

## **Views of the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network on the discussion paper on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**

In response to Notification SCBD/OES/PPP/JMF/87868, and after consultation with the member of its Policy Task Force, the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON) hereby submits its view on the discussion paper (CBD/POST2020/PREP/1/1) published by the CBD Secretariat in January 2019.

### **I. VIEWS ON RELEVANT DECISIONS**

1. GEO BON invites the CBD Secretariat and Parties to consider a framework for voluntary national commitments that would efficiently allow the assessment of their relative contributions to the global post-2020 targets (Item 3(d)).
2. The ability to continuously and accurately track progress towards national and global biodiversity targets will be a key aspect of leveraging transformational change, including by allowing to prioritize conservation measures and identifying successful policies and actions. Furthermore, transformational changes will require a scalable framework (i.e. from national to global), and derived targets, that can be understood and mainstreamed to other sectors whose activities directly impact biodiversity (Item 6(b)).

### **II. VIEWS ON THE SUMMARY OF THE SYNTHESIS OF SUBMISSIONS**

3. GEO BON encourages the development of an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework and highlights the need to focus this framework on SMART targets which are more likely to be successfully implemented<sup>1</sup> (Items 9(d) and 9(j)).
4. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework should be inclusive of sectors and activities that impact biodiversity (directly and indirectly) and allow for the integration between targets and indicators in order to more effectively measure and evaluate policies and actions. To the best extent possible, the targets should be accompanied by information on actions that can empower and improve the capacity of local actors in regards to biodiversity conservation (Items 9(h) and 9(p)).

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance Green, E. J. et al. 2019. Relating characteristics of global biodiversity targets to reported progress. - Conservation Biology (in press).

5. The number of target should be kept to a number manageable for Parties and thus does not increase the reporting burden but instead supports more concrete actions (Item 9(k)).
6. The progress towards science-based and SMART targets should rely on scalable indicators that integrate open access *in situ* and Remote Sensing observations via state-of-the-art and transparent modeling approaches. This should be reflected both at the global level and at the national scale where the indicators could contribute to strengthen the NBSAPs. Importantly, these scalable indicators would allow a continual tracking of the progress in implementation of the biodiversity framework while supporting a more formal review every two or five years (Items 9(l), 9(n) and 9(o)). Those indicators will rely on increased collection, analysis and delivery of marine, freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity observations.

### III. CONTRIBUTION TO ISSUES AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

7. **A. What could constitute an effective structure for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, what should its different elements be, and how should they be organized?** The future framework should allow the integration between its different elements in order to, for instance, better identify, understand and evaluate the relations between drivers and states and hence better target and evaluate effective policies.
8. **B. In the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, what would "ambitious" specifically mean?** While an ambitious framework to address the biodiversity crisis is needed, its successful implementation will rely on measurable, time-bound targets for which the progress can be tracked at multiple scales.
9. **D. What would be the elements and content of an actionable 2030 mission statement for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?** "Distinct, feasible and measurable targets are designed that address key drivers of biodiversity change to minimize impact and improve the state of biodiversity and employ evidence-based conservation policy measures."
10. **E. (a) What does "SMART" targets mean in practical terms?** SMART targets should allow for continuous tracking of progress across space and time. They should be scalable from national to regional and global. The indicators supporting the target rely on available data and can also be projected using scenarios and models. It should also be possible to break down those SMART targets into step-wise, sequential measures that would both increase the transparency of the reporting process and provide a road map towards achieving them.
11. **E. (c) How should the set of targets in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework align with other global targets, including those adopted under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?** To the best extent possible, the targets should align with the 2030 agenda to allow streamlined reporting and take advantage of key messages and existing indicators. However, it is also likely that existing targets and indicators for other global frameworks, such as the SDGs, might

not be explicit enough regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services and hence not contribute to an “ambitious” framework for biodiversity. In those cases, the biodiversity targets and indicators would be essential to complement other global frameworks.

12. **F. What form should voluntary commitments for biodiversity take and how should these relate to or be reflected in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?** Voluntary commitments should be encouraged, yet remain bounded by the set of targets agreed on. Clear guidelines will be needed for those commitments to be quantifiable, and thus allow their aggregation across scales, in order to both assess the likelihood of achieving the global targets from the sum of those voluntary commitments, and track their progress towards such achievement.
13. **G. How can a post-2020 global biodiversity framework help to ensure coherence, integration and a holistic approach to biodiversity governance and what are the implications for the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?** The set of targets adopted should be easily cross-referenced to targets already in place under other conventions. Such process would streamline the reporting process, make it multifunctional, and to some extent support the mainstreaming of biodiversity to other sectors.
14. **H. How can the post-2020 global biodiversity framework incorporate or support the mainstreaming of biodiversity across society and economies at large?** The process by which the targets are established (at various scales) should include the involvement of key sectors driving biodiversity loss in order to ensure buy-in, ownership and a clear understanding of what needs to be done to address the biodiversity crisis (e.g. by informing on evidence-based recommendations). Regarding their implementation, the targets should be step-wise in nature with concrete steps that involve and rely on those key sectors driving biodiversity loss. The multiple values of biodiversity, and the cost of biodiversity loss, should be, to the best extent possible, quantified, and clearly communicated to those sectors and to society.
15. **I. What are the lessons learned from the implementation of the current Strategic Plan? And how can the transition from the current decade to the post-2020 framework avoid further delays in implementation and where should additional attention be focused?** A key lesson is that the targets need to be co-established with the community that develops the indicators in order to avoid the current situation in which some indicators were not identified, or even developed, and only endorsed more than half-way through the Strategic Plan. A successful framework will thus also rely on the high quality and availability of repeated biodiversity observations that are essential to produce those indicators.
16. **K. What indicators, in addition to those already identified in decision XIII/28, are needed to monitor progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the national, regional and global scale?** The framework should be open to new and/or improved indicators that can measure progress towards the targets. Those indicators should be scalable to allow the integration of national commitments into a global goal for biodiversity. The indicators

that focus on the state of biodiversity, and the impact of drivers of change should be based on the Essential Biodiversity Variables framework and integrate open access *in situ* and Remote Sensing observations via state-of-the-art and transparent modeling approaches.

17. **I. How can the effectiveness and implementation of the NBSAPs be strengthened, what additional mechanisms or tools, if any, are required to support implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and how should these be reflected in the framework?** A structured template should be provided for the NBSAPs that supports Parties in identifying their national targets and ensures that they are synergistic with the global targets. This will promote the use of common indicators while allowing the identification of key data gaps. This approach will also, *inter alia*, highlight the need for Parties to step up their efforts on the collection, analysis and delivery of marine, freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity by developing sustained operational national biodiversity observation networks.
  
18. **N. How can the Global Environment Facility support the timely provision of financial resources to assist eligible Parties in implementing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?** Funds should be provided both for conservation actions and to support the biodiversity monitoring needed to produce scalable indicators that can be used to assess the effectiveness of those actions and track progress towards national and global targets.
  
19. **R. How should the post-2020 global biodiversity framework address issues related to communication and awareness and how can the next two years be used to enhance and support the communication strategy adopted at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to ensure an appropriate level of awareness?** The use of online indicator visualization platforms would not only improve target tracking but also increase communication and awareness on the targets themselves and on the on-going efforts to achieve them, thus leading to increased public support.