

WHAT DOES A GOOD POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK LOOK LIKE FOR AFRICA?



KEY MESSEGES:

- The GBF should address issues of injustice and inequity arising from the disproportionate occupation of the ecological space, unsustainable consumption patterns and unfair prices for commodities.
- Human rights, equity and effective engagement of IPLCs, Women, Youth and other marginalized groups is key to the success of the GBF
- Area based conservation must be implemented in line with country priorities and capabilities, and must be implemented in accordance with the rights of IPLCs
- Sustainable use of natural resources delivers for people and nature and must be guaranteed in the GBF in line with CBD and Nagoya Protocol standards beyond limiting sustainable use to ‘customary uses’
- Climate change is a threat to biodiversity. The GBF must take the measures to strengthen biodiversity and societal resilience to climate change and ensure that any initiatives to address climate change do not harm biodiversity and human wellbeing
- Businesses at different scales affect biodiversity and need to be held accountable to governments and communities, with obligations to assess, report and reduce their impact on biodiversity
- The GBF must close the biodiversity financing gap and ensure that financial resources get to local actors



GOOD COP vs BAD COP

CoP15.2 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) comes in the wake of the recently concluded Climate Change and Wildlife Protection conferences, which are the most related to biodiversity. CoP15.2 is long anticipated given the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), was supposed to be actioned between 2021 and 2030. This puts implementation of the global strategy to halt biodiversity loss 2 years behind schedule.

Additionally, the forthcoming discussions to finalize the post-2020 GBF will have to contend with over 2000 brackets, showing the limited consensus across Parties to the CBD. This broader context is what raises questions on how good or bad the COP will be for Africa's biodiversity objectives. It is especially concerning that several of the issues in brackets, are crucial for Africa. The deletion of some of these issues could be disastrous for conservation efforts throughout Africa.

This paper articulates issues that will be emblematic of a good or bad COP 15 outcome for Africa. In providing these comments, we reiterate that successful implementation of the GBF will require integrated approach recognizing that all targets are interdependent.

1. AREA-BASED CONSERVATION (Target 3)

Target 3 of the Post-2020 GBF calls for 30% of land and sea areas to be under protection by 2030. It builds on Aichi Target 11 which succeeded partially on area gazette (of land and sea), but failed on meeting sub-targets for connectedness, ecological representation, effective and equitable management. Proclamation of conservation areas, has historically been characterized by forceful removal of people from their livelihoods and ancestral land to make ways for "conservation areas" that they rarely benefit from. Hence in many countries, existing protected areas are under conflict. They also remain largely underfunded, as countries in developing nations have other pressing priorities such as health, education and poverty.

Good outcome:

- Target does not separate people from biodiversity and areas under biodiversity are inclusively and equitably managed.
- The area-based conservation target includes parameters such as representatively, connectivity and management effectiveness.
- Whatever percentage of protection is agreed on, will be a global target with each country, having sovereignty to decide how much they protect at a national level in alignment with national development priorities
- Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), their land rights, and community livelihoods and well-being are to be respected in the implementation of the target
- Finances and resources for the implementation of this target are commensurate with the level of ambition of the target

Bad outcome:

- One that emphasizes area under protection above everything else, undermines conservation efforts of IPLCs and citizens, imposes 30% as a national target without considering national capabilities, IPLC rights and effective management
- If Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) that are critical become a back-door entry for governments to create protected areas and illegally evict local communities

2. SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES (Target 5)

Target 5 of the Post-2020 GBF is about ensuring that harvesting, trade and use of wild species is sustainable, legal, and safe for human health. Sustainable use is one of the 3 objectives of the Convention and in Africa, the use of natural resources supports livelihoods and income generating opportunities for individuals, communities and countries at large. Despite the irrefutable benefits of sustainable use for people and nature, this target has seen many text propositions in an attempt to hijack it and make it about overexploiting instead of simply promoting sustainable use.

Good outcome:

- Text promotes sustainable use and therefore builds on the long-term success of approaches such as Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) in Africa.

Bad outcome:

- Sustainable use is reduced to subsistence use yet biodiversity is essential for national and local economies

3. CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY (Target 8)

Target 8 seeks to minimize the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. It is widely recognized that it is not possible to address the climate and biodiversity loss crises separately as the two are interlinked. Climate change has significant impacts on biodiversity and yet, healthy ecosystems have the ability to sequester carbon- therefore reducing the impacts of climate change.

While biodiversity does offer a solution to climate change, it is worth noting that the latter is caused by the emission of greenhouse gases, therefore the main response to climate change has to be reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Any other solutions to climate change should not cause harm to biodiversity but lead to the resilience of people and biodiversity. There is also a need to learn from local experiences of how to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Good outcome:

- Recognizes the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change leading to synergistic climate-biodiversity outcomes, including by prioritizing the protection of primary ecosystems as irreplaceable/irrecoverable.
- Emphasizes that any solutions to climate change must not harm biodiversity
- Acknowledge the role of ecosystem-based approaches on climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction

Bad outcome

- Text creates opportunities for false solutions that undermine justice and enables elite capture of land and biodiversity.

4. TARGET 9

This target seeks to ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and environmental benefits for people. This target is closely linked to target 5 on Sustainable Use.

Good outcome

- Text that supports sustainable biodiversity-based products and services
- Management and use of wild species are clearly secured and promotes the development of sustainable biodiversity
- Social, economic and environmental benefits for communities are safeguarded as livelihood approaches

Bad outcome:

- Text that supports commercialization of nature at the expense of biodiversity

4. TARGET 10

This This target deals with agriculture, aquaculture and forestry but so do other targets such as target 15 (sourcing and supply chains) and target 16 (productivity and industrialisation).

Good outcome

- The GBF expands its focus beyond production and productivity, and considers a range of benefits that's agricultural and food systems offer when integrating, conserving and sustainably using biodiversity
- The target safeguards the rights of smallholder farmers and farming communities
- Target includes the vital role of agricultural biodiversity and emphasizes the need for development and maintenance of crop populations and the need to include the in-situ (i.e on-farm) conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Bad outcome

- Industrial agriculture remains prominent in the GBF



6. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT (Target 15)

Target 15 is aimed at addressing the adverse impact of businesses on biodiversity. Businesses, especially large businesses from industries such as mining, build infrastructure and agriculture are responsible for major land and sea use changes which in turn, affects habitats for biodiversity. There is therefore a need for these to assess, report and reduce their impact on biodiversity. These businesses are regulated by laws of the countries they are registered in and hence, countries have a role to play in providing guidance and mandatory requirements for their compliance.

Good outcome:

- Target focuses on holding business and financial institutions to account and be legally responsible for any negative impacts of their investments and activities on biodiversity and human rights
- Text requires governments to put in place public policies and regulations so that all businesses do not harm biodiversity. There should be legal liability for causing biodiversity loss with criminal consequences and calling for greater transparency.

Bad outcome:

- Text that grants businesses a space to self-regulate without government oversight.

7. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (Target 19)

Target 19.1 is on mobilizing financial resources that are necessary to implement the Post2020 GBF. The ability of African and other developing country parties to address the biodiversity crisis is hampered by inadequate financing and other means of implementation. It is estimated that the biodiversity financing gap is at 700 billion US dollars per year. Securing adequate, predictable and sustainable financing from a variety of sources is essential. Of the limited financial resources that are available for conservation, it is evident that very little, gets in the hands of local actors. It is critical that funding gets to where biodiversity conservation is yielding positive outcomes to people and nature.

Large scale and multi-lateral funding processes are complex, requiring intermediaries and hence favours sophisticated and large NGOs. Current financial mechanisms are therefore difficult to access for indigenous peoples and local communities, for women, youth and other disadvantaged groups and for national organizations. Targeted financial mechanisms to support community and national conservation efforts should be expanded, such as the GEF Small Grants Programme. Furthermore, short funding cycles are not aligned to the long-term nature of biodiversity conservation or societal resilience investments, and the decadal goals and targets of the GBF.

Good outcome:

- Closing the biodiversity financing gap
- Providing clarity on where the required financial resources will come from especially how harmful subsidies will be redirected towards biodiversity conservation
- Provide guidance on how these resources will reach local actors (a deliberate shift towards increasing access to conservation finance at the grassroots level – a financing mechanism that delivers where and when it matters)
- IPLCs, CSOs and Youth able to access funding directly

Bad outcome:

- A resource mobilization target that falls short of the financing gap and retains the status quo of funding mechanisms that only favour a select few.

7. ENGAGEMENT OF IPLCs, YOUTH AND WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING (Target 21)

Target 21 is on ensuring equitable and effective participation of IPLCs, Youth and Women on decision making. IPLCs are recognized as rights holders and custodians of the environment, owing to the fact that more than 80% of remaining biodiversity is found in areas either owned, managed or inhabited by them. In Africa, young people under the age of 35 make up more than 70% of the population. Women are primary caregivers, and despite being involved daily on decisions of harvesting firewood, food and other natural resources, tend to be marginalized in decision making.

Due to the unique role they play in society, these groups must be engaged in decision making.

Good outcome:

- GBF retains a strong target on engagement of IPLCs, Youth and Women
- The target retains the text on respecting IPLCs cultures and rights over their land, territories and resources

Bad outcome:

- Issues of rights are pushed into the b.bis section whose fate is currently unknown.