

Target 8: Climate change

Main element to be addressed in this target:

- The impacts of climate change, and its policies and measures on biodiversity

The responsibility of the CBD is biodiversity, and this should be the first focus

- Addressing the common drivers of climate change and biodiversity loss

There where drivers are common between biodiversity loss and climate change, the CBD needs to take responsibility for its part in the crisis

Elements that should be part of the target

- Minimise the impact of climate change on biodiversity by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from all sources

While the main responsibility for regulating the reduction of GHG is on the UNFCCC, the impacts of climate change on biodiversity are huge.

For some sectors, such as forests, and agriculture, policy measures by the CBD can also significantly contribute to enable emission reductions.

- Reduction of the threats to biodiversity from climate change

The objective of the GBF is to reduce the threats to biodiversity – in this target from climate change- by reducing emissions from GHG from all sources, including from deforestation and agriculture and industrial scale animal production.

- Reduction of the threats from actions/policies addressing climate change

Examples: geoengineering; large-scale afforestation that replaces forests with tree plantations, bioenergy and bioenergy carbon capture and storage (BECCS) projects,

- Prioritisation of climate actions and policies that enhance biodiversity

Examples are approaches for ecosystem restoration and sustainable, resilient, and equitable management practices in agriculture, such as agroecology, agroforestry, and silvo-pastoralism.

- Rights of IPLC and in particular women

Many climate measures and policies undermine the rights of IPLCs, while in fact it is IPLCs who are doing most for preserving biodiversity and the climate.

- Conservation of rich natural ecosystems

Natural ecosystems are paramount to preserve the climate AND biodiversity. Especially forests, peatlands, savannas and oceans need to receive protection in order to enable a stable planet.

- Ecosystem approach

This approach has been defined by decision V/6, which offered a very comprehensive understanding.

Mitigation and adaptation have to be in compliance with the CBD ecosystem approach making all ecosystems governed and managed by communities who live closest to them as locally adapted to live with and by their regeneration. The extent to which carbon stocks are sustained as self-regenerating is crucial, also to avoid repeated plantation funding produced by emitting industrial processes.

Elements that should NOT be part of the target

- Nature Based Solutions

NBS is being promoted and framed in CBD, not oriented to solving the biodiversity crisis, but oriented to the interests of other sectors, as a contribution to climate mitigation and adaptation. Risks bringing in elements that are negative for biodiversity, such as monoculture tree plantations and gene drives.

There are insufficient guarantees that “safeguards” for NBS would work, while there are many indications that interests of business and policy makers will override human rights concerns.

➤ **Geoengineering and BECCS**

Decision X/33 of the CBD addresses the negative impacts of geoengineering on biodiversity, and states “that no climate-related geo-engineering activities that may affect biodiversity take place, until there is an adequate scientific basis (...)”

BECCS is a specific form of geoengineering, which relies heavily on plantations for biomass, which have negative impacts on biodiversity.

➤ **10GTeq in emission reductions**

The target should be worded to reflect actions and objectives for the protection, restoration, enhancement of biodiversity. Carbon is not a metric that can do this.

Carbon storage varies widely across ecosystems and is not correlated with richness of biodiversity. Using a carbon-based target could actually incentivize the destruction of species-rich ecosystems and promotion of projects focused on carbon sequestration, such as monoculture tree plantations and/or BECCS projects.

➤ **Carbon offsets**

Offsets do not imply a reduction; at best they mean a displacement from one site of emissions to another one. More often, there is double-counting, baseline problems and others which actually imply that carbon offsets do not raise ambition but are a loss for the climate.

The CBD should facilitate biodiversity policies, and should not facilitate carbon offsetting, as this is not its function.

Further reading on target

- FOEI briefing paper on target 8 <https://www.foei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Target-8-Briefing-note.pdf>
- GFC on NBS: <https://globalforestcoalition.org/faos-plantations/>
- FOEI on NBS: <https://www.foei.org/publication/nature-based-solutions-a-wolf-in-sheeps-clothing/>
- FOEI on BECCS: https://www.foei.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Friends-of-the-Earth-International_BECCS_English.pdf