

Brief comment on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Purpose of this submission

This is the Green Growth Knowledge Platform (GGKP) response to Notification 2018-063. The purpose of this submission is to stress the need to mainstream the protection of biodiversity in economic policymaking using the natural capital approach.

Background

The Earth is on track to lose 38-46% of its biodiversity by 2050. Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, infrastructure and human encroachment have caused widespread ecosystem loss and fragmentation. These economic activities have been some of the main drivers of biodiversity loss to date.¹ By 2050, it is predicted that only 10% of the Earth's land will be free of human impacts.²

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was designed to promote the conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits of biological diversity, including through the adoption of the Aichi targets in the Convention's 2010-2020 plan. Yet, progress on the targets has been limited.³ This is troubling given that the targets play a vital role in the SDGs and in sustainable development.

Rationale

We understand the problem clearly. Biodiversity depends on intact ecosystems, and ecosystems are declining due to economic activity. We must restore ecosystems to preserve biodiversity and achieve sustainable development. The question is how, such that biodiversity will flourish by 2050?

Some will argue that to save biodiversity we must stop economic development, but that is both unrealistic and unnecessary. Biodiversity underpins the provision of ecosystem services and economic well-being, and its preservation is key to achieving several development goals, including hunger and poverty alleviation. Although conservation actions such as establishing protected areas have helped to protect biodiversity, they have not yet been sufficient to prevent its continuing decline or the consequent loss of benefits from biodiversity to people.

Instead, we must make ecosystem conservation and restoration a vital part of economic development. In order to do so, the first priority is to properly account for and value the contribution that biodiversity makes to human society. This includes the role of ecosystems as a natural solution for closing the global infrastructure finance gap. This is the strength of the natural capital approach. It recognizes nature as an asset with value – like labour or machines – and provides methods for reflecting that value into economic decision making.

Approach

To link the post-2020 biodiversity framework to mainstream economic policymaking using an integrated indicators framework for national implementation.

Structure for the post-2020 biodiversity framework

We suggest that the post-2020 biodiversity framework take as a guiding principle that biodiversity conservation and restoration at scale must occur in the context of mainstream economic activity. Other means for protecting biodiversity have not been enough and will fall short of the 2050 Vision.

¹ Other important drivers of biodiversity loss include invasive species and, increasingly, climate change.

² IPBES, *Report on Land Degradation and Restoration*, 2018.

³ CBD, *Updated Scientific Assessment*, 2018.

As such, the biodiversity targets and indicators must be set in a way that is integrated with multiple environmental, economic and social objectives. A single, coherent indicators framework will reveal the multiple benefits of preserving and enhancing natural capital for sustainable economic development. This will require a comprehensive review of indicators frameworks, including those used by economic line ministries such as ministries of finance and development.

While the SDGs provide a clear starting point for this review, other frameworks such as the SEEA-EEA – which underlies Aichi Target 2 – and the green growth or inclusive wealth indicators of GGKP partner organizations including GGGI, OECD, UNEP and World Bank, are important to review in pursuit of the 2050 Vision. The framework must also align, where relevant, with indicators used by the business and finance communities. The [GGKP Natural Capital Expert Working Group](#) is currently assessing related indicator frameworks and data sources and offers to share lessons learned with the CBD Secretariat in structuring the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

In addition, the indicators framework should suggest clear, actionable and measurable responses by countries to achieving the targets. It must be practical for in-country application, particularly in jurisdictions with limited ministerial or statistical capacities. The GGKP working group is conducting a further assessment of sustainable economic policy frameworks that will be useful for ensuring that the post-2020 biodiversity framework is strongly supported in the national advisory work of major international organizations.

Strategy and the targets for resource mobilization

Linking the post-2020 biodiversity framework to mainstream economic policymaking aims to make biodiversity conservation and restoration a part of the “business-as-usual” scenario, rather than an externality to it. Recognizing that we are still far from achieving that goal, the next best scenario is to increase conservation funding, both domestically and internationally, publicly and privately, to support activities aimed at implementing the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

The GGKP partner organizations support a large number of national projects, including those focused on landscape restoration and policy support. With an integrated indicators framework aimed at practical, in-country application, particularly where data is readily available, the post-2020 biodiversity framework will speak to a broad range of international actors. By aligning those actors around a common framework and more manageable set of integrated targets, we expect resource mobilization efforts to be streamlined and international aid funds to go further. An integrated framework would also facilitate the development and implementation of a broad and effective international agreement for the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

Who we are

The [Green Growth Knowledge Platform \(GGKP\)](#) is a global network of international organisations and experts that identifies and addresses major knowledge gaps in green growth theory and practice. The GGKP supports practitioners and policymakers to develop the guidance, best practices, data and tools necessary to support green growth.

In order to bring natural capital into the mainstream of green growth policy and practice, the GGKP in partnership with the MAVA Foundation launched the Natural Capital Expert Working Group at the World Bank in Washington, DC, USA in November 2017. The group aims to influence mainstream economic decision makers to value and account for natural capital in economic planning.