and adaptive for Parties to implement according to national circumstances;
- Ensure alignment and cohesion with other international fora and multilateral environment agreements, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Recognise that biodiversity has direct and indirect impacts on human health and wellbeing; and
- Identify clear measurable environmental outcomes from each target and develop indicators that are hierarchical, enabling Parties with different technical capacity to engage productively.

Agreement to a high-level approach will enable discussions to shift to the content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework more quickly and in a more strategic manner.

Part One

Build on existing efforts, lessons learned and successes, domestically and as an international community

The post-2020 framework should be built on existing efforts, lessons learned and successes. The current Aichi targets have provided a valuable framework in which to promote understanding of biodiversity and drive international and domestic action. Parties worked hard to develop and agree the Aichi targets for biodiversity, and significant effort has been put in by Parties contributing towards them. Enhancing the environmental outcomes that would occur upon meeting the target, should be further explored in development of a new framework, seeking to better link outcomes in the vision statement to the targets.

The Aichi targets should be considered as a basis for the future framework, taking into account emerging knowledge from research and science. Parties should also reflect on and take into account the challenges encountered in contributing to the current strategic plan and targets, both domestically but also as an international cohort. Capacity can continue to be built amongst Parties and organisations by sharing experiences and knowledge more efficiently. A more focussed approach to capacity development and technology transfer will be required in the future to improve the capability of all Parties to monitor their environments and progress against any agreed objectives. Clear outcomes and measurable targets will, in general, assist efforts for a more focused approach. Continuation of the sharing of views and experiences over the next two years as the new framework is developed will be critical to ensure we build on the significant efforts to date, but also look for new and innovative ways to address challenges, including engagement with the private sector.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the World Health Organization's Health in all policies approach, Parties should be mindful to ensure that the post-2020 biodiversity framework is consistent with the human needs of access to clean air and water, good food and an environment that sustains wellbeing and good mental health.

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Robust and inclusive consultation

Australia is strongly supportive of a party-led process that is inclusive of input from all stakeholders. We are committed to broad, inclusive consultation and we will seek to include governments, IPLCs, civil society (particularly women and youth), and representatives from the business and finance sectors in our consultative processes to inform the development of new targets.

Ambitious yet realistic targets for biodiversity

Australia is supportive of targets which are relevant and applicable internationally but that Parties contribute to at regional and national levels as appropriate.

The new strategic plan and associated targets must have a robust scientific underpinning. They must also focus efforts more towards implementation and action. The post-2020 targets should be aspirational to encourage and foster global ambition but it is also important that quality of indicators is improved going forward to drive technical development in the scientific community, leading to an improved understanding of Parties' contribution towards progress against the targets. However, we must need to balance ambition with pragmatism – the targets must also be practical to facilitate domestic action.

The core principles of the current strategic plan could be retained as the Aichi Targets have been a useful tool to focus action and garner support. The existing five overarching goals are also still highly relevant and they could be predominately maintained and built on. Australia does not see a need for more than 20 biodiversity targets under the new strategic plan. Under the current strategic plan, having 20 targets has been difficult in terms of providing focus, adequate effort and resourcing. Options to prioritise or triage targets going forward could also be considered but our view is that Parties should work within a framework of targeted actions which can be implemented by Parties within their own national circumstances.

New targets must be SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound) and consistent with and complementary to each other. Australia's preference is to adopt a pragmatic approach that seeks to 'modernise' or build on the Aichi targets, as opposed to a complete renegotiation of brand new targets. More clearly identifying the outcomes expected would allow existing targets to be considered as the baseline to build off for the future framework. Australia has embedded many of the Aichi targets into domestic policies and programs and updating these targets will be more efficient than determining new targets, which will subsequently have to be integrated into our national approaches.

Australia is supportive of exploring pathways for formalising collaborations between the private sector and national focal points towards effective integration of business-focused information and contributions in the NBSAPS and associated reporting processes, including the collection, synthesis, analysis and communication of businesses' contributions to the post-2020 framework.

Improved alignment and cohesion between international fora

The Convention should continue to work closely with across international fora to avoid duplication and enhance existing and future efforts. This will become increasingly important in the context of climate change, ongoing biodiversity loss, and increasing resourcing constraints.

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Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through to 2030 is important to ensure consistency, reduce duplication, raise the profile of the CBD and tap into the global political momentum around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. There is significant value in developing biodiversity targets such that they can be integrated into and aligned with the SDG goals as appropriate. The new targets under the CBD should take into account those biodiversity related SDGs which expire in 2020 or 2025.

The NBSAPs, National Reports, Global Biodiversity Outlook and the IPBES assessments form the basis of our understanding of the successes and challenges in addressing biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use and management. They should be considered in the context of resource allocation, alignment and consistency to inform discussions in finalising the post-2020 framework.

A flexible and adaptive framework

Australia is supportive of articulating voluntary national contributions or commitments that enable each Party to tailor action for their national circumstances. These could be beneficial at the outset of a new biodiversity framework as well as throughout the life of a new strategic plan. This would allow action to adapt to emerging knowledge, science, technologies, and existing and emerging international data sharing collaborations.

We are supportive of the NBSAPs continuing as the primary mechanism to appropriately align domestic implementation of international objectives as appropriate to national circumstances.

Part Two

Australia agrees that resource mobilization is critical to support the achievement of the post-2020 framework and to increase capacity. Australia strongly believes that it is essential resourcing is sought from a range of different sources, not just from Governments. In line with the theme of the CBD COP14 in Sharm El Sheik Egypt, it will be critical to explore engagement with industries, business and the finance sector to complement, with private sector contributions, voluntary national commitments by Parties and other governments for COP15. In negotiating a new resource mobilization strategy, Parties need to think creatively about innovative approaches including co-funding, blended funding models and partnerships, more targeted and streamlined actions under the Convention, and embracing the mainstreaming of biodiversity across all sectors. Ensuring an understanding of the reliance on biodiversity by all sectors through enhanced mainstreaming should underpin a new framework. The UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (EEA) project sees the CBD as a strong policy driver and opportunity to prioritise efforts over the next few years, which is a critical part mainstreaming biodiversity going forward.

Parties should look for means by which to include, invite and encourage the private sector to take on its key role and responsibility considering its dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, and if possible, facilitate an international process to launch bottom-up self-commitments by private companies, complementing the national and international governmental preparations.

The doubling target has been challenging for Parties and is likely to continue to be challenging to meet. Further investigation of the most effective model to enhance efforts in global biodiversity

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conservation needs to underpin any increases with further work focused on models to increase funding flows coming from all sources.

Existing resources and effort must be appropriately expended and targeted. Processes under the Convention (i.e. efficiency reviews, processes for consideration of issues by the Convention, prioritisation of capacity building, secretariat expenditure etc.) must be adhered to and respected to appropriately utilise scarce resources. Parties should call on businesses and business organisations across all sectors to join in and come forward with biodiversity commitments, building on existing initiatives and explore possible pathways for supporting existing and developing new national and regional business and biodiversity networks as key nodes for post-2020 business engagement, capacity building and mainstreaming of biodiversity.