

Target 16: People

Scope of the target

This target should be oriented towards governmental regulatory frameworks so actions, activities, consumerism and corporations that destroy biodiversity through promoting unregulated consumption choices are reduced to be within planetary boundaries.

This includes incentives and price policies

Ensuring use of resources for consumption is sustainable and equitable

What the scope should NOT be

The current scope of the target seeks to transfer the responsibility for making ‘responsible choices’ to people. This is unacceptable, as people do not have access to the information, the resources nor do they have the power to make the necessary changes.

Elements that should be part of the target

➤ Policies regarding consumption products

Governments have to take responsibility to make sure that consumers don't buy hugely damaging products, and that information on products is real.

➤ Prices that reflect the effect on biodiversity

There should be higher prices for products which are more harmful to the environment. Conscious consumption can't be a prerogative of the (higher) middle classes. Taxes and subsidies should get the balance right, and ensure environmentally friendly and healthy food is accessible and affordable for all.

➤ Identify and monitor all processes and activities of waste and consumption

States have to identify and monitor all processes and activities of waste and consumption, which have adverse impacts on the world's biodiversity and regulate and manage them all, so that their adverse impacts on biodiversity are prevented. The CBD has to ensure this happens, and coordinate the effort by states.

➤ In accordance with fairness and equity, taking into account historical patterns of production and consumption

The responsibility for taking action has to first lie with those who are most responsible for unsustainable production and consumption.

Elements that should NOT be part of the target

➤ “Where relevant” when talking about overconsumption

Wherever overconsumption happens, it is relevant and needs to stop. In a world with limited resources, overconsumption by some population groups imply both an overly big impact on the planet, and an unfair reduction of resources for other population groups.

➤ Cultural preferences

Cultural preferences can be important, but a country with a huge impact on biodiversity through its consumption needs to change this, and can't call upon “culture” to avoid acting. If included, it should have a clear indication of this element.