



A message to world leaders: conservation cannot be done without people

Aracelly Jimenez Mora, mollusk gatherer from Chomes, Costa Rica and President of CopeMolusChomes R.L.

We the people who live on the coasts and near the sea are the ones who know our problems, what we have, what we need and what we want to solve. We are the ones who clean the mangroves, make nurseries and plant mangrove trees to create a good environment that produces quality shellfish and fish. The mangroves are nurseries for juvenile species: if we take care of the shrimp, sea bass and snapper that grow here, we will have good quality products over time.

Artisanal fishing and shellfish extraction generate income for our countries, they contribute to food security, to the fishing value chain: they are decent occupations. We are happy workers, full of hope, but we need to be heard because in our marine territories of life many of our rights are still being violated.

Marine protected areas and other marine conservation actions affect us greatly, especially when institutions do not take communities into account for decision-making. We must promote the co-management of the places and resources that we want to conserve. We have knowledge to share. Communities are not invaders, but as an

integral part of the marine territory. We need to be recognized with respect.

The 30x30 target would affect us a lot, and not just us but all people whose livelihoods depend on healthy seas. This 30x30 decision was made without considering what fishermen thought. Today we must comprehend the impact that 30x30 has on fishing communities.

We, the artisanal fishermen and fisherwomen, are the most interested in ensuring that the seas, oceans, rivers, and mangroves are in good condition. Only then can we have good and responsible fishing over time. We are the ones who care for and protect them because they are our source of work. If we are part of the decision-making process, we could take better care of our seas.

The sea and coasts mean life to me, work, joy, peace and love. My message to world leaders is that conservation cannot be done without people. We expect to be involved in decision-making related to the sea and the coasts, to be heard and taken into account. No one but us knows our reality and needs.

Local Biodiversity Outlooks has – through the production of two flagship reports and now a series of in-depth case studies, briefings, and films created in collaboration with If Not Us Then Who and Nia Tero – drawn attention to why indigenous peoples and local communities must play a central role in the development and implementation of global biodiversity policy. Find these materials, produced in collaboration with indigenous and local filmmakers and activists, which highlight important issues that are central to the negotiations at COP15.

To explore all the materials organized by theme, visit <https://localbiodiversityoutlooks.net/local-biodiversity-outlooks-at-the-cbd-cop15/>

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UNDROP and UNDRIP as two complementary instruments to promote, respect and safeguard the rights to enhance biodiversity

International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty

While we all were in Sharm el Sheikh at the last COP of the CBD, in Geneva, the 10 years negotiation about the rights of peasants and other peoples living in rural areas was reaching its final stage. In fact, during the weeks of COP14, we received the great news that in Geneva, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) was approved.

10 years before, with the same enthusiasm, we welcomed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Indigenous Peoples are among the first who started challenging the limited conceptual framework of human rights. They struggled for more than 30 years for the UNDRIP. This declaration was a watershed development for at least two reasons: it recognizes the right to land and territory and thus the importance of land, water, medicinal plants, animals and minerals for sustaining human life; and it stresses the collective dimension of this and other rights. In many respects UNDRIP and UNDROP contain quite similar provisions, yet they also reflect the different conceptions related to indigenous and non-indigenous people. A close, even integral connection with nature is more typically associated with Indigenous Peoples,

which is also evident in the more advanced endeavors towards legal protection of Indigenous socio-ecological relations. A major difference between UNDROP and UNDRIP is the obligation to obtain people's Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) to development projects affecting them: this is recognised in UNDRIP (Art. 32.2) but not in UNDROP. Many rights accorded to Indigenous Peoples by UNDRIP appear in a less explicit and less obligatory form in UNDROP.

Indigenous Peoples and small-scale food producers are those who take care of most ecosystems; protecting and strengthening their rights is therefore a key obligation of states. The positive discrimination of Indigenous Peoples is well justified due to the different history that carried the collective rights for Indigenous Peoples and the small-scale food producers. UNDROP does not promote only peasants' rights, but also all rural workers, including people working in crop planting, livestock raising, pastoralism, fishing, forestry, hunting or gathering. It is time to recognize the rights holders within the CBD under the correctly established declarations on collective rights: Indigenous Peoples under UNDRIP and small-scale food producers and local communities under UNDROP.

Human rights and biodiversity

Isaac Rojas, Friends of the Earth International

Respect for human rights is essential for biodiversity given the close and millenary relationship that exists between the two and is expressed, among others, through the role that Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) play in the conservation and the traditional and sustainable use of biodiversity. It is thanks to this relationship that today we have forests, jungles and other ecosystems. This relationship is manifested, among others, through traditional knowledge, belonging to the land and territory, culture and spirituality. Activities such as large monocultures and plantations and others related to agro-commodities and mining generate enormous violations of both human rights and biodiversity. These range from the destruction of ecosystems, pollution, the establishment of false solutions (many of them based on markets and compensation) to assassinations and disappearances. There is a clear need for strong public policies to regulate the actions of corporations (including holding them accountable for the human rights violations they cause) and an urgent need to defend those who defend

biodiversity, forests and impacted communities and Indigenous Peoples. We want no more killings of human rights defenders.

Some decisions taken in the field of biodiversity conservation have led to serious violations of human rights, especially the rights of IPLCs. This is the case of the creation of protected areas that have been established in violation of rights. These violations have been the main driving force behind a rights-based approach to conservation that not only guarantees that human rights will not be violated, but also recognises the historical role that human rights have played in conservation, thus giving it a new meaning. Respect for human rights also entails the implementation of real solutions that play an important role in overcoming the climate crisis and the loss and disappearance of biodiversity. If the right to land and territory is respected, historical practices such as the territories conserved by IPLC will develop more fully and we will have better conditions for biodiversity, respect for rights and justice.

Women's rights are human rights!



In this photo by Daliri Oropeza Alvarez, Zapotec women of southern Oaxaca, Mexico, celebrate their victory in defending their rights to Mount Pitayal, the land that sustains them. See this and

more photos at the She Shapes Biodiversity photo exhibit on Gender Day today from 18:30 to 21:00 at the Auditorium, Place Québec, Palais des congrès de Montréal.

Nature and culture: connectivity and rights

Ana Di Pangraco , Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

Biodiversity and culture are deeply intertwined. Livelihoods and ways of life, values, knowledges, beliefs and practices are closely linked to biodiversity. CBD COP 15 heads to renew its commitment to the Joint Programme of Work (JPW) between the CBD Secretariat and the UNESCO on the links between biological and cultural diversity, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), taking a whole-of-society view, and an integrated approach with full respect for human rights, including the collective rights of IPLCs, fully incorporating the added value of biocultural diversity and strengthening the links between biological and cultural diversity towards living in harmony with nature. A group of South American organizations within the framework of the "Wetlands without Borders" Programme (1), with focus on the La Plata basin, have been working hand in hand with rural, peri-urban and urban communities to promote biocultural corridors. Connectivity is a relevant issue in Target 3 to ensure effective and responsible systems of conserved and protected areas. Corridors have been usually limited to biological ones to facilitate the connection between protected areas and buffer zones and to avoid the so feared "island effect". The term "biocultural" seeks to overcome the dualism between nature and culture. Bioculturalism opens the

door to a multifaceted approach when implementing global biodiversity targets at a national and regional scale.

When applied to corridors, the biocultural approach allows ecosystems and communities to remain connected, favors the continuity of ecological processes, involving histories, practices and expressions of their inhabitants. They also contribute to healthy ecosystems, ecological restoration and socio-ecologically responsible productive and residential uses. Identified and promoted in a participatory manner with communities, biocultural corridors fully apply key guiding principles such as: a human rights-based approach, gender approach, intercultural perspective, intergenerational equity, landscape and ecosystem approach and access rights, among others. They are closely related to GBF Targets 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 14, 21, and 22, to name a few. Actively addressing the close link between cultural and natural heritage needs to be reaffirmed at the CBD and reflected in a post-2020 GBF that will bring renewed commitments to biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and restoration.

(1) <https://humedalessinfronteras.org/>

Brazilian intransigence on biotech is a violation of human rights

Barbara Pilz, Naomi Kosmehl and Adam Breasley, Save Our Seeds



Unlike synthetic biology, Brazilian intransigence on biotech is not a new and emerging issue. Successive administrations have been enabling the destruction of the Amazon and its stewards through the approval of GMOs

and deregulation of synthetic biology applications. Brazil has become a dumping ground for pesticides and a gateway for exploitative biotechnology, including experiments with GMO mosquitoes on Brazilian communities without their free, prior and informed consent. In the last decade alone, Brazil approved around 1500 new pesticides, including many banned elsewhere. This violates not only Brazilians human rights to health, food and clean water but contributes to the genocide of Brazil's indigenous peoples and poisoning of local communities.

The Brazilian delegation here at COP15 is disingenuously arguing that synthetic biology is not a new and emerging issue and proposes to postpone it to a future COP. This happens at a time when Brazil already has legislation allowing many synthetic biology applications to go unregulated. In 2018 Brazil became the first country to adopt legislation paving the way for environmental release of gene drive organisms, as they excluded new genetic technologies from being considered LMOs and thereby removing them from regulatory oversight and risk assessment. Ending the destruction of the Amazon and defending the human rights of Brazil's indigenous peoples were key messages from Brazil's incoming government's participation at the climate COP in Egypt. Will the incoming government also step up at COP15 to protect threats to biodiversity and human rights?

Target 3 and indicators

Friedrich Wulf, Friends of the Earth Europe

One of the most enigmatic and heavily discussed targets of the GBF to be is the one on protected areas, dubbed 30 by 30 before it is even clear if this number will be agreed in the end. Drawing on Aichi Target 11, the target is not only on the quantity, but also on the quality of the areas – it is about effectively managed, ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas, and this part of the target is undisputed. The same applies to the wording “respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities” at the very end.

Along with the need to recognize the importance of areas maintained by Indigenous peoples and local communities, these are all important elements, and we hope that they will remain in the final version of the target. However, how will this be monitored and ensured? The suggested Headline indicator for target 3 is “Coverage of protected areas and OECMS, by effectiveness, KBAs & ecosystems”. There are several problems with this:

1) While the indicator can be disaggregated, there may be many areas on which there is not much of the information other than the area – nevertheless they will be counted towards the target. 2) Even if disaggregated, the indicator does not report on human rights. This means paper parks without proper management and cause people's eviction can be counted in.

We propose several options to solve this problem:

- Have a stand-alone Headline indicator on respecting human rights (e.g. number of countries where human rights have been ignored when setting up protected areas) in addition.
- Include “by governance type” in the proposed Headline indicator to reflect the importance of IPCS areas.
- Only count areas towards the 30% which are demonstrably effectively managed AND equitably governed AND respect human rights.