



Inputs for preparation of a post-2020 biodiversity framework

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This note presents IIED views on the scope and content of the post-2020 biodiversity framework, in response to the Notification 2018-063, ref CBD/OES/DC/RH/KNM/87538

Achievements and limitations of the current framework

IIED recognises that considerable progress is still necessary to meet the Aichi targets set within the current (2011-2020) framework - and that many targets will not be achieved. Nevertheless, some significant conservation successes have been achieved since 2011. The new framework should learn from these successes but must also recognise and learn from the failures.

Aichi Target 11 is widely considered to be the target where most progress has been made. However this observation relates to the elements of the target focussed on the expansion of area protected. Much less progress has been reported on the effective management element and almost no progress has been reported on equitable management element. As clarified by decision CBD/COP/14/L.19, equity is a key element of good governance and contributes both to conservation outcomes and human-wellbeing. Some of the other Aichi Targets are unrealistic which undermines their overall credibility in the eyes of governments and other actors. Target 7 for example requires that by 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity. Yet evidence suggests a worsening not improving situation.

Fundamentally, the current framework has no mention of trade-offs between biodiversity conservation and other goals that need to be carefully weighed. Furthermore, the current framework emphasises what needs to be halted, reversed, reduced. But it is not clear *how* these targets should be achieved and *who* should be responsible. Achieving many of the targets relies on action outside the environment sector to address the drivers of biodiversity loss – hence it is essential that the new framework emphasises the mainstreaming of biodiversity and actively engages the sectors which are the key drivers of biodiversity loss. Agriculture, for example, is estimated to be responsible for about 75% of biodiversity loss. Given the rising demand for food driven by changing consumption patterns, particularly for meat, this will continue unless much stronger action to tackle the underlying causes of biodiversity loss.

Suggested priorities for the post-2020 framework

Overarching issues

1. An overarching priority is that the new framework links to, and complements, existing international environment and development policy. Specifically the framework should make reference to, and be coordinated with:

- Biodiversity-related conventions: the current strategic plan serves as a framework for cooperation amongst the biodiversity -related conventions including CITES, CMS, Ramsar and ITPGR and has been recognized by the United Nations General Assembly. The new framework should extend this cooperation to other biodiversity-related conventions including the new treaty on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction
- Rio conventions: the links between biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change must be recognised in the post-2020 framework with coordination ensured between CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD as well as the New York Declaration on Forests.
- SDGs: Many of the Aichi targets are reflected in the SDGs but expire in 2020, while the SDGs run to 2030. The new framework must be fully aligned to the SDGs, not just including targets where biodiversity contributes to the fulfilment of specific goals, but also mitigating actions where achievement of specific SDGs might present a threat to biodiversity. In addition to updated, SDG-compatible targets, the new framework should be aligned time-wise with the SDGs – ie expiring in 2030.
- Human Rights conventions: Both biodiversity loss and exclusionary conservation measures can infringe human rights; while the recognition of human and indigenous rights is important to support continued stewardship of biodiversity. The new framework should reflect the Knox framework principles on the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, as well as the commitments made in the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Convention of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Culture related conventions of UNESCO: The new framework should recognise the links between biodiversity and cultural diversity. The rapid loss of cultural diversity poses a significant threat to biodiversity.

At a higher level of ambition these environment and development policy frameworks might not be limited to coordination and complementarity but also develop a joint reporting framework to further enhance synergies and coordination – particularly at the national level.

2. The new framework has to be more ambitious and yet much more tangible and measurable than the current one. Targets should be science and evidence-based, and based on both western science and traditional and local knowledge, using a ‘multiple evidence-based’ approach . While needing to set an ambitious overarching goal – the equivalent to the Paris Agreement goal of limited global warming to below 2 degrees – the new framework should avoid the temptation to adopt “sound-bite” targets such as “Nature Needs Half,” or “30% by 2030”, unless these are based on sound science and traditional knowledge. Most significantly it must have the resources and political commitment necessary to achieve its goals.

3. The new framework should recognise the pluralism of different interests in biodiversity conservation and the trade-offs that often exist between different stakeholder interests, in particular in countries where resources for conservation are scarce - for example global values may prioritise focus a particular iconic species, while local values might prioritise medicinal plants or wetlands that are important for water supply and healthy fisheries. Targets must not represent the domination of one interest/worldview over another. One way to achieve this would be to keep global targets very broad but invite all countries to develop their country level interpretation which should reflect the diversity of interests that are considered legitimate in their context.
4. The new framework should recognise inter-linkages between targets. For example delivering some of the targets which reduce threats to biodiversity (eg perverse subsidies, deforestation) will help contribute to the achievement of other targets (reduce extinctions of known threatened species).
5. The new framework must place much greater emphasis on engagement and recognition of IPLCs. They are vital stewards of biodiversity and need support to maintain and develop such stewardship. Too often indigenous peoples and local communities have been ignored or excluded from decision making.

Thematic issues

Species: The current Aichi Target (target 12) focusses on known threatened species but the new framework should emphasise the need reduce and/or reverse the losses of *all* species – not waiting until they become threatened before taking action. It should also emphasise the need to prevent local extinctions as well as global extinctions. To bring the framework in line with the SDG “leave no one behind” agenda the framework should also include a target on species/varieties/resources that are of particular importance to poor women and men – including those important for food, medicines, cultural use (also recognising women and men may use and value different species/varieties/resources differently therefore different perspectives must be sought and included). But equally the new framework should not over-emphasise species at the expense of genetic diversity (particularly agriculture varieties), ecosystems (particularly in the context of adaptation to climate change) and the need to retain particular functions that biodiversity performs and the services it provides.

Adaptation: The current framework emphasises reducing, halting and reversing loss of biodiversity. What has not been discussed to date is whether we should plan for *adaptation* to further loss. Current approaches to adaptation emphasise technological fixes (eg drones as pollinators) which are beyond the reach of poor people and poor countries. The new framework could provide the entry point for discussions on pro-poor adaptation.

Equity: Equity and equality, including gender equality, must go from being an important consideration, as in the 2011-2020 strategy, to being a central pillar of the CBD post 2020 strategy – as they are in the SDGs. Equity is particularly important in benefit-sharing mechanisms such as payments for ecosystem services which, if poorly designed, can reinforce existing inequalities.

Youth engagement and empowerment: The post 2020 framework should include strong commitments to creating opportunities for full and effective participation of youth in decision-making at all levels supported by affirmative action on their access to environmental information including use of social media as well as more traditional approaches such as school curricula, wildlife clubs, national competitions etc. This can be seen as an issue of intergenerational equity.

Gender: The development of the new post 2020 framework provides an opportunity to further and more comprehensively integrate gender into the framework and targets, as well as into the framework development process itself. Alignment with the gender targets of the SDGs should also be ensured.

Traditional knowledge and customary use: Urgent action is needed to halt and reverse the loss of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of both wild and cultivated biodiversity. Respecting and recognising traditional knowledge in policy frameworks is not enough. Traditional knowledge and customary use must be fully integrated into all activities to implement the CBD and the post 2020 framework, and all countries must ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in these activities. Parties must also work with other sectors to tackle the drivers of traditional knowledge loss – eg. education, health, agriculture; and with the culture sector to ensure positive linkages between biodiversity and culture are recognised and safeguarded.

Agro-biodiversity: Agricultural biodiversity has declined significantly in the last few decades with the spread of monocultures, making the genetic basis for agriculture increasingly narrow. The post-2020 framework should include a target which aims to halt and reverse the loss of agricultural biodiversity, particularly in situ, where it is still evolving for climate adaptation and is accessible to farmers. Parties should ensure that measures aimed at re-forestation do not replace traditional farming systems rich in agrobiodiversity. The post-2020 target should recognise that collaboration and joint leadership with agriculture sectors is vital for achieving this target, as is the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities to land and self-determination.

Natural capital: The new framework should make reference to green economy plans and any natural capital related policies / measures that exist or are planned in countries. Currently green economy discussions and strategies often focus on climate and energy, while neglecting natural capital and biodiversity. Natural capital needs to be treated as encompassing both ecosystem stocks and flows, rather than just the former. Given that a clear and consistent monitoring framework is needed for the post-2020 biodiversity agenda, due consideration should be given to existing systems, such as the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA).

Nature-based solutions: The new framework should emphasise the role (and include appropriate targets on) nature-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, infrastructure and other development priorities.

Modalities

Like many other stakeholders IIED agrees that the Paris Agreement is a potential role model for the new framework – both in terms of the clear overarching global goal it sets, and its modality of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), with contributions agreed not just from national governments but also private sector (eg private sector commitments with the London Declaration on Illegal Wildlife Trade 2014 to source legally any wildlife products used within their sectors; and adopt zero tolerance policies on corporate gifting or accepting of species threatened with extinction or products made from them) and civil society (eg actions such as the rejection of single-use plastics, and the WWF Earth Hour).

Poor women and men and poor countries who are generally more vulnerable to environmental degradation of any kind must have a stronger voice in setting conservation priorities and negotiation of the inevitable trade-offs. Inclusive national and local level dialogues around issues of biodiversity conservation, green economy and related issues are a good starting point.