



**Opening joint plenary COP 15, CP COPMOP 10 and NP COPMOP 4
11 Oct 2021**

Thank you, Chair. I'm speaking on behalf of the CBD Alliance.

1) We would first like to welcome the decisions to postpone substantive negotiations, including on the post-2020 GBF, until face-to-face meetings are possible again and make a strong call to guarantee vaccines to ensure equitable and effective participation in particular of developing country Parties, civil society and IPLCs. Our shared humanity is at stake, so we call on Parties to support a temporary TRIPS waiver at the WTO. We cannot address biodiversity loss if we do not also address the gross health inequities that the pandemic perpetuates.

2) Despite the delays in the negotiations, urgent action is still possible through a balanced implementation of the objectives and obligations under the CBD and its Protocols. Parties must be serious about halting and reversing biodiversity loss, and equitably addressing its main drivers such as overconsumption and unsustainable production.

The economic logic driving extractivism, including trade and financial rules, inequalities in wealth, high debt and pervasive austerity, perpetuates biodiversity loss and impacts negatively on IPLCs. A clear example is the current push for seabed mining that will be ruinous for marine and coastal ecosystems and small fisherfolk. CBD Parties should call for a moratorium on seabed mining to prevent irreparable damage to deep ocean ecosystems.

3) The time is ripe for the CBD to put in place a mechanism for participatory horizon scanning, assessment and monitoring for *all* technologies. This must include the precautionary principle, free, prior and informed consent, liability and redress, and respect for human rights and the knowledge systems of IPLCs and women.

Discussions on synthetic biology must establish robust horizon scanning procedures to anticipate and assess adverse effects on the environment, human health and socio-economic situations. This broader technology assessment approach must be mirrored in Cartagena Protocol discussions on risk assessment guidance for LMOs containing engineered gene drives.

4) Misappropriation of genetic resources through use of DSI undermines the CBD's third objective. A benefit sharing solution for DSI must include the development of a multilateral benefit-sharing system, with benefits paid into an international fund, enabled by mandatory terms and conditions by open access databases. The fund should support IPLCs and prioritize autonomous development of their knowledge systems for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

5) Voluntary commitments, with companies claiming self-regulation and self-certification, only enable the corporate capture of policy-making and undermine Parties' legally-binding obligations. The mainstreaming process, currently dominated by business and finance, also risks helping those sectors avoid the urgent change required.

Regulating business activities that destroy biodiversity and violate human rights should be at the heart of implementation. The CBD and its Protocols have to establish the accountability mechanisms, penalties, and liability and redress measures, and develop their conflicts of interest procedures further.

6) Biodiversity policy and the GBF should be rights-based and support gender-just and equitable governance rights by IPLCs of conserved areas and other biodiversity-important areas. This requires full respect for the territorial rights of IPLCs, women, youth and peasants as rights holders, and the realization of the rights to participation, information and inclusion in biodiversity policy-making.

Last but not least, we fully support the proposal for a self-standing target on gender justice, as well as proposals to integrate gender in the goals, targets and indicators of the GBF and the recognition of the rights of peasants and smallholder producers.

Thank you.