

Proposal from the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Biodiversity and the Economy in response to notification 2018-063 relating to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework¹

Summary

Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse were identified in the 2018 World Economic Forum's annual [Global Risks Report](#) as a high likelihood global risk with extensive impacts. According to the Report, the loss of ecosystems is inter-connected with changing climates, degrading environments, rising rates of urbanization and emerging middle classes – making this a systemic problem which cannot be tackled by a single strategy or linear approach. Systemic interventions are needed to bring together multiple actors, issues and geographies under a shared narrative and action plan.

The 15th Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), scheduled for Q4 2020 in Beijing, offers a key milestone in the biodiversity agenda when the official process will convene to review and renew its international commitments. Targets from 2020 to 2030, along with other measures are expected.

The World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Biodiversity and the Economy (Annex 1) is proposing a public-private action platform to support the Sharm El-Sheikh to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People launched by the Governments of Egypt and China, together with the Secretariat of the CBD, at the 14th Conference of the Parties in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt (Annex 2.)

The Council's platform, provisionally named the **"Bend It!" Nature Action Platform"**, seeks to help create a new, wider "narrative" around biodiversity, people and the economy. Over the coming years, this effort will catalyze engagement from business, NGOs and citizens for a more energized action agenda for nature and people, in a way that compliments the scientific, technical and intergovernmental dialogue on biodiversity by relating it to everyday business decisions and consumer choices. And with a more bottom-up approach, it seeks to influence the political decision-making process to scale ambition for the next set of targets for biodiversity.

¹ Response to notification 2018-063 provided by members of the Global Future Council on biodiversity and the economy. Of the 24 members, 22 offered input, as members of the CBD Secretariat observed the process for the submission.

What is the “Bend It!” platform

The concept – working title the “Bend it!” Nature Action Platform – is conceived as a popularizing effort to support the design of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework and help mobilize the Sharm El Sheikh to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People. The vision for the platform is participatory and inclusive with the following specific aims:

1. Objective: Capture wider public, civil society, business, investor and political imagination for the urgency of action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss
2. Who to engage: Leading companies and institutions (with equal focus on coalitions/industry sectors)
3. How to engage: Invite into a dynamic and shared framework of commitments for action on biodiversity that both individually and cumulatively helps to “bend” the loss of biodiversity (See figure 2)
4. Final goal: Move away from the currently very concerning downward trajectory of negative impacts and loss of species, ecosystems and genetic diversity, to a period of stabilization (flat-lining) and then restoration and ecological sustainability pathways (upward rather than downward curves). (see figure 2)

What will the “Bend It!” platform do

I. Scientific Underpinning

This submission is based on wide acceptance that the scientific evidence on the trends in and causes of biodiversity and ecosystem loss is well established. In fact, the evidence has never been clearer about the consequences and impact of human activities. Most recently, this evidence has been captured by the [2018 Living Planet Report](#), several [IPBES Assessment Reports](#), and [information documents](#) released by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Azote Images for Stockholm Resilience Centre).

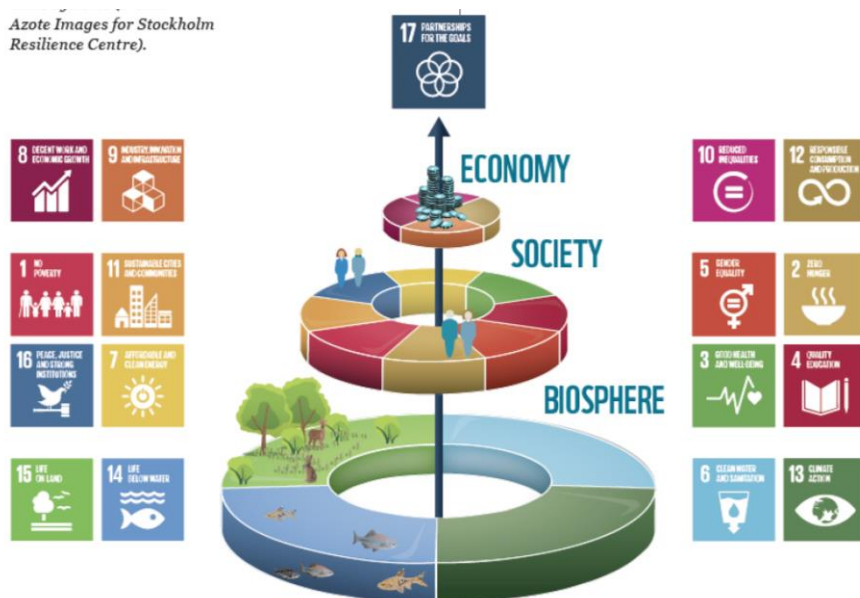


Figure 1. Building bottom-up with nature. Nature (represented by the biosphere) must be the foundation for which we make decisions and tools post2020. (From WWF 2018 *Living Planet report*.)

As stated in the WWF Living Planet Report, “Exploding human consumption is the driving force behind the unprecedented planetary change we are witnessing, through the increased demand for energy, land and water...[indeed] a recent assessment found that only a quarter of land on Earth is substantively free of the impacts of human activities. This is projected to decline to just one-tenth by 2050.”

It is imperative that an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework addresses the drivers of biodiversity loss, and strengthen capacity in science, technology and innovation to manage the risks and opportunities on the interlinkages between biodiversity, people and the economy (Figure 1). The Bend It! Nature Action Platform will integrate the scientific evidence to devise a multinational/multisectoral approach to bring climate and land together. It will discuss links between oceans, climate, energy, and agriculture, to break scientific silos in nature research and other disciplines. This will enable a holistic approach as these areas are connected in the real world and a systems approach is needed post2020.

The Council proposed to develop the equivalent of the Socolow’s climate wedges for biodiversity action, creating a scientifically rigorous (but presented for the nonexpert) series of “action areas” that show the “hotspots” topics where various actors can focus their commitments and initiatives on to help stabilize and restore nature.

Figure 2 provides examples of these “wedges”, which could be healthy oceans for marine life and food production, forest, wetlands and land management for species conservation, as well as food and fiber production, and other key areas such as biosafety and access and benefit sharing of genetic resources. Linked to each wedge would be a set of more specific action levers or opportunities that, if triggered, could each help to create a positive change in that area (e.g. tackling eutrophication from agricultural run-off as a lever in the ocean biodiversity health wedge). Analysis – like cost curve frameworks – could parse out what these various levers might be, what the scale of them might need to be to help “bend the

curve” and how regionally focused they might need to be – to contribute to a positive trajectory in each wedge.

With time to 2050 running along a horizontal axis and gradations of Business As Usual (BAU), “stabilize” and “restore” on the vertical axis, these wedges could be mapped out on a time to “scale of change” required by 2030 basis. This analysis would need to be undertaken and completed within the next several months and should be multi-institutional. A rough analogue (for the wedges at least) could be the development of the planetary boundaries analysis² and associated wedge diagram.

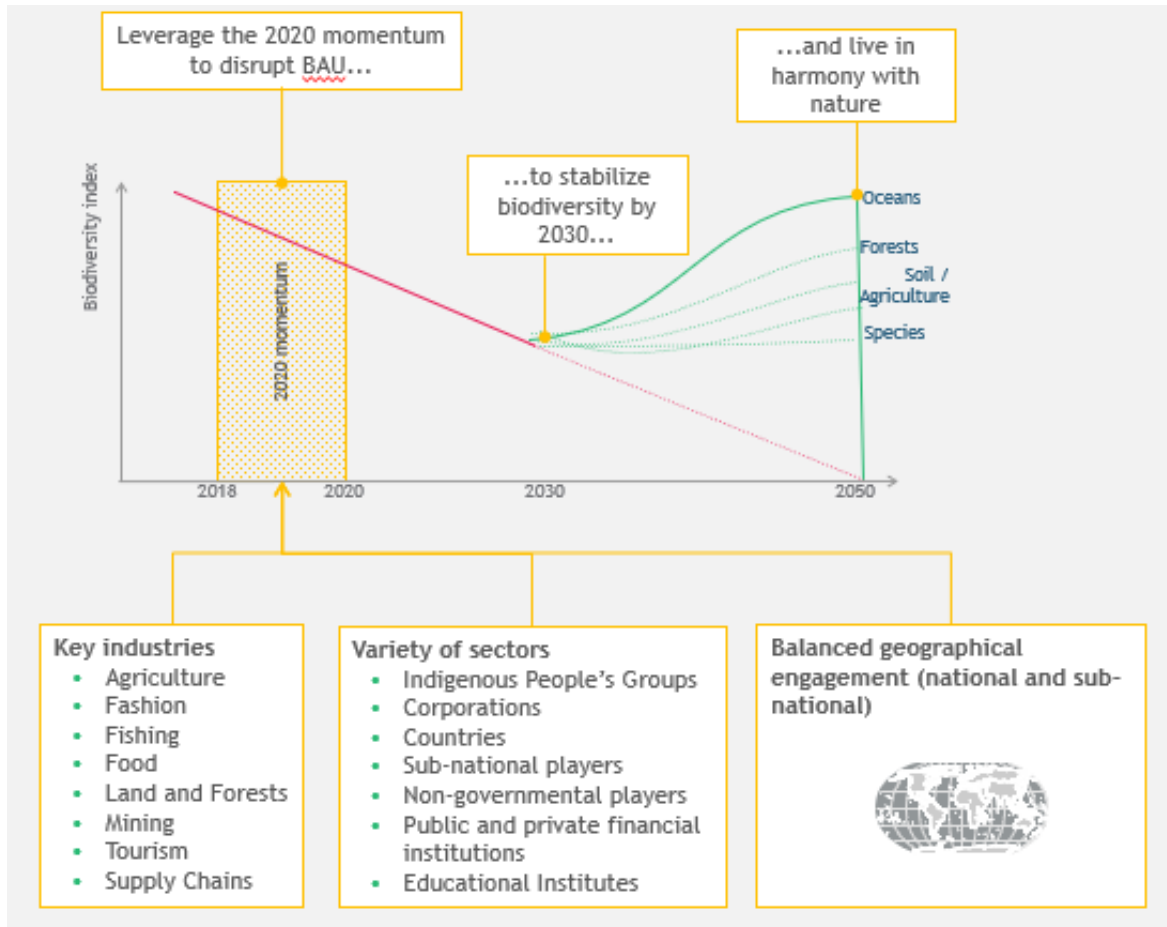


Figure 2. The Bend It! Nature Action Platform

² <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries/planetary-boundaries/about-the-research/the-nine-planetary-boundaries.html>

III. The Bend It! Nature Action Platform for Post2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

The Bend It! Nature Action Platform has six main components designed to disrupt business as usual (BAU) with an impetus for action that is transformative, catalytic, inclusive, knowledge based, and result-oriented (See Figure 2):

1. Engaging businesses through a high-level Champions for Nature group consisting of CEOs amongst others
 2. Highlighting the inter-connectedness of issues for an integrated and shared narrative
 3. Communications and mobilization as a key delivery mechanism
 4. Enabling Nature-Based Decisions and Tools, including corporate and national natural capital accounts
 5. Capacity Building of Science, Technology & Innovation Literacy
 6. Disruptive innovation for “Game-changing” contributions: idea of moon-shots
- *High-level group of Champions for Nature:* consisting of a coalition of business CEOs from developed and emerging economies, investors, civil society organizations, business coalitions and associations to serve as change agents setting a collective vision for an ambitious post 2020 global biodiversity framework. The objective is to capture wider public, civil society, business, investor and political commitments. Such business and government leadership could also drive the implementation of a meaningful action agenda in the lead up to 2020 and beyond, by:
 - o devising new or plug in their existing efforts into the Bend it! framework, thereby illustrating their contribution to bending the curve and their commitments to 2030 and beyond to 2050.
 - o leveraging the interest and commitment among its leading businesses and industry sectors to engage individually and/or via sector initiatives, in a location-specific context, at the national or sub-national level, for example, in pursuing a comprehensive restoration agenda
 - o creating or convening a community of young scientists, economist and experts who can collectively come up with new thinking for reshaping humanity’s relationship with nature and with that our current operating models in the field of business, politics and society.
 - *Highlighting the inter-connectedness of issues and risks of inactions:* Such component seeks to link together various related environment, economic and human development agendas such as wetlands, forests, oceans, food systems, land-use, climate mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, resilience and poverty reduction, into a practical set of multi-benefit “nature action” policy issues for governments to consider and align opportunity areas for the business and financial community and others. An important impetus for the Bend It! Nature Action Platform is to communicate a holistic vision about nature, people and the economy that is accessible to non-environmental experts and intentional in its desire to influence action to stem the current business as usual approach in mitigating the threats to our natural ecosystems on the planet. This will be done through several case

studies, white papers and high-level dialogues to be delivered in the next two years around key milestones such as the UN General Assembly Week in 2019, G7 and G20 Ministerial Meeting.

- *Communication that mobilizes a pro-nature momentum:* A key part of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework, which the Bend It! Nature Action Platform could support is on communication and mobilization.

The purpose of a significant transformation in communications is twofold:

- ✓ to create awareness for the agenda, and make information accessible to address current challenges to connect biodiversity loss to unsustainable human activities,
- ✓ to motivate the public, all levels of governments and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to actions that halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. Incentives and resources to use digital, print and social media could provide stakeholders with the capacity and support to influence society at large to care about biodiversity, people and the economy. This could also send signals to key decision-makers of shifting behavior, practices and priorities of citizens and consumers.

To this end, two specific initiatives will be undertaken:

- Through a white-labelled campaign, entitled “PledgeforNature”, the target is to secure 100million signatures and petitions for policy makers, businesses and citizens to act responsibly for nature and our planet. This pledge will be launched at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos 2019. The pledge has been created by a self-mobilizing global network of young people – the [global shapers](#) – who are spread across 387 cities around the world. This grass-roots pledge is intended to be generic to avoid brand or institutional politics and to ensure it is something all organizations can use. A short video of the globe (early version) [is available here](#) . The Pledge will also involve other WEF communities such as the Young Scientists to ensure the message is amplified and supported by early-career entrepreneurial and scientific innovators.
 - Launch of a network of senior communications and campaign practitioners (from civil society and business) to guide the collective strategy, ensure individual efforts complement rather than duplicate each other, and develop key moments to demonstrate and amplify the strength of the collective movement.
- *Enabling Nature-Based Decisions and Tools, including corporate and national natural capital accounts:* The post-2020 global biodiversity framework and associated action agenda must drive integrated (spatial) planning approaches and nature-based decision-making. The Bend it! Nature Action Agenda platform would set gold standards for the quality and traceability of the commitments that it attracts, effectively ensuring that any stakeholder engaging in the effort could demonstrate how nature is integrated in its decision-making. To this end, a report showcasing good practice in Nature-Based Decisions could be commissioned, outlining international, national and subnational integrative consultative, planning and monitoring approaches.

Governments could also consider the types of incentives and policy frameworks that could be required (and/or created) to promote nature-based decision-making in key economic sectors, including in the COP13 and COP14 mainstreaming sectors under the CBD process. In addition, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework must articulate a new, broader narrative around biodiversity, people and the

economy that helps business and investors make better nature-based decisions within their operations and planning, and along supply chains – akin to the Scope 1,2,3 criteria for climate emissions where a ‘user-case’ can be made for businesses for taking account of nature, and for civil society/ sector entities to make within their planning, procurement and their policy making roles, at local, national level and, where relevant, on cross-border/trade issues.

In terms of monitoring approaches, corporate natural capital accounts could potentially transform decision-making and accountability to integrate nature into business operations. Furthermore, the preparatory process should explore whether these accounting approaches, including the system of environment-economic accounting (SEEA) at the national level, could become a central reporting mechanism for the post-2020 biodiversity agenda. The establishment of national ecosystem or natural capital accounts provides for a whole-of-government approach to monitoring the outcomes of conservation actions, mainstreaming and other implementation efforts. An ambitious post-2020 framework could include key policy questions for accounts such as accelerating the implementation of conservation actions and a comprehensive restoration agenda.

- *Capacity Building of Science, Technology & Innovation Literacy Around Nature, People and The Economy:* For it to be effective and address the scope and scale of threats to our planet’s biosphere, the post 2020 global biodiversity framework must address issues of distribution and fairness and make significant efforts to bridge science, technology and innovation literacy challenges among and within countries, ensuring gains are equitable and accessible, leaving no one behind. Governments could create the incentives that leverage innovation in science, technology and a knowledge economy to address transboundary and transdisciplinary planetary threats.

Integrated approaches are required to address these threats and to bend the curve of biodiversity loss³. An all-hands-on-deck approach is required to combat these threats, and moreover, the innovations and technologies developed to address these threats must be aligned with local culture and context. “Actions and policies that strengthen science, technology and innovation and human capacity-building in every country are needed to create knowledge-based, innovative societies that utilize scientific evidence to help to inform policy and inspire science-based solutions.”⁴

Some targeted initiatives should focus on:

1. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education at all student levels, using innovative teaching and learning approaches such as improvisational performances, tabletop and digital learning games, and social virtual, augmented, and X-Reality modalities in the classroom.
2. Future frontiers of science initiatives that are accessible and scalable for low-income nations, such as, sequencing their local genetic diversity (e.g. Amazon Bank of Codes), employing potentially low-tech nature survey techniques (e.g. [environmental DNA](#) (eDNA) biodiversity

³ See Figure 2.

⁴ From the UN-ECOSOC High-level political forum on sustainable development Multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals: summary by the Co-Chairs

surveys), harvesting natural products in a sustainable manner (e.g. [venomics](#) for health and agriculture).

3. Creating a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to drive economic viability for nature-based technologies.

4. Based on interdisciplinary STEM projects that combine the “hard” and “soft” fields to ensure technical and social sensibilities are aligned at the local level.

- *Disruptive Innovation to Create “Game Changing” Contributions*: The time between now and 2020 is short to create the incentives and to facilitate game changing contributions. By encouraging the private sector and other relevant actors to initiate disruptive actions, this could send a signal of greater support to end damaging business as usual approaches. For example, *Nature-X Moonshots*⁵ could be considered. The Nature-X moonshots challenges should be ambitious, exploratory and groundbreaking projects that have a strong science and technology foundation and be directed by a multistakeholder coalition of government and nongovernment actors to ensure successes are quickly identified and scaled. Additionally, the moonshots should address both “hard” and “soft” (“social”) science, technology, and innovation literacy areas. While it is tempting to focus on the hardware technological challenges, it is imperative that we give equal focus to social technologies, as these are crucial for understanding and modifying cultural attitudes and behavior about biodiversity, people and the economy. One such example is the Amazon Bank of Codes which is currently targeted for pilot phase starting in early 2019.

Presentations of the Bend It! Nature Action framework (and explanations of how to engage in support of the CBD process) are planned to be undertaken by interested council members at various business and multi-stakeholder event(s) supported by the World Economic Forum (or others), later in 2019 and through 2020 in the run up to the Beijing COP15.

⁵ A moonshot is an ambitious, exploratory and ground-breaking project undertaken without any expectation of near-term profitability or benefit. It is done because we must, because the cost of inaction is too high for society.

Annex 1: About the World Economic Forum

Our Mission

The World Economic Forum is the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation.

The Forum engages the foremost political, business and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

It was established in 1971 as a not-for-profit foundation and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. It is independent, impartial and not tied to any special interests. The Forum strives in all its efforts to demonstrate entrepreneurship in the global public interest while upholding the highest standards of governance. Moral and intellectual integrity is at the heart of everything it does.

Our activities are shaped by a unique institutional culture founded on the stakeholder theory, which asserts that an organization is accountable to all parts of society. The institution carefully blends and balances the best of many kinds of organizations, from both the public and private sectors, international organizations and academic institutions.

We believe that progress happens by bringing together people from all walks of life who have the drive and the influence to make positive change.

Read the latest Annual Report [here](#). Find out about our Foundation [Regulations](#) and [Statutes](#).

About the Global Future Councils

The World Economic Forum's Global Future Councils are the world's foremost interdisciplinary knowledge network dedicated to promoting innovative thinking to shape a sustainable and inclusive future for all.

The network convenes more than 700 of the most relevant and knowledgeable thought leaders from academia, government, business and civil society, grouped in expertise-based, thematic councils. In a global environment marked by short-term and siloed thinking, the Global Future Councils foster interdisciplinary and long-range approaches. They provide thought leadership on key global challenges, and the impact and governance of emerging technologies through:

- Scoping and monitoring trends and developments
- Contextualizing global shifts within the main regional or national frameworks
- Deepening understanding of the drivers and enablers of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and its impact on global systems
- Informing the World Economic Forum's strategic initiatives
- Highlighting the implications of these dynamics for decision-makers

Annex 2 Text of the Sharm El Sheik to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People

UN Biodiversity Conference 2018, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt Announcement:

Sharm El-Sheikh to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People

The Republic of Egypt, as the President of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its concurrent meetings (COP14), and the People's Republic of China, as future host of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its concurrent meetings (COP15) in 2020, together with the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, are teaming up to launch the **Sharm El-Sheikh to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People**.

The Action Agenda for Nature and People – which will be hosted on an online platform – aims to catalyze a groundswell of actions from all sectors and stakeholders in support of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, while enabling the mapping of current global efforts, in order to assess impact and gaps.

RATIONALE

More than 77% of land on Earth, excluding Antarctica, has been modified by humans, up from just 15% a century ago. Vertebrate populations have declined by 60% from their 1970 levels. And the most recent study by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that the seas have absorbed 60% more heat than previously thought, which means that the Earth is more sensitive to fossil fuel emissions, making it much more difficult to keep global warming within safe levels this century.

We are rapidly destroying nature, our life support system, but we have the knowledge and the skills to change this path. We are in urgent need of effective, multi-stakeholder action of a magnitude never seen before to **change the current trajectory of human life on Earth: from self-extinction, to survival and thriving together**, with all the ecosystems and forms of life on Earth.

VISION

The Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, together with the Governments of Egypt and China, are launching the **Action Agenda for Nature and People to inspire and take meaningful steps towards building a future global sustainable economy**. The Agenda is meant for the benefit, prosperity, and well-being of all countries and people to achieve the Convention's Vision of Living in Harmony with Nature by 2050.

Through promoting nature's fundamental role in our economic, social, and ecological systems, as the infrastructure supporting life on Earth and human sustainable development, the Agenda will enable **a paradigm shift in the human-nature relationship**: from abuse and neglect to respect, value and sustainability.

The platform aims to accelerate the transformations needed to achieve the three objectives of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity: conservation; sustainable use; and equitable sharing of the benefits resulting from the utilization of genetic resources. The Action Agenda will also contribute to enhancing the implementation of the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011-2020, in its remaining two years, while supporting the design of an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, for adoption at COP15.

OBJECTIVES

The Action Agenda has three main objectives:

1. **Raise public awareness about the urgent need to stem biodiversity loss and restore biodiversity health for the sake of humanity and the global ecosystem;**
2. **Inspire and help implement nature-based solutions to meet key global challenges;**
3. **Catalyze cooperative initiatives across sectors and stakeholders** in support of the global biodiversity goals.

PLATFORM

The Action Agenda for Nature and People will be hosted on **an online platform to receive and showcase concrete commitments and contributions to biodiversity**, from stakeholders across all sectors, in the run-up to COP15, to be held in 2020 in Beijing, China. This will enable the mapping of global efforts on biodiversity, in order to estimate impact and to identify key gaps.

The Nature Action Agenda will also entail specific action areas linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. A special emphasis will be placed on the Nature-Climate-Oceans-Water-Land nexus.

We invite and will encourage the announcement of other initiatives from state and non-state actors to raise ambition both in the field of conservation, sustainable use and access and benefit sharing, and in mainstreaming biodiversity solutions and conservation measures across all sectors. We intend to later announce specific ideas to champion and further mobilize support to the Action Agenda.