

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF BRAZIL
ENVIRONMENT DIVISION

Initial views on the Post-2020 Biodiversity Strategic Plan

1. The current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 is a sound and comprehensive document supported by governments, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations. It was endorsed by the UN General Assembly Resolution that established the UN Decade on Biodiversity in 2011 and by the seven other global biodiversity-related Conventions (CITES, CMS, Ramsar, World Heritage, IPPC, ITPGRFA and IWC), and is well incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

2. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 has a clear vision and ambitious goals and targets. Its implementation benefits from the support provided by revised NBSAPs established in line with the Global Strategy. In the case of developing countries, the plan also benefits from the financial support provided by the Financial Mechanism of the Convention and from the technical support provided by the CBD Secretariat, partners (including the Japan Biodiversity Fund), bilateral cooperation and NGOs.

3. Parties have recognized that the achievement of global Aichi Targets still lags behind as compared to the national targets of new or revised NBSAPs. At the national level, it can be argued that this happens mostly due to the challenges faced by most countries to mainstream the biodiversity agenda into economic sectors. At the global level, it can be a result of insufficient mechanisms to address the third pillar of the Convention: the fair and equitable sharing arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, particularly with the countries of origin of such resources.

4. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the post-2020 period can thus go many steps further as compared with the current plan and ensure that new global targets: (i) address the three objectives of the Convention, which are intertwined and mutually supportive, in an equal way; (ii) better cover the main issues related to biodiversity, including those dealt with by the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols, and by other global biodiversity-related Conventions; (iii) have both process and outcome components and clearly defined elements (such as the current Aichi Target 11); (iv) explicitly recognize the need to mainstream biodiversity into all sectors; and (v) are sufficiently flexible to be adapted to local realities.

5. The level of ambition of the new global targets should take into consideration the progress achieved under the current plan as a starting point and be adjusted in order to make the 2050 Vision feasible. It should give due consideration to the current and future drivers of biodiversity loss, while ensuring that human impacts on nature are kept within safe ecological limits and avoiding ecological tipping points at local, sub-national, national, regional and global levels. At the same time, planetary boundaries for sustainability should be respected and food security at all levels should be considered by the new plan.

6. According to several scenarios, at current consumption patterns, by 2030 ecosystems will unlikely be kept within safe ecological limits. Extinction rates are estimated to be far above acceptable levels. Attention should be given to the pathogens and vectors that emerge in degraded environments, harming them even further. Habitat loss, overexploitation, illegal trade, invasive species, pathogens spillover, pollution and climate change are currently the main threats to biodiversity conservation. The Alliance for Zero Extinction, an international network of experts, has identified 947 sites that are the last refuge of one or more threatened species, which are home to 1,536 of the world's most threatened species. Pollinators are among the most affected species worldwide, facing rapid decline mostly due to threats caused by human activities.

7. Considering these projections, the need for an enhanced global commitment on the protection of biodiversity at all levels, including genes, species and ecosystems, is even more relevant for the post-2020 framework. Biodiversity loss should be halted by exploring innovative ways to integrate biodiversity in the economic sectors, increasing sustainable agricultural practices, protecting native vegetation and river banks, restoring degraded lands, changing fisheries management approaches and controlling pollution. It can also be halted with the establishment of an effective mechanism to ensure the sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including those arising from digital sequence information on genetic resources, with countries of origin. Such benefits can be used programs and strategies aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

8. Protected areas remain one of the most relevant tools for maintaining habitat integrity and should be well managed and ecologically representative. Estimates show that currently 15% of terrestrial and inland waters and around 7% of the oceans are officially covered by protected areas. These areas, however, are not sufficient or efficient to promote the full integrity of habitats if other mechanisms are not in place.

9. One of such mechanisms is the promotion of the connectivity of land- and seascapes. Synergies among biodiversity conservation actions, ecosystem restoration approaches and the maintenance of ecological processes can be encouraged in these spaces, while ensuring that the sustainable use of biodiversity is in place according to national legislations.

10. Other mechanisms include the conservation of native vegetation in private areas. The Brazilian Forestry Code (Law 12,651/2012), for instance, establishes the obligation that river banks should have a minimum protection of forest cover or other native vegetation ("Areas of Permanent Preservation – APP"). This measure helps to improve the quality and amount of water and also serves as a shelter for biodiversity. The Code also sets forth that at least 20% of private farms should be protected ("Legal Reserve – RL"). This percentage reaches 80% in farms located in the Amazon Region. Both forest areas APP and RL are under the responsibility of the owner of the land.

11. Oceans should also be taken into account. They cover 71% of the planet's surface and are essential for all beings, providing them with food, energy, water, salt and other

raw materials essential for their survival and good health. Seas and oceans suffer from the contamination of pollutants, including marine debris, from both land- and sea-based sources, global warming, and reduction of biodiversity, especially the depletion and collapse of fish stocks. This requires countries to jointly implement ocean management and conservation actions. It is also essential that countries create appropriate and effective legislation and governance structures that guide the implementation of public policies aimed at the conservation, sustainable use and sharing of benefits of coastal and marine biodiversity.

12. The new Strategic Plan should thus have more precise targets addressing the three objectives of the Convention and covering the main issues related to biodiversity. Above all, it should ensure the mainstreaming biodiversity in productive sectors, by facilitating the necessary economic and behavioral changes, taking into account national circumstances and priorities. The plan should also contribute to the integral health of the rural, forest and riverine populations, which is intrinsically linked to biodiversity. These populations relate to natural resources through their mode of production and social reproduction, and depend on access to a healthy environment for the full and dignified development of their way of life.

13. The Post-2020 Plan should also have an agreed review mechanism to assess the matching of the level of ambition and implementation of the revised NBSAPs and their revised national targets with the global targets, as well as a more effective monitoring and modelling framework to assess progress (or lack of progress) and its consequences. Finally, it should also focus on technological solutions and innovative ways to improve productivity while ensuring that sustainability goals are met.

14. Finally, discussions to develop Post-2020 Strategic Plan should consider the SDG Agenda. In this regard, SDGs 2.5, 14 and 15 are the most directly related to biodiversity, and concern the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic and terrestrial environments and species, respectively. For this purpose, establishing synergies with targets under other Conventions should be fostered to avoid the duplication of efforts.

December, 2018.