

Input to the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

“Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD)
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Executive Summary: Putting biodiversity on a path to recovery is essential for building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Biodiversity and ecosystems feature prominently across many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets. Biodiversity is explicitly highlighted in SDGs 14 and 15, but also underpins a much wider set of Goals. On our current trajectory, biodiversity, and the services it provides, will continue to decline, jeopardizing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights how critical the health of ecosystems is for human well-being and sustainable development. As with other issues, the COVID-19 pandemic had differential effects, both in terms of impacts on the environment as well impacts on policy processes. The build back better agenda reiterates the imperative to explore further avenues for leaving no one behind and building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the links between biodiversity loss and pandemic risk, as well as the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development more generally, recovery measures should also address the common drivers of biodiversity loss, invest in activities that reduce the risks of future pandemics, and build resilience and safeguards to achieve long term sustainable development.

Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity requires a significant shift away from ‘business as usual’ across a broad range of human activities, that can be catalyzed through the adoption and implementation of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Parties and other Governments, at all levels, relevant organizations and initiatives, indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, business and civil society organizations, as well as other stakeholders, have a key role to play in building momentum for the adoption and the implementation of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Options are available to the global community that could simultaneously slow, halt and ultimately reverse biodiversity loss, limit climate change and improve the capacity to adapt to it and meet other SDGs. A high level of technical, economic, and financial cooperation, assistance, commitment, engagement, and concerted efforts within and between countries is needed to achieve the global goals and targets, including the proposed targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the SDGs. Policies that foster synergies on mitigating biodiversity loss and climate change, while also considering their societal impacts, offer the opportunity to maximize co-benefits and help to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Several of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Aichi Biodiversity) targets are reflected in the SDG targets. Given that the Aichi Biodiversity Targets have endpoints of 2020, the High-level Political Forum may wish to consider, as appropriate, providing further guidance on the possible role of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in the further implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It may also wish to re-emphasize the essential role of biodiversity in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals; express its support for the ongoing process of developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and further help to galvanize political momentum for an ambitious and practical post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022.

Introduction: A robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework to advance the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Biodiversity and ecosystem services contribute to human well-being. Globally, nearly half of the human population is directly dependent on natural resources for its livelihood, and many of the most vulnerable people, including indigenous peoples and local communities, women and girls, and youth, depend directly on biodiversity to fulfil their daily subsistence needs. Biodiversity is also at the centre of many economic activities, including those related to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism and as such underpins social and development priorities. Societies also have less tangible but highly-valued connections with nature that help to define identities, cultures and beliefs.

Biodiversity and ecosystems feature prominently across many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets¹. Biodiversity is explicitly highlighted in SDGs 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land), but also underpins a much wider set of Goals. All the SDGs require adequate ecosystem services, including those related to water filtration, air quality regulation, land and soil quality, sustainable energy, climate mitigation, among others.

As highlighted in the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, on our current trajectory, biodiversity, and the services it provides, will continue to decline, jeopardizing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Around 1 million species are already at risk of extinction and there will be a further acceleration in the global rate of species extinction, unless action is taken to reduce the intensity of drivers of biodiversity loss.

Further, as identified by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)², the direct drivers of change in nature with the largest global impact have been changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution, and invasion of alien species. These five direct drivers result from an array of underlying causes – the indirect drivers of change – which are in turn underpinned by societal values and behaviours that include production and consumption patterns, human population dynamics and trends, trade, technological innovations and local to global governance.

With biodiversity declining faster than at any time in human history, the deterioration of nature threatens quality of life and intensifies risks posed to well-being, our economies and our planet. Research by the World Economic Forum (WEF) estimates that \$44 trillion of economic value generation – more than half of the world's total GDP – is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services. The loss of nature has therefore been identified as one of the most severe environmental risks, along with climate action failure and extreme weather³.

¹ The links between the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and biodiversity were highlighted in the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, <https://www.cbd.int/gbo5>. Technical note on Biodiversity and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-technical-note-en.pdf> ; policy brief version <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-policy-brief-en.pdf>.

² IPBES, Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 2019, <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment>.

³ World Economic Forum, The Global Risks Report 2022, 17th edition, Insight report, https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2022.pdf.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights how critical the health of ecosystems is for human well-being and sustainable development. A special virtual session of CBD’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice was convened in December 2020 on the interlinkages between biodiversity and health, the One Health approach, and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic⁴. The importance of a more integrated, cross-sectoral and biodiversity-inclusive One Health approach that would address the common drivers of biodiversity loss, climate change, increased pandemic risk while supporting better health and well-being outcomes were raised as part of efforts to build back better and integrate biodiversity considerations into economic recovery plans and policies⁵.

There are many opportunities for responses to COVID-19, including both short term stimulus measures and longer-term approaches to ‘build back better’ to contribute to sustainable development, and reduce the risk of future pandemics⁶. However currently most post COVID-19 recovery measures neglect these opportunities⁷. Restoring humanity’s relationship with nature is urgently needed to achieve a green and healthy recovery from COVID-19 and to build back better – which is the focus of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. As part of the build back better agenda, policies that simultaneously address synergies between mitigating biodiversity loss and climate change, while also considering their societal impacts, offer the opportunity to maximize co-benefits and help advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As highlighted in the report of a joint workshop by IPBES and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)⁸, climate change and biodiversity loss are closely interconnected and share common drivers through human activities; limiting global warming to ensure a habitable climate and protecting biodiversity are mutually supporting goals, and their achievement is essential for sustainably providing benefits to people.

With a view to putting biodiversity on a path to reach the 2050 Vision of world living in harmony with nature, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, currently being negotiated under the auspices of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), represents a historic opportunity to set an example of a global agreement for action on biodiversity, building on the outcomes of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020⁹. A first part of the UN Biodiversity Conference, comprising the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-15), the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 10) and the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (COP-MOP 4), was held in Kunming, China from 11 to 15 October 2021.

The Kunming Declaration¹⁰ was adopted at the high-level segment of the meetings. Ministers and other heads of delegation committed to ensure the development, adoption and implementation of an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework, that includes provision of the necessary means of implementation, in line with the Convention, and appropriate mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and review, to reverse the current loss of biodiversity and ensure that biodiversity is put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature”.

⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-SBI-SS-02>

⁵ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/844e/0d9b/40ed8f7e926da88af5d6624b/sbstta-sbi-ss-02-03-en.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/44f2/38b3/cf38b99f5527f600c19e3c09/sbstta-sbi-ss-02-02-en.pdf>, Section III

⁷ https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2022.pdf.

⁸ IPCC-IPBES co-sponsored workshop on Biodiversity and climate change, Workshop report, 2021, https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2021-06/20210609_workshop_report_embargo_3pm_CEST_10_june_0.pdf.

⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/sp/> and <https://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/2011-2020/Aichi-Targets-EN.pdf>.

¹⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/c2db/972a/fb32e0a277bf1ccff742be5/cop-15-05-add1-en.pdf>

The declaration also addresses a number of key elements needed for a successful post-2020 global biodiversity framework: mainstreaming biodiversity across all decision-making; phasing out and redirection of harmful subsidies; strengthening the rule of law; recognizing the full and effective participation and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities; and ensuring an effective mechanism to monitor and review progress, increase the provision of financial, technological and capacity building support among others. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework is expected to be finalized and adopted at the second part of CBD COP-15, which will take place in 2022¹¹.

Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity requires a significant shift away from ‘business as usual’ across a broad range of human activities. In addition, the second edition of the Local Biodiversity Outlooks¹² emphasizes that putting the cultures and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities at the heart of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework would help to deliver sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing, and positive outcomes for biodiversity and climate. The adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will pave the way for accelerating the uptake of transformative transitions and tackling climate change, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, and a wide range of socio-economic challenges by delivering numerous co-benefits from healthy ecosystems.

Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic provide both an opportunity and a need to build back better and greener - for transformative changes towards a sustainable future in which all people are able to live in harmony with nature, leaving no one behind. In addition, ongoing discussions regarding the potential establishment of an agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, provide an opportunity for considering the strengthening of environmental dimensions within One Health approaches, building on the linkages between environmental degradation including biodiversity loss, and zoonotic diseases that may lead to future pandemics.

Global coordinated efforts and strong leadership are urgently needed to catalyze a decade of action for people, the planet, nature and climate, with a view to tackling the triple environmental crisis as a foundation for the sustainability of the planet and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1. Progress, experience, lessons learned, challenges and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the SDGs under review in the 2022 HLPF from the vantage point of the CBD and its Protocols

In the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, published in 2020, the Convention on Biological Diversity undertook a comprehensive review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the corresponding targets of the Sustainable Development Goals¹³. This assessment is reproduced in annex 1 to this note. Where information is available, updates to this review are provided in the subsequent subsections of this section.

¹¹ While several meetings of CBD’s Subsidiary Bodies and Open-Ended Working group were held virtually¹¹, the COVID-19 pandemic travel and restrictions measures have delayed the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, thereby minimizing the available time to achieve new goals and targets by 2050 and 2030, respectively.

¹² <https://www.cbd.int/gbo5/local-biodiversity-outlooks-2>

¹³ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2020) Global Biodiversity Outlook 5. Montreal. <https://www.cbd.int/gbo5>

Impact of sanitary measures and lockdowns in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in line with the three objectives of the CBD and its Protocols

Lockdown measures, travel restrictions and the slowdown of economic activities stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic have had a short-term positive impact on the environment and biodiversity, however, these reductions have been relatively short lived rather than presenting a systemic transition towards sustainability.

The health response to COVID-19 has also increased challenges related to pollution. Prior to the pandemic, pollution - including from plastics and other waste - was already a major driver of biodiversity loss and the actions taken to minimize waste to date have been largely insufficient¹⁴. Ten of thousands of tonnes of extra medical waste from the response to the COVID-19 pandemic have put tremendous strain on health care waste management systems around the world, threatening human and environmental health and exposing a dire need to improve waste management practices¹⁵. This highlights the need to increase current efforts to mainstream biodiversity within and across sectors and the importance of working in partnerships and through models that engage with the private sector, in line with SDG 17.

The economic impact of COVID-19 and the need for funding to address the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to the global health response, have in some cases reduced funding for other aspects of the SDGs, like the environment. As reflected in the OECD Development Co-operation Report 2020¹⁶, shifts in funding allocations to health and humanitarian assistance from other sectors could hamper a comprehensive multi-sector approach to addressing COVID-19 and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, it will be important to maintain an adequate distribution of ODA across key sectors, and including for biodiversity.

Linkages between biodiversity loss and health in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the relationship between people and nature. The Workshop report on Biodiversity and Pandemics¹⁷ convened by IPBES noted that the many of the underlying causes of pandemics are the same global environmental changes that drive biodiversity loss and climate change, including land use change, agricultural expansion and intensification, and unsustainable wildlife trade and consumption. Media coverage of this relationship has been notable. While this suggests an increase in awareness of the links between biodiversity, human health and wellbeing, messages and their potential interpretation are varied and complex, and the overall impact of this will only be known once the impact of the global crisis, and the longer-term changes it has caused, become clearer.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also shed light on the importance of biodiversity for people, as people sought increasingly to spend time in the outdoors and nature during the pandemic in order to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy. In particular the critical importance of urban nature has been noted with access to green spaces being an important factor in supporting health and well-being while people observe social distancing requirements.

¹⁴ For example, see the assessment of progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 8 (pollution) in GBO-5.

¹⁵ <https://www.who.int/news/item/01-02-2022-tonnes-of-covid-19-health-care-waste-expose-urgent-need-to-improve-waste-management-systems>

¹⁶ OECD, Development Co-operation Report 2020: Learning from Crises, Building Resilience, Estimates of official development assistance funding for COVID-19 response in 2020, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/f6d42aa5-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/f6d42aa5-en>

¹⁷ IPBES Workshop report on Biodiversity and Pandemics, Workshop report, 2020, https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2020-12/IPBES%20Workshop%20on%20Biodiversity%20and%20Pandemics%20Report_0.pdf

The linkages between biodiversity loss and the emergence of zoonotic diseases that could lead to pandemics, such as COVID-19, also reminds us that biodiversity is a key environmental determinant of human health. Ecosystems depend on a great diversity of organisms to provide the necessary services for life, health and well-being, including food, clean air, the quantity and quality of fresh water, medicines, spiritual and cultural values, climate regulation, pest and disease regulation, and disaster risk reduction.

Ensuring the conservation and protection of indigenous people and local communities territories is an efficient and cost-effective way to put biodiversity on a path to recovery and mitigate the risk of pathogen spillover that may lead to zoonotic diseases and pandemics. Their territories contain important areas of biodiversity, such as forests, deserts, grasslands, and marine environments, with less intensive deforestation and less environmental degradation compared to forests under other management strategies.

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of SDGs 14 and 15 under review, which are directly linked to the CBD and its Protocols.

Biodiversity is explicitly highlighted in SDGs 14 (Life Below Water) and 15 (Life on Land), but also underpins a much wider set of Goals. SDG 14 and 15 are closely linked to all Aichi Biodiversity targets adopted under the CBD. The COVID-19 pandemic mostly led to change in the strategy and roadmap for implementation and reporting activities on to implement the Aichi Biodiversity Targets – most activities, including capacity building, training, and meetings were undertaken virtually and by building online information sharing mechanisms.

- **SDG 14 on life below water**

As with other issues, the COVID-19 pandemic had differential effects, both in terms of impacts on the environment as well impacts on management efforts and policy processes. Unless changes to our approaches to use the marine environment are urgently implemented, a return to business as usual is likely to negate any long-term positive impacts of this economic slow-down on the ocean.

At the global level, and in the context of the CBD, the COVID-19 pandemic caused major delays in convening various CBD workshops and meetings, delaying the CBD decision-making processes, including on issues critical to marine and coastal biodiversity, and delaying the provision of guidance and advice to governments and other stakeholders in implementing efforts to achieve SDG 14. A number of major ocean-related processes were set to meet, and take important actions/decisions in 2020 (e.g., CBD COP 15, UN Ocean Conference, WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies, BBNJ negotiations), leading 2020 to be considered the “Super Year for the Ocean”. The COVID-19 pandemic caused delays in all of these processes, affecting the momentum and political capital on ocean issues, which could have otherwise accelerated the achievement of SDG 14. However, the increased reliance on virtual means for communication improved the ability of many stakeholders to participate in virtual meetings that they would otherwise not have been able to attend, and to more easily connect with a broad range of colleagues. At the national level, there is emerging evidence in many parts of the world that some management and enforcement efforts in marine and coastal areas were negatively impacted, and various projects and initiatives faced delays due to impacts on financial processes as a result of the pandemic.

- **SDG 15 on life on land**

There is a lack of data and information on direct impact of COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns on different ecosystems. The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected food and nutrition security and rural livelihoods, this making the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of agricultural and other managed land more urgent. Most direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic caused by lack of on-site staff are illegal harvesting, mining and poaching in protected areas, and increased cases of wildfires.

The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are intensifying inequalities in wealth and land ownership, exacerbating a major barrier to restoration. It is obvious that after a short-term reduction in environmental pressures with a gradual recovery of the economy, the risk of increased pressure on ecosystems is high. Many governments are loosening environmental standards to allow faster economic recovery. Facing the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CBD Secretariat has pivoted current support to countries for planning and implementing ecosystem restoration from in-person workshops to online options¹⁸.

- **Implementation of Aichi Target 11 in both marine and terrestrial realms (related to SDGs 14 and 15)**

The Programme of Work on Protected Areas adopted in 2004 as well as Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (ABT 11) of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, adopted by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) in 2010, helped speed up progress in protected and conserved areas. Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (ABT 11) is directly linked to SDG target 15.1, 15.4 and 15.5 and contributes to many other targets of the SDGs. Other Aichi Biodiversity Targets are also relevant to SDG14 and SDG15, as highlighted in the annex 2 to this document.

The substantial progress of ABT 11 enhances progress in the qualitative elements of the target, such as connectivity, coverage of areas important for biodiversity, ecological regions, and key biodiversity areas. It also contributes to the achievement of other Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

ABT 11 implementation progress:

Currently Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (ABT 11), which calls for 17% for terrestrial and 10% for marine and coastal areas to be effectively conserved by 2020, is one of the most widely implemented targets of the Strategic Plan. From the point of view of marine and coastal areas protection (ABT 11), coverage of marine protected areas increased from 0.29 percent to 2.4 percent (global ocean) between 1993 and 2010 and further to 8.01 percent by the end of 2021. The number of marine protected areas also increased to 17,721 and marine other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) to 192 by the end of 2021. Terrestrial protected areas increased to 13.6 percent by 2010, and then to 16.8 percent by December 2021. Currently there are 251,922 protected areas and 479 (terrestrial OECMs). This represents progress not only to the relevant sub-targets of SDG target 15 but also other targets of the SDGs. Overall, the momentum afforded by the recent successes of ABT 11 has provided encouragement to Parties of the CBD. Notably, SDG 15 reflects the targets set under the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including ABT 11, and linkages are maintained in the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

¹⁸ Massive open online course in 2022 in partnership with UNDP and the Learning for Nature platform: <https://www.learningfornature.org/en/courses/ecosystem-restoration/>

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDGs 4 and 5, reemphasising the importance of the education sector for mainstreaming biodiversity and improving the ability of women to participate in decision-making and to access biological resources

Greater access to education (SDG 4) builds human capital and thereby enables effective action, including collective action, to be taken. Women and girls' access to education is also critical to ensure they have the capacity and opportunity to contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of its benefits. This also enables women to play an active role in decision-making related to biodiversity, where they remain under-represented at all levels (SDG 5).

- **SDG 4 on quality education**

As expected, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on educational, research and capacity building activities related to the study of biodiversity, both at the domestic level and transnationally, due to the necessary restrictions on movements and as a consequence of increased costs of travel. Particular caution had also to be taken during field expeditions to avoid reverse transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and related variants back from humans to wild fauna. In some cases, sample collection was significantly slowed down and/or came to a complete halt.

Projections of the impact of COVID-19 on girls' education suggest that it has the potential to roll back substantial gains made in recent decades, with estimates indicating that 11 million girls are at risk of not returning to school¹⁹. This has longer-term implications for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, towards ensuring inclusive action to address biodiversity loss.

- **SDG 5 on gender equality**

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have widened gender inequalities, with more women pushed into poverty, facing escalating domestic violence, and burdened with additional care responsibilities. These impacts will affect efforts to achieve all of the SDGs, including those addressing biodiversity (SDGs 14 and 15). Less access to stable employment, less safety and security, and less time to devote to tasks outside of care work means that the opportunities available for and capacity of women to fully engage in efforts to halt biodiversity loss are correspondingly lessened.

In terms of policy implications related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ensuing delays in intergovernmental meetings intended to reach agreement on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework have amounted to more time for a consultative process to develop a new gender plan of action for the CBD²⁰. A draft gender plan of action is now being proposed for adoption at CBD COP-15, which will enable its implementation in tandem with the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Linkages with ABT 14 implementation progress:

Aichi Biodiversity Target 14 put an explicit focus on the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable²¹. There are numerous examples of the disproportionate impacts of a decline in ecosystem services on women and girls, although global information is limited. Conversely,

¹⁹ UNESCO Factsheet 2021, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375707>

²⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/b899/8ca5/902071cea57c8467e7b419bd/sbi-03-04-add2-rev2-en.pdf>

²¹ “By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.”

considering gender dimensions in biodiversity management can lead to positive outcomes for biodiversity and gender equality. Studies have demonstrated that increased involvement of women in local resource decision-making leads to better resource governance, management and conservation outcomes, and that success rates of community-based natural resource management are impacted positively when more women participate in decision-making. However, women remain significantly underrepresented in environmental ministries and district or community level committees; as of 2020, only 15 per cent of national environmental ministries were led by women²².

Due to sociocultural norms and discriminatory systems and practices, women and girls around the world face inequalities in access to biological resources such as land and water, and essential services. Globally, less than 15 per cent of landholders are women, and, while 164 countries recognize women's rights to own, use, make decisions and use land as collateral on equal terms with men, only 52 countries guarantee these rights in law and practice²³. Ensuring land ownership and rights for women in both law and practice enables women to have more substantive engagement in decision-making processes, and strengthens their capacity and incentive to invest in sustainable practices.

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on SDG17, highlighting the need to work in synergies to tackle the pandemic and the triple planetary crisis, and build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic

Partnerships are essential to address the triple planetary crisis and contribute to the build back better agenda, in a coordinated and mutually-supportive manner, building on existing partnerships across the United Nations systems and involving all stakeholders. Despite restrictions and lockdown measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, essential partnerships and collaboration across agencies in support of biodiversity were able to be maintained.

- **SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals**

The United Nations can play a key role in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the SDGs, with a focus on improving enabling conditions, access to relevant data and means of implementation at national level. Through the interagency mechanism of the United Nations Environment Management Group (EMG) and work conducted under the auspices of the UN Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), entities of the United Nations have worked together to provide system-wide inputs to the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (EMG) and to establish collective action to support its implementation (EMG and CEB).

A report dedicated to supporting the global biodiversity agenda was released²⁴, specifically targeting Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and country-level programmes, but also the UN's Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework itself, with a view to mainstreaming biodiversity for sustainable development and integrating biodiversity with other key areas, including human rights, strengthening of governance and the rule of law.

²² <https://www.iucn.org/news/gender/202103/new-data-reveals-slow-progress-achieving-gender-equality-environmental-decision-making>

²³ OECD (2019), SIGI 2019 Global Report: Transforming Challenges into Opportunities, Social Institutions and Gender Index, <https://doi.org/10.1787/bc56d212-en>

²⁴ EMG, Supporting the Global Biodiversity Agenda, a United Nations System Commitment for Action to assist Member States delivering on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, 2021, <https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EMG-Biodiversity-WEB.pdf>

Through the Common Approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery²⁵, the UN system has expressed a shared recognition of the urgency to act, and a commitment to mainstream biodiversity through better coordinated efforts that will connect and build on strategies and programmes of work of UN system entities.

Building on the report of a joint workshop by IPBES and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)²⁶ featuring how climate change and biodiversity loss are closely interconnected and share common drivers through human activities, the SCBD continues its efforts to leverage action, policies, programmes, and multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance the implementation of global agreements, in order to maximize co-benefits and leave no one behind. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the three Rio Conventions has continued to operate virtually, and a programme of joint activities was developed on the occasion UNFCCC COP26, under the Rio Conventions Pavilion²⁷.

With reference to decision XIV/34²⁸, in the recent years, the CBD has strengthened collaboration with partners for the Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People to mobilize non-state actors' commitments to the Action Agenda to make commitments in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. As of early February 2022, and despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Action Agenda²⁹ has grown in number of commitments, with 343 commitments and 130 partnership initiatives, including participation of over 700 organizations on 11 action categories. During the 2021 NGO Action Forum³⁰, on the margins of Part 1 of the COP15, eight biodiversity alliances representing dozens of NGOs and private-public organizations, publicly announced a joint call for action entitled "Towards Kunming: My Commitments for Nature" and over 50 commitments from China were made.

2. Assessment of the situation regarding the principle of "leaving no one behind" against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

One of the underlying principles for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to 'leave no one behind', as articulated in paragraphs 3, 4, 18, 23, 48, 72 and 74. Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems play an important role in the realization of this principle through their supporting role in achieving the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Ensuring the full enjoyment of the right to safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment for all, including for most vulnerable, and against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic

²⁵ CEB UN (2021) A common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery, CEB/2021/1/Add.1, https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/CEB_2021_1_Add.1%20%28Biodiversity%20Common%20Approach%29.pdf

²⁶ IPCC-IPBES co-sponsored workshop on Biodiversity and climate change, Workshop report, 2021, https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/2021-06/20210609_workshop_report_embargo_3pm_CEST_10_june_0.pdf.

²⁷ <http://www.riopavilion.org/unfccc-cop26-glasgow/>

²⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-34-en.pdf>

²⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/portals/action-agenda/>

³⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2021-2022/action-forum>

Globally and as noted in earlier sections of this submission, nearly half of the human population is directly dependent on natural resources for its livelihood, and many of the most vulnerable people depend directly on biodiversity to fulfil their daily subsistence needs. In his report³¹, the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, highlighted the lack of formal land and tenure rights making indigenous peoples and local communities, peasants, Afrodescendants, women and the poor “susceptible to displacement through actions ranging from land-grabbing and industrial resource extraction to the creation of new parks”. It was also noted that persons with disabilities could be disproportionately affected by the deterioration of nature, but could also contribute to conserving, protecting and sustainably using it, that Small island developing States are particularly vulnerable to biodiversity loss, and that individuals and communities working to safeguard human rights and protect nature from destruction and exploitation put themselves at grave risk in many States.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which has also disproportionately affected the most vulnerable and raised the issue of equitable access to public goods that include vaccines and health products, it is crucial to ensure the most vulnerable populations are not left behind. In particular, supporting the efforts of indigenous peoples and local communities in conserving and protecting their lands, many of which are critical to global biodiversity, would result in less poverty, lower rates of deforestation and better protection of the biodiversity and ecosystem functions on which these communities depend.

Leaving no one behind, a core principle for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

At the fourteenth meeting of the Parties (COP-14) held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, Parties agreed in decision 14/34 that the process to develop the post-2020 global biodiversity framework would be inclusive, participatory and gender responsive. In respect to a gender responsive approach, the decision indicated that the process would systematically integrate a gender perspective and ensure appropriate representation, particularly of women and girls, in the process. It was noted that efforts should be made to advance the collection, analysis and use of gender-sensitive data, including data disaggregated by sex.

In support of such an approach, the Secretariat prepared an official document for consideration by Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities and stakeholders on Advice to enable a gender-responsive process for the development of the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework³², along with an accompanying information document on Enabling a gender-responsive process for the development of the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework: supplementary background and tools³³.

In addition, the Convention has established mechanisms for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in meetings held under the Convention, including a Voluntary Fund for the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities³⁴ in CBD meetings, including the post-2020 global biodiversity framework process. Further the Convention has established the ad hoc open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions to, among other things, to enhance the role and involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.³⁵

³¹ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, Human rights depend on a healthy biosphere, 2020, <https://undocs.org/A/75/161>.

³² CBD/COP/14/9/Add.1, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/07dc/33eb/ea6d01c79f91d4da4ec01386/cop-14-09-add1-en.pdf>

³³ CBD/COP/14/INF/15, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/5ab6/13f3/3eff0c5b52c856db19b279ec/cop-14-inf-15-en.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/traditional/fund.shtml>

³⁵ <https://www.cbd.int/traditional/decisions.shtml>

Indigenous peoples and local community representatives following the Convention have formed a caucus, referred to as the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)³⁶. In response to decision 14/34, the Secretariat, along with the IIFB, organized three global thematic dialogues for indigenous peoples and local communities on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework³⁷, which contributed to strengthening the first draft of the framework.

3. Actions and policy recommendations in areas requiring urgent attention in relation to the implementation of the SDGs under review

Actions and policy recommendations in areas requiring urgent attention in relation to SDGs 14 and 15 under review, which are directly linked to the CBD and its Protocols

Several overarching lessons from the experiences in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 can help to inform the actions required to effectively reach the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDGs 14 and 15. Overall these lessons suggest that there is no single solution to address the ongoing decline of biodiversity and that a range of changes may be required. The SDGs are unlikely to be met unless ecosystem degradation is stopped and ecosystem restoration is undertaken at a significant scale. A high level of technical, economic, and financial cooperation, assistance, commitment, engagement, and concerted efforts within and between countries is needed to achieve the global goals and targets, including the targets of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework and of the SDGs.

The fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity outlook provides suggested actions and policy recommendations which are particularly relevant with a view to advancing progress on SDG 14 and 15. These include:

- Efforts to conserve and restore biodiversity need to be scaled up at all levels using approaches that will depend on local context. These need to combine major increases in the extent and effectiveness of well-connected protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, large-scale restoration of degraded habitats, and improvements in the condition of nature across farmed and urban landscapes as well as inland water bodies, coasts and oceans;
- Efforts to keep climate change well below 2 degrees C and close to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels are needed to prevent climate impacts from overwhelming all other actions in support of biodiversity. The conservation and restoration of ecosystems can play a substantial role in this. Such ‘nature-based solutions’ can also be an important part of adaptation to climate change;
- Effective steps need to be taken to address all remaining pressures driving biodiversity loss, including invasive alien species, pollution and the unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity especially in marine and inland water ecosystems.

In light of the policy challenges highlighted in the following section for SDG 14 and 15, it is essential that all stakeholders play an active role in implementing the forthcoming post-2020 global biodiversity framework in cross-sectoral and coordinated manner, as fragmented and piecemeal efforts to achieve the different elements of SDG 14 and SDG 15 will not be effective in achieving broader goals.

³⁶ <https://iifb-indigenous.org/>

³⁷ Information about the Dialogues available at <https://www.cbd.int/tk/post2020.shtml>

- **SDG 14 on life below water**

Moving forward in a post-pandemic world, it will be important to work to maintain any positive effects on the marine environment, utilize lessons learned and tools that have emerged, and shift away from unsustainable ways of working and living. In the context of SDG 14, this will mean working to maintain any positive environmental effects that have been yielded as a result of the pandemic-driven slowdown, effectively utilizing virtual means of cross-sectoral coordination (where appropriate), and ensuring that we avoid return to business as usual.

There is a major risk that significant efforts and funding will be directed towards recouping significant lost income in various ocean-related sectors, including tourism and fishing, with inadequate consideration of ecological sustainability. It is important that post-pandemic recovery is focused on strengthening the health of marine ecosystems as a basis for a productive ocean economy and other efforts have adequate safeguards in place to avoid adverse impacts on the ocean.

- **SDG 15 on life on land**

Despite the achievement of ABT 11 at the global level, there are still differences in the level of protection between countries and gaps in the qualitative elements that will need to be filled through implementation of the relevant Targets of the post 2020 global biodiversity framework. Effective implementation of proposed Target 3 of the post 2020 framework will include both protected areas coverage and the quality of protection and conservation and sustainable use of resources to ensure multiple benefits to society.

There are still significant opportunities in the identification, recognition and reporting of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), which have the potential to further improve the implementation of the quantitative and qualitative elements of the Target and contribute to the realization of multiple benefits.

Appropriate access and equitable benefit sharing (ABS) mechanisms are also important. In particular, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework presents an opportunity to raise awareness and mobilize resources to support the implementation of ABS frameworks at the national level as well as to support the implementation of ABS mechanisms in a mutually supportive manner. The development of indicators for proposed Goal C and Target 13 of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework further represents an opportunity to improve data collection on the implementation of ABS and the range of benefits it provides.

Actions and policy recommendations in areas requiring urgent attention in relation to SDGs 4 and 5 under review

Education and capacity-building are essential to further advance biodiversity awareness and mainstreaming, and the inclusion of gender considerations and traditional knowledge systems play a fundamental role in providing information on biodiversity management at all levels. Correspondingly, ensuring biodiversity knowledge and values are mainstreamed in the education sector is an important approach to advancing implementation of the SDGs.

In addition, greater equality and empowerment of women and girls, as called for in Goal 5, have a positive effect on biodiversity by affording women greater influence in its use. The full and effective involvement of women and indigenous peoples and local communities is essential to achieve global biodiversity targets and ensure a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

- **SDG 4 on quality education**

To strengthen awareness and understanding of gender and biodiversity linkages and increase access to quality education with regards to biodiversity, the CBD Secretariat has produced a number of knowledge products and information materials, including a publication outlining gender linkages relevant to the biodiversity issues addressed under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets³⁸. The Secretariat also led a participatory exercise to develop a set of training materials on gender and biodiversity for the South-East Asia and Pacific region³⁹. Educating decision-makers on the relevance gender issues and how they may be addressed in biodiversity policy and programming is an important step in ensuring sustainable and equitable outcomes for biodiversity and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Related efforts under the CBD include the development of the draft post-2020 gender plan of action, which proposes an objective to ensure women's equal access to resources, services and technologies to support their engagement in the governance, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

In addition, traditional knowledge systems play a fundamental role in providing information on biodiversity management at the local level. As distinct peoples, indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions, providing education in their own languages in a manner appropriate to their cultural teaching and learning methods.⁴⁰ In this context, the CBD has adopted several safeguards and voluntary guidelines to respect, preserve and maintain traditional knowledge: the Tkarihwaí:ri Code of Ethical Conduct⁴¹, the Mo'otz Kuxtal Voluntary Guidelines⁴², and the Rutzolijirisaxik Voluntary Guidelines⁴³. In addition, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing ensures that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is accessed with the prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities, and mutually agreed terms have been established⁴⁴. To support the capacity development of indigenous peoples and local communities and Parties, the Secretariat implemented a capacity development programme for indigenous peoples and local communities during the biennium 2017-2018; four regional workshops were organized in Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific, Asia, and Africa. Furthermore, the Secretariat launched a three-part series of Training Manuals for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the Convention on Biological Diversity⁴⁵.

In the coming decade, substantial increases in financial and other resource flows to enhance capacity development for developing countries will be required. A culture of data sharing, capacity-building, technology transfer, strengthening the biodiversity research infrastructure, including collections, good science-based education, and a significant increase in resource mobilization towards developing countries are needed to implement and track the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. As highlighted in the Virtual Science-Policy Forum for Biodiversity⁴⁶, co-organized by the SCBD, jointly with the eight International Conference on Sustainability Science (April 2021), education and research, in particularly biodiversity research, should be strengthened, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

³⁸ CBD, Addressing Gender Issues and Actions in Biodiversity Objectives, https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-towards2020-gender_integration-en.pdf

³⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/gender/doc/cbd-gender-training-materials-seap-en.pdf>

⁴⁰ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (A/RES/61/295), Art. 14

⁴¹ CBD, [the Tkarihwaí:ri Code of Ethical Conduct](#)

⁴² CBD, [the Mo'otz Kuxtal Voluntary Guidelines](#)

⁴³ CBD, [the Rutzolijirisaxik Voluntary Guidelines](#)

⁴⁴ Article 7, Nagoya Protocol

⁴⁵ The 1st Training Manual is available at <https://www.cbd.int/traditional/doc/training/cbd-training-manual-01-en.pdf>

⁴⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2021/pr-2021-04-23-spf-en.pdf>

Knowledge sharing will also play an important role in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in particular when it comes to areas of rapid change such as pioneer technologies. Technologies such as those used for biotechnology, intelligence, artificial nanotechnology and others, most often are not equally accessible across the globe. In the context of leaving no one behind and ensuring access to global public goods, including global health public goods, more equitable access to technology will have an important role to play. In this sense, the work that the SCBD has already started along with other organisations will be key to continue sharing valuable information and maximize sharing of expertise and resources. Cooperation, even if informal with other MEAS and relevant organisations has proven useful to avoid duplication of efforts and achieve important goals. It is expected that the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will also benefit from this type of knowledge sharing experiences.

- **SDG 5 on gender equality**

Lessons learned from the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 include the importance of strengthening the integration of gender, the role of indigenous peoples and local communities and stakeholder engagement. Analysis has shown that opportunities for effective action in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 were missed due to insufficient involvement of women, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders in the design and implementation of NBSAPs.

The review of implementation of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action⁴⁷ revealed that the Plan had a valuable impact in bringing attention to and advancing action on gender equality and women's empowerment. Overall progress in implementation was somewhat difficult to measure, as the limited availability of sex-disaggregated data, relevant gender analysis and appropriate indicators posed a challenge for assessment. These lessons provide additional impetus for the post-2020 global framework to set stronger requirements for future action on biodiversity to include these considerations as foundational prerequisites.

The theory of change in the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework⁴⁸ acknowledges the need for appropriate recognition of gender equality, women's empowerment, youth, gender-responsive approaches and the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the implementation of the framework. It further states that it will be implemented taking a rights-based approach and recognizing the principle of intergenerational equity. Enabling conditions identified for the framework include ensuring greater gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, reducing inequalities, greater access to education, and employing rights-based approaches.

Target 21 of the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework proposes to ensure equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, and respect their rights over lands, territories and resources, as well as by women and girls, and youth. In addition, a draft gender plan of action⁴⁹ has been developed, to be put forward for adoption at COP-15. The outcomes and objectives of the draft plan are closely aligned with the SDG 5 targets, particularly targets 5.5 and 5.a, among other SDG targets⁵⁰. The plan puts forward actions to be undertaken by Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities and stakeholders, with support from the SCBD.

⁴⁷ CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.3, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/2a29/307a/3235fdabd9edd01b9576e42b/sbi-03-02-add3-en.pdf>

⁴⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/914a/eca3/24ad42235033f031badf61b1/wg2020-03-03-en.pdf>

⁴⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/0919/6830/6fe8d737b8192a39f3378e23/sbi-03-04-add2-rev2-en.pdf>

⁵⁰ Information document "Draft Post-2020 Gender Plan of Action – Highlighting Linkages with the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework", <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/444a/f794/c4ff3e8f037180bb33fa0afc/sbi-03-inf-41-en.pdf>

Actions and policy recommendations in areas requiring urgent attention in relation to SDG17 under review, to ensure that all stakeholders support the uptake of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

The successful implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, once adopted, will rely on the uptake and scale-up of policy measures and recommendations at all levels. Parties and other Governments, at all levels, relevant organizations and initiatives, indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and older persons, business and civil society organizations, as well as other stakeholders have a key role to play in building momentum for the adoption and the implementation of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

- **SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals**

At the national level, close interaction amongst the national focal points for the different multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) is essential for strengthening cooperation and collaboration in implementation. Conducting this in the context of the national mechanism that coordinates actions on the Sustainable Development Goals may provide additional benefits. Additional steps may need to be taken to further encourage interaction among focal points where this is not already established. Furthermore, it is critical to encourage, promote and facilitate collaboration in development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). It is envisaged that the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) will take forward the outcomes of the Consultative Process and the UN Common Approach and support their implementation through an EMG Issue Management Group on Biodiversity.

At the subnational and local level, SDGs 14 and 15 are supported by several partnerships engendered in the context of the CBD, following the adoption by its Parties of a ten-year Plan of Action for the engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in 2010. More recently since 2019, leading subnational and local governments and their networks have come together under the so-called “Edinburgh Process”, a platform for network development, which has also spun off specific initiatives for cities (CitiesWithNature) and regions (RegionsWithNature)⁵¹.

Opportunity to advance SDG14 and 15 through the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030):

Currently, there is insufficient political support and technical capacity in both the public and private sectors to invest in the many hundreds of thousands of ecosystem restoration initiatives worldwide that are needed to achieve restoration at such a scale. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and with support of collaborating agencies including the CBD, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) is building a global movement aiming to halt the degradation of ecosystems and restore them to achieve global goals⁵².

Opportunity to advance SDG 15 through the Global Soil Partnership:

The Global Soil Partnership⁵³, established by FAO in 2012, aims to raise awareness and facilitate the implementation of sustainable soil management practices that help reverse soil degradation. The Partnership is currently developing its Global Soil Partnership 2022-2030 work plan, which will in part link to SDG 15.3.1 and its indicator measuring the proportion of land that is degraded over total land area. The Global Soil Partnership’s Action Framework and the International Soil Biodiversity Initiative’s updated plan of action will both contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 15.

⁵¹ CBD/SBI/3/19, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/0b09/511f/8eeb6c298438b93c6b20af91/sbi-03-19-en.pdf>

⁵² <https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/>

⁵³ <https://www.fao.org/global-soil-partnership/en/>

Continuing ongoing efforts with regards to mainstreaming biodiversity within and across sectors:

Parties to the CBD have reaffirmed their call for partnerships in relation to mainstreaming biodiversity on land and in the sea into all economic sectors and levels of government. The proposed decision before Parties at the next Conference (document CBD/SBI/3/CRP 16⁵⁴) “invites Parties and encourages other Governments, in collaboration with various sectors, to establish, or further strengthen, national, subnational, regional or global business and biodiversity partnerships as institutional partners for the implementation of the long-term strategic approach in accordance with national priorities and circumstances [...]”.

Continuing ongoing efforts to engage with the business sector:

Parties to the CBD have supported 23 national chapters of the Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity, who come together regularly for a Business Forum parallel to the Conference of the Parties, including at CBD COP 15 phase II in Kunming, later this year. In addition, leading corporations have come together in commitments to partnerships for targets 14 and 15, such as BusinessForNature, supported by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and Act4Nature. Several corporations in the area of food committed to the One Planet for Biodiversity campaign. Likewise, several investment and finance players collaborated to launch the Finance for Biodiversity partnership.

Continuing ongoing efforts on the Action agenda:

In recent years, the current partners to mobilize commitments to the Action Agenda has significantly increased. The main work after COP-15 will involve making commitments to be more measurable and raise awareness of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; showcasing the role the Action Agenda can play to connect climate change and other CBD programmes and aligning it with drivers of biodiversity loss.

The COVID-19 crisis reveals how inclusive and equitable solutions are needed – from immediate response to preparedness and prevention and eventual long-term sustainable economic recovery. The Action Agenda provides a source to recognize actions that promote sustainability, and to advance robust multi-partner solutions to achieve a vision of Living in Harmony with Nature by 2050.

Continuing ongoing efforts at the subnational and local levels:

In terms of recommending and calling for partnerships to achieve harmonization of governance across different levels of spatial planning, in sea as well as on land, the 195 CBD Parties are proposing the adoption of a ten-year Plan of Action for the engagement of subnational and local governments in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. As a result, a Global Partnership on Subnational and Local Governments for Biodiversity⁵⁵ should be established as an informal cooperative platform.

4. Policy recommendations, commitments and cooperation measures for promoting a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the pandemic while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Co-benefits of advancing the health of the planet and health of the people, and preventing zoonotic diseases that can lead to future pandemics, as part of a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

⁵⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/aa97/8fa2/4d21550ccf7f670e3dc3f14a/sbi-03-crp-16-en.pdf>

⁵⁵ The partnership will be further supported by an Advisory Committee of Cities, in which ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability acts as Secretariat, and an Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments.

Over the last decade, the multiplicity and complexity of linkages between biodiversity and human health have been increasingly recognized, as reflected in the findings of the joint CBD/WHO *State of Knowledge Review on Connecting Global Priorities: Biodiversity and Human Health*⁵⁶. The Convention has developed guidance on integrating biodiversity considerations into One Health approaches.

Infectious diseases (e.g. Ebola virus disease, HIV/AIDS, Monkeypox, SARS, MERS, COVID-19) highlight the complex linkages among biodiversity, global environmental change and human health, and the critical need for integrated, transdisciplinary approaches such as One Health. As highlighted in the IPBES Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics⁵⁷, almost all pandemics, and the majority of emerging infectious diseases (EIDs), are caused by wildlife-origin pathogens, and pandemics risk is increasing rapidly, driven by exponentially increasing anthropogenic changes.

At its twenty-fourth meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) will consider a draft global plan of action on biodiversity and health⁵⁸, which aims to support Parties in implementing a biodiversity-inclusive One Health approach and a sustainable recovery from COVID-19. The intricate links between biodiversity and the emergence of zoonotic diseases reminds us of the need to build back better and restore a healthy planet, as biodiversity is the foundation of life on Earth and underpins the health of all living beings, including human health.

An opportunity to strengthen the global pandemic preparedness and response agenda, including by leveraging a biodiversity-inclusive One Health approach

In the context the decision by the World Health Assembly at its special session⁵⁹ to establish an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response⁶⁰, there is an opportunity to further emphasize the importance of One Health approaches for disease prevention, preparedness and surveillance, including in view of linkages between biodiversity loss and the emergence of zoonotic diseases, as highlighted in the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook's One Health transition⁶¹ and CBD decisions⁶². A One Health transition can play a critical and catalytic role in reducing the loss and degradation of biodiversity, restoring healthy ecosystems, enhancing the health, well-being and livelihood of all living beings, including humans, animals and plants, and preventing future pandemics.

In addition, the prevention of and preparedness for the deliberate use of biological pathogens would need to be addressed, including through greater internal UN coherence and coordination in this regard. In view of strengthening interagency cooperation and multi-stakeholder engagement, the following trends might need to be considered: (i) the emergence of do-it-yourself-biology-labs with high-tech equipment in both the developed and developing world, and the citizen scientist movement that may be able to resolve many every-day problems but also comes with risks; (ii) trends toward automation and the convergence of biotechnology, information technology and artificial intelligence technologies, as well as the ever-easier decentralized access to DNA sequencing that can be used by citizen scientists; (iii) increasing antimicrobial resistance, which is a likely source of a future pandemic and an important element impacting human, animal and environmental health; and (iv) the lack of comprehensive biorisk assessments, associated regulatory guidance and implementation.

⁵⁶ WHO/CBD, Connecting global priorities: biodiversity and human health: a state of knowledge review, 2015, <https://www.cbd.int/health/SOK-biodiversity-en.pdf>

⁵⁷ IPBES Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics, 27-31 July 2020, <https://www.ipbes.net/pandemics>

⁵⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/bc8c/4c00/21af4e66ff6b5b5eef46bfb1/sbstta-24-item-09-non-paper-en.pdf>

⁵⁹ WHA special session from 29 November to 1 December 2021, https://apps.who.int/gb/e/e_whassa2.html

⁶⁰ [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHASSA2/SSA2\(5\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHASSA2/SSA2(5)-en.pdf)

⁶¹ <https://www.cbd.int/health/doc/gbo-5-en-178-181.pdf>

⁶² Including decision COP14/4, <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-04-en.pdf>

A robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework and a shift from ‘business as usual’ through transformative actions

The current COVID-19 pandemic and the efforts to build back better point to the imperative to explore further avenues for building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. In addition to its direct impacts on human health, the COVID-19 pandemic and the policy measures taken to reduce its spread have led to major social and economic impacts including losses of jobs and revenue. There are opportunities to integrate biodiversity into stimulus and recovery measures, and for responses to COVID-19, including both short term stimulus measures and longer-term approaches to ‘build back better’ to contribute to sustainable development more broadly while reducing the risk of future pandemics.

The role of technology to support the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and achievement of its goals is key as has been previously mentioned. Biotechnologies including synthetic biology have enormous potential to provide solutions for some of the most important challenges faced by biodiversity such as biodiversity loss, climate change, and others. It is therefore important to consider what is needed to make a more effective, efficient use of the technologies, as well as ensuring that access to it is fair and equitable.

5. Key messages for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2022 HLPF

In light of the above, the HLPF may wish to consider, as appropriate, providing further guidance on the possible role of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in presenting biodiversity-related targets as a successors to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets which are reflected in the SDGs targets.

It may also wish to:

- re-emphasize the essential role of biodiversity in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
- express its support for the ongoing process, under the Convention on Biological Diversity, of developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework as the global policy framework for achieving accelerated action and transformative pathways for biodiversity in the coming decade, and as an essential contribution to the UN Decade of Action on the SDGs;
- further galvanize political momentum for an ambitious and practical post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2022.

The HLPF may also wish to emphasize the key messages provided in annex 1 to this document, which build on the outcomes of the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO 5).

As countries evaluate options on how to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a unique opportunity to initiate the transformative changes needed to achieve the 2050 Vision of living in harmony with nature. Such actions would put biodiversity on a path to recovery, reduce the risk of future pandemics, and produce multiple additional benefits for people.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Key messages to the HLPF, building on the outcomes of the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO 5)⁶³

- Humanity stands at a crossroads with regards to the legacy it leaves to future generations. Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate, and the pressures driving this decline are intensifying. None of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets was fully met, in turn threatening the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and undermining efforts to address climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the relationship between people and nature, and it reminds us all of the profound consequences to our own well-being and survival that can result from continued biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystems.
- Options are available to the global community that could simultaneously halt and ultimately reverse biodiversity loss, limit climate change and improve the capacity to adapt to it and meet other goals such as improved food security. These pathways to a sustainable future rely on recognizing that bold, interdependent actions are needed across a number of fronts, each of which is necessary and none of which is sufficient on its own. This mix of actions includes greatly stepping up efforts to conserve and restore biodiversity, addressing climate change in ways that limit global temperature rise or address adaptation to its consequences without imposing unintended additional pressures on biodiversity, and transforming the way in which we produce, consume and trade goods and services, most particularly food, that rely on and have an impact on biodiversity.
- Navigating the available pathways to the 2050 vision involves consideration of all the multiple aspects of our relationship with nature and the importance we attach to it. Solutions need to seek an integrated approach that simultaneously address the conservation of the planet's genetic diversity, species and ecosystems, the capacity of nature to deliver material benefits to human societies, and the less tangible but highly-valued connections with nature that help to define our identities, cultures and beliefs.

With regards to the SDGs under review, the following key messages are emphasized:

- Several overarching lessons from the experiences in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 can help to inform the actions required to effectively reach the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDGs 14 and 15. Overall these lessons suggest that there is no single solution to address the ongoing decline of biodiversity and that a range of changes may be required.
- SDG 4: Greater access to education (SDG 4) builds human capital and thereby enables effective action, including collective action, to be taken. Women and girls' access to education is also critical to ensure they have the capacity and opportunity to contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of its benefits.
- SDG 5: Analysis has shown that opportunities for effective action in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 were missed due to insufficient involvement of women, indigenous peoples and local communities, and a broad set of stakeholders in the design and implementation of NBSAPs (see especially Aichi Targets 14, 17 and 18). This provides additional impetus for the post-2020 global framework to set stronger requirements for future action on biodiversity to include all of these considerations as foundational prerequisites.

⁶³ <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5/publication/gbo-5-en.pdf>

- SDG 14: Moving forward in a post-pandemic world, it will be important to work to maintain any positive effects on the marine environment, utilize lessons learned and tools that have emerged, and shift away from unsustainable ways of working and living. It is important that post-pandemic recovery is focused on strengthening the health of marine ecosystems as a basis for a productive ocean economy and other efforts have adequate safeguards in place to avoid adverse impacts on the ocean.
- SDG 15: The UN Decade is well positioned to assist in the world's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Investments into large-scale ecosystem restoration have been documented to generate more livelihoods per dollar spent than other sectors, such as transportation and building infrastructure whilst also yielding attractive long-term economic returns. A critical role of the UN Decade will consequently be to highlight to decision-makers the job-creation and income-generating opportunities that ecosystem restoration presents and to detail how to take advantage of these opportunities.
- SDG 17: It will be crucial to support nature-based partnerships both within the UN and in the private and public-private sectors, given the interconnections and underpinning of biodiversity in economic, social, and ecological systems. The effective mobilization of resources for the implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will also require new partnerships. Upcoming partnerships both within the UN and new public-private ones should fully incorporate and promote the benefits nature provides to people. Mainstreaming nature and ecosystem services into the decision-making framework of the finance sector is of particular importance.

With regards to achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, the following key messages are emphasized:

- Efforts to conserve and restore biodiversity need to be scaled up at all levels using approaches that will depend on local contexts and the effective engagement of diverse stakeholders. These efforts need to involve major increases in the extent and effectiveness of well-connected protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, large-scale restoration of degraded habitats, and improvements in the condition of nature across farmed and urban landscapes as well as inland water bodies, coasts and oceans.
- Efforts to keep climate change well below 2 degrees C and close to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial levels are needed to prevent climate impacts from overwhelming all other actions in support of biodiversity. The conservation and restoration of ecosystems can play a substantial role in this, and can also be an important part of adaptation to climate change.
- Effective steps need to be taken to address all remaining direct and indirect pressures driving biodiversity loss, including invasive alien species, pollution and the unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity especially in marine and inland water ecosystems.
- Transformations need to be achieved in the production of goods and services, especially food. This will include adopting agricultural methods that can meet growing global demand while imposing fewer negative impacts on the environment, and reducing the pressure to convert more land to production.
- Transformations are similarly needed to limit the demand for increased food production by adopting healthier diets and reducing food waste, and also in limiting the consumption of other material goods and services affecting biodiversity, for example in forestry, energy and provision of fresh water.

Annex 2 - Summary of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the corresponding targets of the Sustainable Development Goals as based on the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook⁶⁴

Aichi biodiversity target⁶⁵	Associated targets from the SDGs⁶⁶	Progress towards the target
1. Awareness of biodiversity increased	4.7 12.8	There has been an apparent increase in the past decade in the proportion of people who have heard of biodiversity and who understand the concept. Understanding of biodiversity appears to be increasing more rapidly among younger people. A recent survey suggested that more than one third of people in the most biodiverse countries have high awareness both of the values of biodiversity and the steps required for its conservation and sustainable use. The target has not been achieved (low confidence).
2. Biodiversity values integrated	15.9	Many countries report examples of incorporating biodiversity into various planning and development processes. There has been a steady upward trend of countries incorporating biodiversity values into national accounting and reporting systems. At the same time, there is less evidence that biodiversity has been truly integrated into development and poverty reduction planning as required by the target. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
3. Incentives reformed	14.6	Overall, little progress has been made over the past decade in eliminating, phasing out or reforming subsidies and other incentives potentially harmful to biodiversity, and in developing positive incentives for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Relatively few countries have taken steps even to identify incentives that harm biodiversity, and harmful subsidies far outweigh positive incentives in areas such as fisheries and the control of deforestation. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
4. Unustainable production and consumption	8.4 12.2	While an increasing number of governments and businesses are developing plans for more sustainable production and consumption, these are not being implemented on a scale that eliminates the negative impact of unsustainable human activities on biodiversity. While natural resources are being used more efficiently, the aggregated demand for resources continues to increase, and therefore the impacts of their use remain well above safe ecological limits. The target has not been achieved (high confidence).
5. Habitat loss halved or reduced	15.1 15.2 15.5	The recent rate of deforestation is lower than that of the previous decade, but only by about one third, and deforestation may be accelerating again in some areas. Loss, degradation and fragmentation of habitats remains high in forest and other biomes, especially in the

⁶⁴ For further information on this review, including the sources of information and methodology see Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2020) Global Biodiversity Outlook 5. Montreal. <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5>.

⁶⁵ For the full wording of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets see the assessment contained in the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

⁶⁶ For the full wording of the targets from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development see <https://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo5/publication/gbo-5-en.pdf>. The SDG targets currently being reviewed as part of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development have been bolded.

		most biodiversity-rich ecosystems in tropical regions. Wilderness areas and global wetlands continue to decline. Fragmentation of rivers remains a critical threat to freshwater biodiversity. The target has not been achieved (high confidence).
6. Sustainable management of aquatic living resources	<i>14.2</i> <i>14.4</i>	While there has been substantial progress towards this target in some countries and regions, a third of marine fish stocks are overfished, a higher proportion than ten years ago. Many fisheries are still causing unsustainable levels of bycatch of non-target species and are damaging marine habitats. The target has not been achieved (high confidence).
7. Sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry	2.4 <i>14.7</i> <i>15.2</i>	There has been a substantial expansion of efforts to promote sustainable agriculture, forestry and aquaculture over recent years, including through farmer-led agroecological approaches. The use of fertilizers and pesticides has stabilized globally, though at high levels. Despite such progress, biodiversity continues to decline in landscapes used to produce food and timber; and food and agricultural production remains among the main drivers of global biodiversity loss. The target has not been achieved (high confidence).
8. Pollution reduced	6.3 <i>14.1</i>	Pollution, including from excess nutrients, pesticides, plastics and other waste, continues to be a major driver of biodiversity loss. Despite increasing efforts to improve the use of fertilizers, nutrient levels continue to be detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity. Plastic pollution is accumulating in the oceans, with severe impacts on marine ecosystems, and in other ecosystems with still largely unknown implications. Actions taken in many countries to minimize plastic waste have not been sufficient to reduce this source of pollution. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
9. Invasive alien species prevented and controlled	<i>15.8</i>	Good progress has been made during the past decade on identifying and prioritizing invasive alien species in terms of the risk they present, as well as in the feasibility of managing them. Successful programmes to eradicate invasive alien species, especially invasive mammals on islands, have benefited native species. However, these successes represent only a small proportion of all occurrences of invasive species. There is no evidence of a slowing down in the number of new introductions of alien species. The target has been partially achieved (medium confidence).
10. Ecosystems vulnerable to climate change	<i>14.2</i> <i>14.3</i>	Multiple threats continue to affect coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change and ocean acidification. Overfishing, nutrient pollution and coastal development compound the effects of coral bleaching. Corals have shown the most rapid increase in extinction risk of all assessed groups. Hard coral cover has declined significantly in some regions, and there has been a shift towards coral species less able to support diverse reef habitats. Other ecosystems especially in mountains and polar regions have experienced significant impacts from climate change, compounded by other pressures. The target was missed by the stated date of 2015, and it has not been achieved by 2020 (high confidence)
11. Protected areas	11.4 <i>14.5</i> <i>15.1</i>	The proportion of the planet's land and oceans designated as protected areas is likely to reach the targets for 2020 and may be exceeded when other effective area-based conservation measures and future national

		commitments are taken into account. However, progress has been more modest in ensuring that protected areas safeguard the most important areas for biodiversity, are ecologically representative, connected to one another as well as to the wider landscape and seascape and are equitably and effectively managed. The target has been partially achieved (high confidence).
12. Reducing risk of extinction	15.5 15.7	Species continue to move, on average, closer to extinction. However, the number of extinctions of birds and mammals would likely have been at least two to four times higher without conservation actions over the past decade. Among well-assessed taxonomic groups, nearly one quarter (23.7%) of species are threatened with extinction unless the drivers of biodiversity loss are drastically reduced, with an estimated total of one million threatened species across all groups. Wild animal populations have fallen by more than two-thirds since 1970, and have continued to decline since 2010. The target has not been achieved (high confidence).
13. Safeguarding genetic diversity	2.5	Genetic diversity of cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals, and wild relatives, continues to be eroded. The wild relatives of important food crops are poorly represented in ex situ seed banks that help guarantee their conservation, important for future food security. The proportion of livestock breeds that are at risk or extinct is increasing, although at a slower rate than in earlier years, suggesting some progress in preventing the decline of traditional breeds. Wild relatives of farmed birds and mammals are moving closer to extinction. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
14. Ecosystem services	6.6 15.4	The capacity of ecosystems to provide the essential services on which societies depend continues to decline, and consequently, most ecosystem services (nature's contributions to people) are in decline. In general, poor and vulnerable communities, as well as women, are disproportionately affected by this decline. Mammal and bird species responsible for pollination are on average moving closer to extinction, as are species used for food and medicine. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
15. Ecosystem restoration and resilience	14.2 15.1	Progress towards the target of restoring 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems by 2020 is limited. Nevertheless, ambitious restoration programmes are under way or proposed in many regions, with the potential to deliver significant gains in ecosystem resilience and preservation of carbon stocks. The target has not been achieved (medium confidence).
16. Access to and sharing benefits from genetic resources	15.6	The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization entered into force on 12 October 2014. As of July 2020, 126 Parties to the CBD have ratified the Protocol and 87 of them have put in place national access and benefit sharing measures, as well as establishing competent national authorities. The Protocol can be considered operational. The target has been partially achieved (high confidence)
17. Biodiversity strategies and action plans	15.9	By the December 2015 deadline established in this target, 69 Parties had submitted an NBSAP prepared, revised or updated after the adoption of the Strategic Plan. An additional 101 Parties have since submitted their NBSAP, so that by July 2020, 170 Parties had

		developed NBSAPs in line with the Strategic Plan. This represents 85% of the Parties to the Convention. However, the extent to which these NBSAPs have been adopted as policy instruments and are being implemented in an effective and participatory manner, is variable. The target has been partially achieved (high confidence).
18. Traditional knowledge	1.4 16.7	There has been an increase in the recognition of the value of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use, both in global policy fora and in the scientific community. However, despite progress in some countries, there is limited information indicating that traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use have been widely respected and/ or reflected in national legislation related to the implementation of the Convention, or on the extent to which indigenous peoples and local communities are effectively participating in associated processes. The target has not been achieved (low confidence).
19. Sharing information and knowledge	17.18	Significant progress has been made since 2010 in the generation, sharing and assessment of knowledge and data on biodiversity, with big-data aggregation, advances in modelling and artificial intelligence opening up new opportunities for improved understanding of the biosphere. However, major imbalances remain in the location and taxonomic focus of studies and monitoring. Information gaps remain in the consequences of biodiversity loss for people, and the application of biodiversity knowledge in decision making is limited. The target has been partially achieved (medium confidence).
20. Mobilizing resources from all sources	10.b 17.3	There have been increases in domestic resources for biodiversity in some countries, with resources remaining broadly constant for others over the past decade. Financial resources available for biodiversity through international flows and official development assistance have roughly doubled. However, when all sources of biodiversity finance are taken into account, the increase in biodiversity financing would not appear to be sufficient in relation to needs. Moreover, these resources are swamped by support for activities harmful to biodiversity (see Aichi Target 3). Progress on identifying funding needs, gaps and priorities and the development of national financial plans and assessments of biodiversity values has been limited to relatively few countries (see Aichi Target 2). The target has been partially achieved (high confidence).