



# TOWARDS POST-2020 DIALOGUE WITH #9

## THE ROAD FOR CHANGE, TOWARDS COP15 AND BEYOND: A DIALOGUE IN ESWATINI BETWEEN THE AFRICAN GROUP AND THE EUROPEAN UNION



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**SUBSIDIES THAT ARE POTENTIALLY HARMFUL TO BIODIVERSITY REPRESENT USD 500 BILLION PER YEAR, ABOUT TEN TIMES HIGHER THAN GLOBAL FUNDING DEDICATED TO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE.**

**As the preparations for CBD COP15 rise in intensity, it is essential to build a common vision of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and strengthen cooperation for its implementation.**

On 13 January 2020, and ahead of the second meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework OEWG2, (24-29 February, Rome), the zero draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework was published. On 31 January, in Ezulwini, Eswatini, delegates from the European Union and a group of representatives of the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity met for a dialogue to share their perspectives, with observers from WWF, AWF, and IDDRI.

The following provides highlights and reflections on some of the issues that were discussed.



## 1. A GOOD WORKING BASIS, TO BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED

Since COP14, multiple consultations took place to feed collective reflections and the drafting of the post-2020 framework. There is general appreciation for the quality of this process and a view that the zero draft constitutes a good working basis, covering most issues at stake, even though priorities may differ.

While work remains to make the proposed goals and targets even clearer and simpler (to facilitate their uptake) and to increase their “SMARTness”, other key elements for implementation are also now on the table, such as the links with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), resources for implementation including from enhanced benefit-sharing measures, mainstreaming in other socioeconomic sectors and their related institutions, building partnerships with non-state actors, and the development of an effective and robust transparency and responsibility framework linked to adequate resource mobilisation.

The Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development should strongly reinforce each other. Taken together, these different elements can compose a consistent “theory of change”, which can guide discussions towards COP15 but also serve as a roadmap for implementation. Whether this theory of change will be included as an element of the post-2020 framework or be an independent document remains to be discussed.

However, its substance will be important in any case, and it seems necessary to further develop some of its elements <sup>1</sup>.

## 2. NON-STATE ACTORS AT THE HELM: BIODIVERSITY APPROACHES AND TOOLS

The IPBES Global Assessment identified five major drivers of biodiversity loss. To a significant extent, they clearly relate to unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, especially in the agrifood sector. There is thus a central relationship between addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss and achieving the second objective of the CBD, namely the sustainable use of biological diversity and its components.

This could be made even more explicit in the post-2020 framework to make this relationship even more visible, as well as strengthen the ties between the post-2020 framework and Agenda 2030. Some also stressed the linkages with adequate sharing of the benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources (“benefit sharing”).

Sustainable use can be seen as both the result of addressing drivers of biodiversity loss and also a means to this end. Increasing the number of cases of sustainable use that support the livelihood of people can facilitate support for biodiversity policies and provide a credible alternative to unsustainable models driving biodiversity loss.

However, while there are numerous examples of tools to foster sustainable use worldwide <sup>2</sup>, they still need to be scaled up and mainstreamed, which requires more systemic changes, especially in terms of financial flows. In addition, such models need to be community-based and be accompanied by adequate benefit sharing incentives to promote cooperation at the local level.

European Union – African Group Dialogue on the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework – Eswatini, 31 January 2020

<sup>1</sup> An example of a discussion on the theory of change can be found in: Rankovic, A., Chabason, L., Jouve, M., Kok, M., Landry, J., Laurans, Y., & Rochette, J. (2020). A good working basis in the making. How to handle the zero draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. IDDRI, *Policy Brief* N°01/20.

<sup>2</sup> The Satoyama Initiative was launched at COP10 and is dedicated to encouraging and promoting knowledge-sharing between such actions.

<https://cutt.ly/yaeihk0>

There is also a wealth of initiatives around agroecological practices or sustainable wild meat consumption, for example.



Eswatini landscape, Aleksandar Rankovic, 2020

### 3. SHIFTING INVESTMENTS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MODELS

During the consultation on resource mobilisation that took place in Berlin (14-17 January 2020), the funding gap for biodiversity was highlighted once again. The means of implementation and resource mobilisation aspects remain a priority. Even more worrying is that while this gap is already large now, if we fail to effectively address the drivers of loss, funding needed to achieve the 2050 Vision will become even larger, especially in a context of increasing climate change in the coming decades. Sufficient incentives for the communities are key to ensure conservation and eventually reduce the loss of biodiversity.

There is a direct link between the lack of resources and the questions of sustainable use, drivers of biodiversity loss, and inadequate benefit sharing. The OECD conservatively estimates that subsidies that are potentially harmful to biodiversity represent USD 500 billion per year, about ten times higher than global funding dedicated to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use <sup>3</sup>.

Redirecting subsidies, and thus shifting public investments and incentives for private investments and enhanced benefit sharing by businesses profiting from biodiversity and ecosystem services towards activities that are beneficial to biodiversity could constitute an important source of additional resources, but also decrease the need for resources by reducing the negative impacts on biodiversity.

Shifting subsidies has long been identified as a key issue but has been difficult to implement. This requires planning economic transitions for sectors and taking into account the potential “losers” of these reforms and accompany them in the transition. In various cases, this involves systemic change and would require a stronger enabling framework, and some strongly doubted this would be feasible for all harmful subsidies by 2030. Both to push for such economic reforms, but also to make them implementable, CBD and biodiversity actors will need to reach out to the rest of society. Shifting subsidies is also a long-term solution, as it requires systemic change.

By what time countries will be able to phase out harmful subsidies remains to be seen, as it will require systemic change for many of them. Ensuring fair and equitable—and adequate—benefit sharing was suggested by some as a potentially much simpler and quicker approach, though one does not exclude the other.

### 4. MAINSTREAMING AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

An important feature of the post-2020 framework is that it should become the international reference on biodiversity. Its mainstreaming, and the implication of various groups of stakeholders for its implementation, will be of utmost importance. A key question is how to achieve this in practice so that all of these different entities are involved and take their share of responsibility. Mechanisms or processes should be imagined in order to achieve this.

At the multilateral level, enhancing the cooperation with other MEAs, such as the “chemical and waste” conventions to work on pollutants <sup>4</sup>, could help build important bridges to implement the post-2020 framework. With climate change, more cooperation with the UNFCCC on mitigation, but also adaptation, could be built.

Taking stock of the existing partnerships built by the CBD over the years, and finding ways to strengthen them, with for example the FAO on agriculture and fisheries, will be necessary to work on addressing drivers of biodiversity loss.

**WHILE THERE ARE NUMEROUS EXAMPLES OF TOOLS TO FOSTER SUSTAINABLE USE WORLDWIDE, THEY STILL NEED TO BE SCALED UP AND MAINSTREAMED, WHICH REQUIRES MORE SYSTEMIC CHANGES, ESPECIALLY IN TERMS OF FINANCIAL FLOWS.**

The authorities in charge of the 2030 Agenda, such as the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), could be important partners to mainstream biodiversity, which would also support the HLPF in its expected role to bridge gaps between Sustainable Development Goals.

There is an ongoing mobilisation of cities and business, with several events and coalitions that have been launched, such as the works done by networks like ICLEI and others on cities and subnational governments <sup>5</sup>; and Business for Nature coalition<sup>6</sup> on the business side. Sectoral initiatives, such as the One Planet Business for Biodiversity (OP2B) <sup>7</sup>, are increasingly contributing to discussions. There are also calls to launch a Task Force on Nature Impact Disclosures (TNFD) to better include the impacts on biodiversity into financial decision-making <sup>8</sup>.



Eswatini mountains,  
Ndumiso Silindza

<sup>3</sup> OECD (2019), Biodiversity: Finance and the Economic and Business Case for Action, report prepared for the G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting, 5-6 May 2019.

<sup>4</sup> See an example on pesticides: Kinniburgh, F., Rankovic, A. (2019). Mobilising the chemical conventions to protect biodiversity - An example with pesticides and the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. IDDRI, Issue Brief N°07/19.

<sup>5</sup> <https://cutt.ly/qawNISK>

<sup>6</sup> <https://cutt.ly/dawMgZY>

<sup>7</sup> <https://cutt.ly/GawMLQK>

<sup>8</sup> <https://cutt.ly/tawInSc>

<sup>9</sup> <https://cutt.ly/VawOtxl>



Blesbok, *Damaliscus pygargus*, Ashim D'Silva

<sup>10</sup> Rankovic, A., Maljean-Dubois, S., Wemaere, M., Laurans, Y. (2019). An Action Agenda for biodiversity: Expectations and issues in the short and medium terms, IDDRI, Issue Brief N°04/19. Kok, M., Widerberg, O., Negacz, K., Bliss, C., Pattberg, P. (2019). Opportunities for the Action Agenda for Nature and People, PBL/Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, PBL publication number: 3630, The Hague, 2019

<sup>11</sup> <https://cutt.ly/WfbadUv>

Cover page picture: Ariane Labat, European Union Delegation to South Africa

Recently, the 2020 Global Risks Report issued by the World Economic Forum (WEF) reveals that biodiversity loss is the third perceived global risk in terms of impact, and the fourth in terms of likelihood, by economic actors <sup>9</sup>. It will be important to find ways to better involve these non-state actors, whose contributions are needed to address the drivers of biodiversity loss, by creating and institutionalising spaces for engagement and interaction.

This could also help to enforce much enhanced benefit sharing. The Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People is an embryo of such a mechanism. Still, it needs to be strengthened to further invite non-state commitments for biodiversity <sup>10</sup>.

## 5. TRANSPARENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Strengthened transparency and responsibility mechanisms will be a key feature of the post-2020 framework and is crucially important in relation to all three objectives of the Convention. It will be necessary to see how to build on the current mechanisms under the CBD. The global consultation on transparent implementation, monitoring and reporting held in Rome on 20-22 February, has provided useful further insights <sup>11</sup>.

In this context, some also underlined the critical importance of a mechanism to monitor and enforce the adequacy of monetary benefit sharing by the private sector.

Developing countries have generally struggled to prepare their national reports, notably because of a lack of visibility on the resources available to prepare them. There might be need for a dedicated source of funding for transparency, to increase visibility. How national reports will be taken up in global assessments needs to be clarified as well.

More standardised tools and methods to do the reporting could be important, to help monitor collective progress towards the goals and targets. This should not necessarily be seen as an increase in administrative burden; such guidelines could on

the contrary help provide clarity on the work that is needed.

Having a common list of indicators, for example, could be an important starting point and make use of existing expertise and works done under the CBD and other multilateral agreements. This would also help consolidate the data that feeds into the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

Monitoring should also be well embedded in the long term framework for capacity development.

A long-term perspective is needed to think in cycles up to 2050. This would require mapping out what kind of review mechanism and collective stocktaking, at what kind of moment, would be most important.

At each COP, for example, there should be a discussion on the state of collective action, what commitments have been made, what results have been achieved and how many resources have been mobilised from state and private actors.

At the national level, this will require increasing the institutional capacity to ensure that national systems and frameworks are in place and functioning in a more timely and comparable way, which will require more resources.

This, in turn, would help the transparency mechanisms play the role of a platform at the national level, to enable discussions on what measures and policies are working, which are not, and find ways to fill the gaps.

This could then feed back into international discussions and help find ways to strengthen cooperation towards collective progress.

**MORE STANDARDISED TOOLS AND METHODS TO DO THE REPORTING COULD BE IMPORTANT, TO HELP MONITOR COLLECTIVE PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOALS AND TARGETS.**

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CBD COP 15 — KUNMING 2021  
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