

Convention on Biological Diversity  
Submission of **The Nature Conservancy** in response to Notification:  
**Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of  
the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**  
December 15, 2018

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) views the post-2020 biodiversity framework as coming at a critical juncture for the future wellbeing of nature and people. The continued decline of species diversity and abundance, and the degradation of ecosystems and their functions, risk undermining our food systems, clean water, health, heritage and the quality of life. Failure to arrest this decline in the next decade will not only make achievement of the other Sustainable Development Goals impossible, but also quite likely contribute to numerous humanitarian crises—and be an irreversible catastrophe for natural world.

TNC believes the post-2020 global biodiversity framework must therefore take a bold approach to drive transformational change in societies and economies. We have published research showing that a sustainable future by 2050 is possible<sup>1</sup>. We can achieve such a future with existing technologies and without major tradeoffs between environmental health, economic growth, and human development. However, achieving a more prosperous and sustainable world in 2050 will require major changes to our production systems. The key message from TNC's analysis is that people and nature can thrive together—but neither will thrive unless the other does too. In this context, we welcome the opportunity to provide initial views on the aspects of the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

### **1. Proposed structure and priority for the post-2020 biodiversity framework**

TNC helped create and endorses the recommendations in a joint paper (see [Annex](#)) submitted in November 2018 to the Secretariat in response to this notification. The joint paper suggests a reorganization of the Aichi targets into a more coherent logical structure to identify different types of targets — “enabling conditions,” “actions” and “objectives” (or outcomes)—and the relationships among them. We believe clarifying these relationships can improve governance and accountability for achieving Convention targets. While all types of targets should have clear metrics and reporting, “action” targets will permit the most straightforward review process of whether parties are meeting their commitments to the Convention. Outcome targets measure actual progress towards our overall goal (apex target) of improving the status of biodiversity.

Within the action targets, TNC believes greater emphasis should be placed on addressing the main causes of biodiversity loss. The principal threats to biodiversity—land-use change, direct exploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species—originate in economic activities and resource use that are typically outside the scope of environment ministries. TNC is therefore persuaded that the success of the post-2020 strategy will hinge on parties' ability to bring a “whole of government”

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<sup>1</sup> Tallis HM, Hawthorne PL, Polasky S, et al. An attainable global vision for conservation and human well-being. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*. 2018;114:6722-6728. doi:10.1002/fee.1965.

approach to biodiversity conservation, as well as to mobilize a broad segment of the population in support of the targets. In support of such an approach, we believe

- The post-2020 biodiversity framework should be centered on what is now called the “mainstreaming” agenda within the CBD.
- It should be defined in the new framework around specific actions that should be taken in key sectors (infrastructure, resource extraction, agriculture) to reduce impacts on biodiversity loss.
- These action targets should be supported by strategic spatial plans that identify the least-harmful development options and locations for the greatest return-on-investment through positive interventions—
- and by national legal frameworks that require no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services through application of the mitigation hierarchy (see section 4 below regarding “net gain.”).

An expanded and rigorous sector-based approach to addressing threats to biodiversity (and the risks posed by potential ecological collapse to those sectors themselves) is the most direct way of engaging a set of key governmental actors in delivering CBD targets. It also creates a pathway for private sector to contribute to specific sectoral targets, and provides clear links to existing initiatives (e.g., sustainable infrastructure initiatives supported by the multilateral development banks and the G20).

## **2. Supporting implementation of the post-2020 Framework: Political will and review systems**

TNC shares the widespread recognition that raising the profile of biodiversity to the highest political levels and driving action across society will be critical to achieving the 2050 Vision. To this end, the Convention needs a simple, unifying narrative that is a clear “call to action” and can mobilize high level political support and public engagement. While we propose an overarching 2030 goal in (4) below, we recognize that there are likely to be communications challenges around any apex target that is measurable and scientifically robust. It may be more straightforward to use a concise and communicable phrase (e.g., “the nature we need”) to describe the top-level goal, nesting its scientific interpretation in the quantified “objective” targets on the state of biodiversity (see [figure](#) in Annex).

Implementation of the CBD would benefit from more rigorous and frequent review processes to measure progress vis-à-vis targets. The post-2020 framework must be reflected not only in national biodiversity strategies, but also in the policies of other sectors that impact biodiversity, and all relevant sectors should be accountable for delivery against national commitments. National reports should reflect the inputs and impacts of all relevant actors and should allow for public review and comment at the national level to ensure transparency and increase accuracy of reporting.

A necessary precondition to effective implementation and review is that targets and sub-targets have clear metrics and indicators from the launch of the strategy so that governments and other stakeholders can drive ambition and track performance. TNC suggests that a strategy focused around sectoral, “action” targets may allow for more process-based indicators that are easier to assess and aggregate at global level.

## **3. Refining and increasing ambition of Aichi targets**

The current Aichi Targets have provided an important framework for biodiversity action in the past eight years. Considerable work has been done to develop indicators and measure progress that should not be abandoned as we move towards the next decennial. In addition to reframing the targets in a more logical structure as proposed in [joint paper](#), TNC feels several targets should be updated in significant ways.

Protected Areas (Aichi Target 11): While we advocate a post-2020 strategy that focuses on production sectors and drivers of biodiversity loss, a robust network of well-managed and representative protected areas should remain a core pillar of global biodiversity strategy to attain the 2050 Vision. TNC, along with National Geographic Society and other organizations, is supporting raising the level of ambition in this target from 17% to 30% for terrestrial and marine ecosystems by 2030. We believe particular emphasis should be placed on the representativeness component of the target; we have developed a method for quantifying representativeness that can help refine this aspect of the target.

Ecosystem Services (Target 14): The contribution of biodiversity and ecosystems to people is enormous: It is estimated to be between \$125 to \$145 trillion annually<sup>2</sup>. TNC is a founding member of the Natural Capital Project and believes approaches that value ecosystem services will be essential to ensuring biodiversity is factored into economic decision making. This target could be the vehicle for, among other things, better incorporating freshwater biodiversity protection in the framework.

Enhancing Carbon Stocks (Target 15): Research has shown that natural ecosystems can provide over a third of the solution to climate change while providing multiple benefits for biodiversity, health, food production and well-being<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, nature remains an under-utilized and under-financed method of addressing climate change in countries' NDCs under the Paris Agreement. An ambitious conservation and restoration agenda, tied to both the UNFCCC and the UNCCD, that maximizes the role of natural ecosystems in climate mitigation (and adaptation vis-à-vis the Sendai Framework) would be an important upgrade to this target. Specifically, TNC has endorsed the *30 x 30 Forests, Food and Land Challenge* launched at the 2018 Global Climate Action Summit calling on business, states, city and local governments, and global citizens to take action for better forest and habitat conservation, food production and consumption, and land use, to deliver up to 30% of the climate solutions needed by 2030. The land degradation neutrality goal of the UNCCD also provides valuable synergies with the CBD on addressing impacts from agriculture on natural habitat and can help create a unifying "net gain" approach across the three conventions.

#### **4. Comments on a potential apex goal or target around "Net Gain for Nature"**

Habitat extent and condition are not only a biodiversity state but also a biodiversity loss driver. TNC believes that the primary driver of the loss of biological diversity is the loss of habitat extent and condition. Hence, for all the other components of biodiversity (including ecosystem services), we propose a metric of net gain in the extent (and condition) of natural habitat as a relatively simple and achievable overarching 2030 goal for the CBD that works on multiple spatial scales.

This concept is already embedded in Aichi Target 5: "By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats...is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced." We propose making this more ambitious, providing opportunity within a restoration agenda, and reframing it in the positive context around "net gain." This is a target we feel is potentially achievable by 2030.

While additional technical work needs to be done, TNC believes that the emergence of low-cost spatial technologies, including geographic positioning systems (GPS), geographic information systems (GIS) and

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<sup>2</sup> Costanza R, De Groot R, Sutton P, et al. Changes in the global value of ecosystem services. *Global Environmental Change*. 2014;26:152-158. doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2014.04.002.

<sup>3</sup> Griscom BW, Adams J, Ellis PW, et al. Natural climate solutions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 2017;114(44):11645-11650. doi:10.1073/pnas.1710465114.

remote sensing can provide sufficient data to measure progress toward net gain. Ideally, we would measure the extent and condition of every habitat at a global scale. Using this data, we could track the extent of hundreds of habitats and report at the country and ecoregional scales. Various stakeholders, from countries to companies, could subscribe to the net gain idea. Indeed, many companies have already started to talk about making their operations net gain (or no net loss) from a habitat perspective and they operationalise this via the mitigation hierarchy.

## 5. Resource mobilization

The current target for resource mobilization refers to the mobilization of financial resources from all sources for the achievement of the Strategic Plan, and then only measures official development assistance (ODA) as its indicator and calls for a “substantial increase from current levels. The target is far too constrained. Measured by this indicator, we are close to meeting this target, yet the level of financial resources for improving the status of biodiversity remains woefully inadequate. An alternative formulation of the resource mobilization target should focus on mobilizing financial resources from all sources – public and private – and link the amount of resources at the level necessary to achieve the 2030 targets and 2050 vision.

An alternative formulation could take the form of:

*By 2030, all parties will mobilize adequate domestic financial resources, as well as mobilize increased official development assistance for those parties in a position to do so, and ensure effective enabling conditions to facilitate a substantial increase in private investment flows in biodiversity, such that the aggregate level of financial resources flowing to biodiversity conservation are adequate to meet the world’s and each Party’s biodiversity goals, approximating \$400 billion annually.<sup>4</sup>*

This target suggests that there should be indicators on:

- 1) domestic public resources mobilization for biodiversity
- 2) ODA outflows and/or inflows for biodiversity, and
- 3) private sector investment in biodiversity.

Behind these indicators, there would need to be an understanding of:

- 1) the baseline of biodiversity finance needs globally and for each country, and
- 2) the framework of enabling conditions for private sector investment in biodiversity.

Regarding private finance in particular, TNC has been building of body of experience related to conservation as an investment opportunity, financing for natural infrastructure (e.g., coral reef insurance, water funds, storm water credits for urban areas), sustainable supply chains, natural climate solutions (including restoration), and the use of biodiversity offsets through application of the mitigation hierarchy. Each of these funding streams has an important role to play. Looking at infrastructure development projections, the world could meet the aggregate biodiversity finance needs through biodiversity offsets if each country required compensatory mitigation for all major infrastructure projects and then applied the proceeds against the highest biodiversity conservation needs identified in its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. We see this as an essential element of the mainstreaming agenda for infrastructure as well as for conservation funding.

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<sup>4</sup> This figure comes from: Credit-Suisse, Conservation Finance: Moving Beyond Donor Funding Towards an Investor-Driven Approach, 2014. <https://www.credit-suisse.com/media/assets/corporate/docs/about-us/responsibility/environment/conservation-finance-en.pdf> Research is underway to re-assess and update this figure.

## Key Elements and Innovations for the CBD's Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework: A Collaborative Discussion Piece

November 2018

### Recommendations for the Post-2020 Framework

- Create a simple overarching “apex goal” that conveys the fundamental importance of nature in achieving climate resilience, sustainable development, and human well-being.
- Outline a clear logic structure for biodiversity priorities that clarifies relationships between specific targets and drives implementation of the actions needed at all levels to achieve larger objectives for the state of biodiversity.
- Ensure the targets on all levels are clear, concise and quantifiable, to clarify the actions needed and enable progress to be measured.

Nature is the infrastructure that supports all life, but has not been adequately recognized as a key element of economic and social stability. In 2020, the Parties to the CBD will agree to a new global biodiversity framework aimed at halting and reversing the concerning trends of biodiversity and nature loss, using nature sustainably, and ensuring the sharing of its benefits. The new framework must set clear and ambitious long-term goals for the recovery of biodiversity and nature, and drive more effective implementation of action at the global, national, local, and sectoral level.

The CBD can play a key role in defending nature and its role as essential to all life. 2020 needs to be a turning point in creating a movement of shared ownership for nature's role across institutions, fora, and sectors - it's a moment for the importance of biodiversity to resonate beyond the technical sphere and have its impact felt in all sectors. All Parties and non-state actors need to use the events over the next two years to create visibility for nature and biodiversity. The content below is intended as a **discussion piece** for both Parties and non-state actors involved in this process, outlining an innovative logic structure and important elements for what this approach would entail.

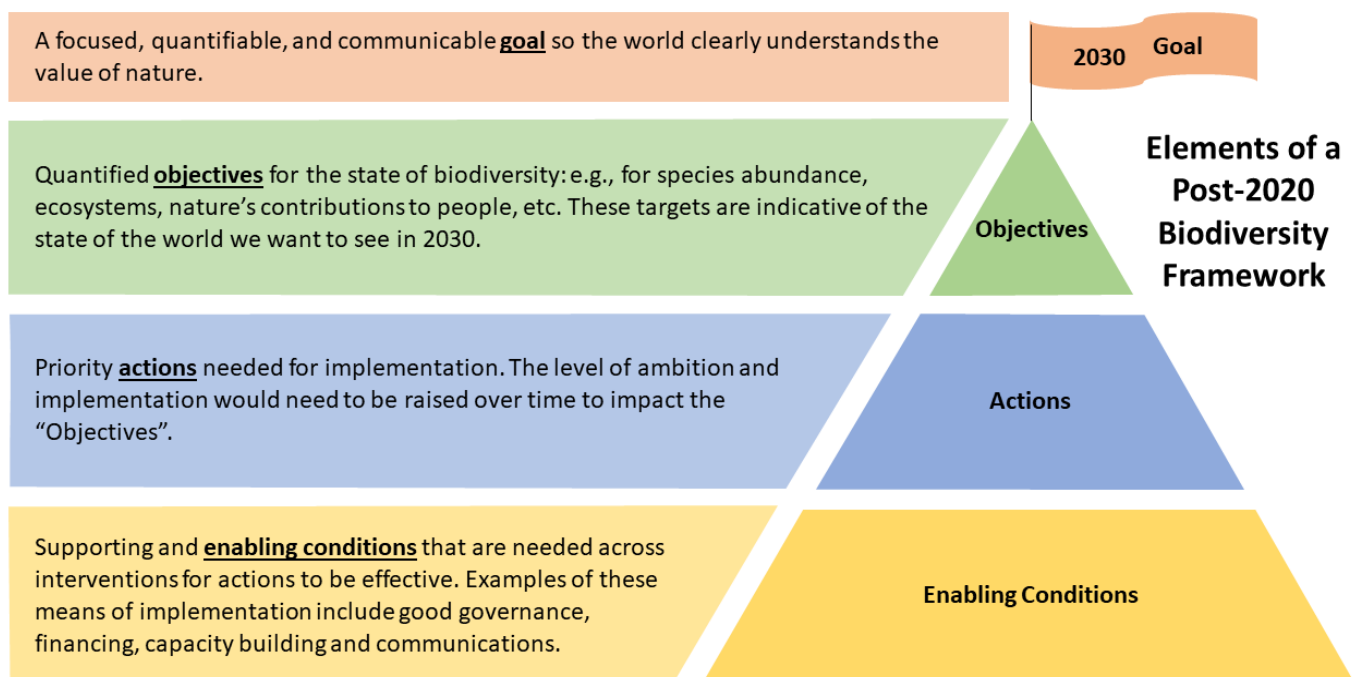
### KEY ELEMENTS OF AN INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE APPROACH

The content of the CBD's current Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Targets - while considered to be comprehensive and ambitious - would benefit from a more straightforward **logic structure** to facilitate implementation and highlight key linkages between the targets themselves. Reorganizing and refining the content of the 2011-2020 strategy in a way that makes the linkages and relationships between the targets clear would be a useful starting point in determining how the post-2020 framework could be organized. We also need to ensure the

targets agreed upon are specific and quantifiable.<sup>5</sup> In that spirit, we share the diagram below as a starting point to rethink the current elements and move to an innovative and effective approach that helps drive implementation. We chose a pyramid to show the different foundations, building blocks and elements needed to arrive at a comprehensive new strategic framework.

### LEVEL 1: ENABLING CONDITIONS

The base of the “pyramid” is comprised of strategies for **enabling conditions** that are needed for the success of any action or intervention presented in the layers above and can ensure actions move forward effectively. These conditions should include specific targets to allow for progress to be measured. These targets should answer the question of *how* governments and non-state actors can enable effective implementation.



We recommend that strategic means of implementation are incorporated as foundational to the post-2020 biodiversity framework, including targets for the following:

- good governance, including effective enforcement of laws, transparency of process, and empowerment of vulnerable groups such as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities,
- provision of sufficient resources from national, bilateral and multilateral sources, and non-state actors,

<sup>5</sup> We note related recommendations (specify the goal, identify indicator metrics, and identify actions) presented in the following publication: Mace, G. M., Barrett, M. Burgess, N. D., Cornell, S.E., Freeman, R., Grooten, M., Purvis, A. 2018. Aiming higher to bend the curve of biodiversity loss. Nature Sustainability DOI: 10.1038/s41893-018-0130-0

- an ambitious communications plan to raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity for people's well-being and the foundational role of nature in everyday life,
- building additional capacity and support the removal of barriers to reduce gaps in implementation and reporting, and
- generating and sharing information to serve better implementation aims.

## LEVEL 2: ACTIONS

In the middle of the pyramid, there is space to specify the **action targets** needed from both Parties and other actors to achieve the objectives required. Some of these actions would address direct pressures of biodiversity loss and can generate immediate results at the objectives level, while others would address underlying causes or drivers of biodiversity loss. Overall, these interventions will allow governments to identify *what actions* are needed to conserve nature and use it sustainably.

These actions include concrete and unambiguous targets addressing activities within the responsibility of environment ministries, for example:

- expanding protected and conserved areas and strengthening their management, and ensuring similar expansion and strengthening of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), including Indigenous and Conserved Communities Areas (ICCAs),
- supporting the conservation of particular species,
- increasing efforts to restore ecosystems and habitats to bend the curve on biodiversity loss.

An additional area of focus can include the implementation of activities that are the responsibility of other ministries or branches of government, in order to hold other sectors accountable for mainstreaming biodiversity. Examples include:

- phasing out harmful subsidies,
- incorporating the value of biodiversity into national accounting processes,
- minimizing the impact of infrastructure and related sectors on biodiversity, and
- recognizing the positive impact of healthy ecosystems on human health.

For these actions, countries should use a ratcheting mechanism similar to the Paris Agreement to ensure ambition is increased within countries' National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). This would provide a predictable framework for evaluating global progress to conserve biodiversity and for increasing ambition for implementation to a point where the 2030 mission could be achieved.

## LEVEL 3: STATE OF BIODIVERSITY OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

At the top level of the pyramid, we need to define the '**objective**' targets for the state of biodiversity we want to see by 2030. These should be spatially-based and quantified. These

objectives will specify effective conservation of all Key Biodiversity Areas and other important *specific locations* in ecosystems worldwide that need to be better managed, preserved, or restored, to prevent the loss of threatened species, maintain species abundance, ensure ecosystem service flows, etc, and achieve the end state of biodiversity we want on a global scale.

#### LEVEL 4: STRATEGIC GOAL - MISSION FOR 2030

The post-2020 framework must unite Parties and non-state actors under a **shared, ambitious and quantified 2030 Goal that is reflected in the mission for 2030**, based on the existing commitment to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and nature. This “apex goal” should show the cumulative impact of the objectives and answer the question of *why this strategy is needed*. The 2030 Goal itself should be a measurable milestone on a longer pathway of change, a trajectory to achieving the 2050 vision of “living in harmony with nature”. It could be centered on the existing language of the CBD, but needs to be underpinned by a clear definition of what this means in practice, ideally through a well formulated metric (or set of metrics) to assess its success or failure. The Goal could be accompanied by a common and compelling message on the importance and value of biodiversity and nature for people’s well-being to ensure that other actors and sectors understand the fundamental role that nature plays.

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Moving towards an innovative structure for new targets is, of course, not sufficient to solve the challenges of creating an effective framework for the next decade. Effective implementation is also needed, including accurate reporting combined with improved and transparent review mechanisms. These pieces of structure and process are interlinked, as neither will work effectively without the other, and we look forward to providing recommendations on implementation in due course. The NGOs putting this paper forward also look forward to engaging in discussions about how these details can evolve as we move toward 2020.

If scaled effectively, the framework presented above would lead to quantifiable outcomes for the state of biodiversity in the world. If implemented, this framework could put the world on the path to achieve the CBD’s ambitious 2050 Vision of a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.

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