

Target 10: Agriculture and forestry

Elements to be replaced

- “Ecosystem services” by “Ecosystem functions”

Ecosystem functions are well defined under the CBD. The word services is a market term, and suggests that the main function of ecosystems is to serve human requirements.

Elements that should be part of the target

- Ensure that all areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, forestry and other productive uses are managed sustainably

These sectors have been identified by IPBES as the ones which most impact biodiversity. These land-uses together have a bigger land occupancy than any other use. So, their sustainability is key for global environmental sustainability.

- Agroecological approaches and indigenous food systems

Agroecology and indigenous food systems have consistently proven capable of sustaining yields over time, while conserving and sustainably using biodiversity, and providing a basis for adequate nutrition and secure farm livelihoods, especially for small producers. Agroecology also provides farmers a means to spread risks during adverse and extreme weather events, adapt to climate change and build climate resilience. Such food systems are also positive for biodiversity and climate.

- Phasing out all unsustainable production forms, such as systems based on monoculture production and on agrochemical and excessive natural fertiliser inputs

Unsustainable agricultural production forms are the main cause of biodiversity loss, according to the IPBES and they also speed up climate change impacts

Particularly monoculture production is linked to loss of biodiversity and argo-biodiversity, and to agrochemicals which are devastating for biodiversity and ecosystems - and also human health

- Reducing nutrients lost to the environment, including by abolishing synthetic fertilisers

Excessive use of manure and other organic and synthetic fertilisers lead to pollution levels that destroy sensitive plants and animals. This affects water bodies as well as terrestrial ecosystems such as meadows and forests. Synthetic fertilisers should be abolished completely.

- Support to farmer seed systems

Seeds are at the basis of agrobiodiversity. It is small scale producers, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, women, pastoralists and fishers, which ensure the continuity of seed systems. These should be protected, including through in-situ and on-farm conservation, and ensuring their secure land, water and sea tenure.

Elements that should NOT be part of the target

- Sustainable intensification

Sustainable intensification retains the focus on productivity, technology and capital-intensive production rather than a structural transformation of food systems via ecological, economic, social and political change. Some practices included are: reduce tillage through the use of GM crops or reduce the carbon intensity of industrial livestock. However, many of those techniques have serious impacts on biodiversity themselves.

- Ecological intensification

Unclear terminology which probably leads to the same practices as sustainable intensification

➤ Increased productivity

In many cases productivity -as managed by agro-industry - is contrary to biodiversity concerns, so including it could lead to further loss of biodiversity.

Productivity is the competence of the FAO, then the CBD has to ensure/check/regulate that those productive methods are compatible with biodiversity conservation.

Further reading on target

- On sustainable intensification, in ECO:
<https://eco2022cbdalliance.blogspot.com/2022/03/sustainable-intensification-green.html>
- On agricultural biodiversity in the CBD, by FOEI:
<https://www.foei.org/publication/replanting-agricultural-biodiversity-in-the-cbd/>
- On meat production and impact on forests and biodiversity, by GFC:
<https://globalforestcoalition.org/whats-steak-impacts-industrial-livestock-feedstock-sector-forests-biodiversity-farmers-communities/>