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Essential ingredients for a successful Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: Political will and addressing drivers of biodiversity loss

By Maha Bazzi and Janice Cox, World Animal Net

The CBD is faced with the challenging task of developing a transformative post-2020 framework which will effectively reverse the current biodiversity crisis.

The recent report, published by IPBES, estimates that 1 million species are at risk of extinction “unless action is taken to reduce the intensity of drivers of biodiversity loss.” IPBES emphasized that transformative changes through integrative governance approaches, are key to restoring and protecting nature. This means not shying away from systemic change where needed. The IPBES report highlighted that “Agriculture is a fundamental driver of global biodiversity loss”. The recent report by the IPCC echoes this point while stressing the importance of altering diets and food production systems. The new CBD framework must tackle the fact that the expansion of industrial agriculture is systematically destroying biodiversity, while pushing wildlife to the brink of extinction.

Some valuable core tenets of the Aichi Biodiversity targets must be maintained and built upon as a basis for stronger targets. For example: **Target 3** (Phase-out and reform of incentives - including subsidies - harmful to biodiversity)- It is totally unacceptable that countries continue to subsidize harmful agricultural production (over \$500 Billion spent on agricultural subsidies), and support industrial agriculture and monoculture production through development aid.

We Need Divestments, not Investments, to save Biodiversity

By Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition, Paraguay

The 1st meeting of the OEWC on the post-2020 strategic plan of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) is taking place at a historical moment in time: an estimated 10% of the planet's biodiversity is literally on fire. The Amazon, the world's most biodiverse and carbon rich biome, is

Target 7 (Manage agriculture, aquaculture and forestry sustainably)- Needs more political will and effort, including incentives for positive change. Instead, many countries still allow the expansion of activities which destroy biodiversity, such as the clearance of the Amazon for crop and livestock production, as evidenced by the tragic fires currently raging in the Amazon.

The importance of “addressing the underlying causes of biodiversity loss” (Strategic Goal A) and of enhancing “implementation through participatory planning [...] and capacity building” (Strategic Goal E) cannot be overstated. Any moves towards simplifying biodiversity targets and indicators must be avoided.

Biodiversity conservation must be supported by multiple sectors in order to succeed. However, the current crisis shows that governments need to step up their action. Investment in capacity building and training to implement the CBD framework is needed at all levels. If stakeholders are made aware of the Convention processes, perceive its benefits, and are given tools for its application, then they are more likely to actively engage in its implementation. To ensure transformation however, the new framework must include binding commitments and performance measures, and effective reporting and monitoring systems. These must be informed by analysis on the root causes of biodiversity loss, including industrial animal agriculture and consumption patterns. Achieving a sustainable future for humanity while safeguarding the diversity of life on Earth will only be possible if all Parties accept the need for bold measures proportionate to the catastrophic losses our planet is experiencing. These must be rooted in a new ethic, where nature and animals are respected and protected by humankind.

experiencing its most dramatic burning season ever, with at least 85% more fires than last year. Meanwhile, the second biggest forest area in Latin America, the Chaco, is facing devastating fires too.

If the fires in the Brazilian Amazon show one thing, it is the futility of payments to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) and other investments in biodiversity conservation. There is no country in the world that has received so much REDD+ funding as Brazil. In 2015, it had already received more than 1 billion USD in REDD+ funding, and that was before the Green Climate

Fund, in all its wisdom, paid it an additional 96,5 million in the beginning of this year for its “efforts” to conserve forest in 2014 and 2015. Needless to say, all this money is literally going up in smoke as we speak.

The main reason why these billion dollar investments have been so futile, is that the Brazilian government itself invested a tenfold of this money in the main driver of deforestation: soy and beef production. In 2017 alone, it awarded a generous 84.3 billion USD in rural credit agreements for beef and soy expansion on top of 48 billion USD direct support under the Agricultural and Livestock Plan. And these figures do not even include the billions of primarily Chinese foreign investments in new ports and other infrastructure to expand soy and beef exports from the country. On the other side of the ocean, the EU, one of the main importers of soy and beef, does not only continue to finance biodiversity destruction through its generous subsidies for its own industrial livestock sector, but it has also given deforestation a major boost this year by closing a free trade agreement with Brazil and other Latin American Southern Cone countries, which is expected to significantly increase soy and beef exports too.

So the tears that are being cried over the Amazon by world leaders at the G7 today are mainly crocodile tears. As long as governments refuse to divest from biodiversity destruction, investments in protected areas and other biodiversity measures equal to pouring a cup of water over the current fires. The ongoing biodiversity crisis makes it crystal clear that the post-2020 strategic plan should not only include an even stronger target to immediately redirect all subsidies and other perverse incentives destruction, but also a target to ban all other investments in biodiversity destruction – and related trade agreements.

Nairobi, here we go!

By Friedrich Wulf, ProNatura and FOE Europe

Dear delegates, so here we finally are in Nairobi to develop the post-2020 biodiversity framework together. After a long preliminary process with numerous online, regional and other consultations, we finally enter negotiation mode. Beware, it is not about content yet! The main outcome that is expected is the adoption of a roadmap, a comprehensive series of meetings that will culminate – hopefully – in producing a draft text to be thrown into the policy arena and adopted in October next year in Kunming, China.

A road with potholes

But this roadmap is very important. It outlines the key ingredients of the future agreement, and topics which are not foreseen to be discussed in a working group are not likely to be a major building block of the post-2020 framework. Realising this makes you see the gaps with agony, should you discover them after going through the

documents and especially the annex to document CBD/WG2020/1/4, which is the work plan for the coming year. You will all remember the IPBES global assessment which was published in May, and that a key element of this was the need for addressing the drivers and push for transformative change. Given its importance, you would assume it is part of the post-2020 work plan. Right? Wrong! Have a closer look – it is missing! So, dear delegates, this is something on your “to do” list – to fill the gap and add a workshop on drivers and transformative change to the programme. First one to say “we will organize it” is our hero!

In addition to that, a lot of the debate – according to non-paper 2 prepared by the co-chairs – will deal with vision, targets, objectives and structure of the new plan, or in other terms, with cluster 1 of document CBD/WG2020/1/3. But the targets themselves were and are not the issue – it is their lack of implementation, which is dealt with in clusters 2-4. Out of 2.5 pages, only 9 lines of non-paper 2 deal with what is crucial for the success of the next biodiversity framework. So, the second demand is to put much more emphasis on monitoring, comparability, review and compliance so these elements are sufficiently addressed.

Finally, a comprehensive process like this needs to let everyone contribute in the working groups. Closed settings with only 30 participants, as have been foreseen for the workshop on area-based conservation that is planned to take place in Tadjikistan, are not acceptable. If this is a resource issue, we ask wealthy parties to step up and ensure the necessary financial support.

Just do it – mend them!

It seems deciding the work programme is a rather small task in view of all the content discussions to come. But given the implications it has, and the dedication it may take to put things to work, 4 days may be gone in a jiffy. We wish you a good hand and godspeed in resolving the issues noted, which will be crucial for an effective post-2020 biodiversity framework. We don't want it to be flawed right at the start, do we?

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