

Setting the scene: Quick guide to the CBD, state of biodiversity, importance of biodiversity, post-2020 global biodiversity framework and COP-15

Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity is a multilateral environmental treaty with 196 Parties, 195 countries and the EU, and provides a global legal framework for action on biodiversity. Opened for signature 5 June 1992, it entered into force 29 December 1993. The CBD was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development; and is part of the second-generation MEAs created after the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, together with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The CBD's objective is to develop national strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The CBD has three main goals: the conservation of biodiversity; the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity; and, the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Present state of biodiversity

Biodiversity is in a crisis. The rate of global change in nature during past 50 years is unprecedented in human history, with the pressures driving biodiversity decline intensifying:

- Humans are presently overusing Earth's biocapacity by at least 56%
- One million animal and plant species (out of 8.1 million) threatened with extinction
- 2020 global Living Planet Index report shows an average 68% fall in monitored vertebrate species populations between 1970 and 2016
- 10% of insects, over 40% of amphibious species, 33% of reef-forming corals and over a third of all marine mammals threatened
- 9% of all domesticated breeds of mammals used for food and agriculture extinct by 2016.

Continued biodiversity loss and degradation of ecosystems presents a fundamental risk to the healthy and stable ecosystems that sustain all aspects of our societies, as it reduces the ability of biodiversity and ecosystems to provide essential life-sustaining services, from food security and nutrition to regulation of water and air quality, and pest and disease regulation. Biodiversity loss also threatens to undermine the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Main challenges in biodiversity conservation are to reduce or eliminate the drivers of biodiversity loss. The five direct drivers with the largest relative global impacts are: Changes in land and sea use; Direct exploitation of organisms; Climate change; Pollution; and, Invasive alien species.

Why biodiversity important

Biodiversity is the foundation of life. Provides us with the air we breathe, water we drink, food we eat, it sequesters carbon, and yields many other benefits – all crucial for human survival. Biodiversity is not only about plants, animals, micro-organisms, and their ecosystems. Biodiversity is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. Nature and the ecosystem services it provides underpins socio-economic development and human well-being. Nature is the backbone for maintaining and restoring our balance within the planetary boundaries.

Our economies are highly dependent on nature and its ecosystem services. Over half the world's total GDP - equivalent to \$44 trillion of economic value generation - is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services and, as a result, exposed to risks from nature loss. Over 70% of people living in poverty at least partly dependent on natural resources for livelihoods. In 2010, 2.6 billion people drew their livelihoods either partially or fully from agriculture, 1.6 billion from forests and 250 million from fisheries. The cost of inaction on biodiversity estimated to rise to at least US\$14 trillion – 7% of global GDP – by 2050. Harnessing the benefits and solutions provided by nature opens significant market opportunities. The 2020 Future of Nature and Business report (World Economic Forum) estimates that an economy centred on sustainable development can unlock \$10 trillion of business opportunities.

Post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The post-2020 global biodiversity framework is a ten-year strategy to engage the entire world in the task of protecting nature and building a future of life in harmony with nature. Draft framework includes an overarching vision for 2050, which features four goals that define the vision and make it measurable by 2050. The framework's 2030 mission includes 21 concrete targets that define the actions needed to reach the mission. Framework will be like the Paris Agreement on climate change in terms of its global importance and impact.

The framework takes an explicit “all hands-on-deck” approach: whole-of-society, whole-of-government, a true framework for all. This means it's a framework for productive sectors, for governments, for civil society, for businesses, for banks, for farmers, for teachers, for students, for consumers, for producers and ultimately for you. The framework addresses the urgent need for transformative changes in an open, transparent, inclusive and science-based way, featuring ambitious but realistic targets with open and robust reporting and a review mechanism to address previous deficiencies in reporting and review. A platform for all action to protect and restore biodiversity over the next decade, it will be especially relevant for building back better following the pandemic.

COP-15 (UN Biodiversity Conference)

Part one of COP-15, held in October 2021 in Kunming, China, was marked by passionate calls from stakeholders for transformative action, and signaled renewed political will to boost ambition, enhance collaboration and maximize opportunities for synergies across other multilateral agreements. It saw the adoption of the Kunming Declaration, where Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) committed to negotiating an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework that can bend the curve of biodiversity loss. The declaration a clear indication of the worldwide support for the level of ambition that needs to be reflected in the post-2020 framework to be finalized in 2022. Furthermore, China announced that will invest 1.5 billion yuan (about \$233 million) to establish a Kunming Biodiversity Fund to support biodiversity protection in developing countries.

At part two of COP-15 later this year, Parties will adopt the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The framework will chart the path into a transformational decade, marked by meaningful collaboration and concrete action towards the delivery of the set goals and targets. Many other critical issues are also up for discussion that will set global biodiversity agenda for next decade. These include enhancing integration with respect to provisions related to traditional knowledge and indigenous peoples and local communities; the way to address biotechnologies such as synthetic biology; and question of digital sequence information on genetic resources. Governments will also seek agreement on increased mobilization of resources from all sources to fund biodiversity protection including redirecting negative biodiversity incentives to positive and green biodiversity incentives and mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors.