



Priorities for draft 1 of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

August 2021

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The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) will be a major milestone in global agreements on biodiversity conservation, setting international ambition for the next decade. CBD negotiations for the GBF are well underway, and we welcome the progress to date including the release of the first draft in July 2021. But there remain some critical issues yet to be addressed.

In May/June 2021, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) published a three-part guide series for CBD negotiators to support those who wish to see equity provisions, human development and foundational elements strengthened in the draft GBF.

1. [Strengthening equity in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (May 2021)
2. [Strengthening the development dimensions in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (June 2021)
3. [Strengthening the foundational elements of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (June 2021)

IIED has reviewed the first draft of the GBF against these guides. While improvements have been made, below we outline five priorities for strengthening the GBF to ensure it can deliver on its vision of a world living in harmony with nature. The below points should be read alongside the above guides which highlight a much broader set of areas for strengthening the GBF.

Now is the time to strengthen these components in the GBF – the decisions taken by leaders this year will guide international and national efforts over the coming decade that are critical to combating the biodiversity crisis.

Priority 1: Shift focus to equitable governance, not management

The GBF seeks to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity, including through area-based conservation. Such transformative change requires governance that is not only inclusive but also equitable, including respect for rights, participation in decision-making, transparency, rule of law, dispute resolution and sharing of access, costs and benefits. Equity in an environmental context is largely a matter of governance, not management, and a devolved and rights-based approach is a powerful way of promoting equitable governance.

An upcoming briefing by IIED, to be released in early September, will set out important recommendations for the GBF being negotiated this year. It argues for the inclusion of equitable governance as a key part of its strategy for protected and conserved areas, as well as in the overall Enabling Conditions for the Framework to succeed. Further, it outlines that rights-based approaches (RBAs) are a powerful way of promoting equitable governance and should be prominent in the section on Enabling Conditions, and it is important to specify, in broad terms, the applicable rights. It also argues that the implementation of GBF Target 3 should prioritise devolution of authority to site level, partnership with Indigenous Peoples and local communities, building equitable governance and innovative learning, incentives and broad-based alliances that support scaling up.

Recommendations:

- Replace “participatory” with “equitable” in GBF Paragraph 15 of the Enabling Conditions.
- RBAs should be elevated to the start of the Enabling Conditions section (Para 14), and additional text or references added to indicate that they apply to human, civil as well as site-specific rights.
- In GBF Target 3 on protected and conserved areas, replace “equitably managed” with “equitably governed” (aligning with the monitoring framework).
- Add devolution of authority and broad-based alliances to GBF Enabling conditions, Paragraph 17.

Priority 2: Reinsert Nature-based Solutions, including in Target 8

All references to Nature-based Solutions (NbS) have been removed from the first draft of the GBF. Emphasis is now placed on Ecosystem-based Approaches (EbA), which is not the same as NbS as we outline in our [recent research report](#).

NbS have the power to tackle biodiversity loss, climate change and poverty in an integrated way, and their appeal to governments, businesses and civil society groups is growing. If done well, NbS could hold the key to cost-effective ways of protecting, sustainably managing, and restoring ecosystems, while at the same time addressing societal challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and poverty and inequality. This is emphasised in the case studies showcased in a [major new report](#) launched by 15 environment and development organisations in July 2021.

NbS is a key link between climate and nature, and it is referenced in many international processes.

- The UK as the UNFCCC COP26 President has embedded NbS as part of its Nature Campaign.
- Many countries, including almost all Least Developed Countries, have embed NbS-style measures in their UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contributions, the climate change plans submitted by countries that outline how they intend to reach their commitments under the Paris Agreement.
- The [Leaders Pledge for Nature](#), signed by more than 80 countries, specifically references the need to scale-up both NbS and EbA.
- The [G7 leaders](#) also commit to provide support towards NbS.

Removing NbS from the GBF risks weakening linkages between the CBD and these processes, and not keeping pace with the evolving terminology. We are particularly concerned that it will weaken the link between the CBD and the UNFCCC which are both hosting major conferences this year. More broadly, excluding NbS risks alienating those governments, businesses and parts of civil society that have also embraced the term.

The term ‘NbS’ has been problematic. Concerns have been raised by Indigenous Peoples that it is western-centric and doesn’t represent their worldview. There are also concerns that some organisations are using NbS as greenwashing or an alternative to offsetting their emissions. The GBF should reinsert NbS and use this as an opportunity to address these issues and promote the implementation of high-quality NbS that delivers for people, climate and nature.

Recommendation: Add NbS back into Target 8 (proposed new text underlined):

Target 8: Minimize the impact of climate change on biodiversity, contribute to mitigation and adaptation through ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions, contributing at least 10 GtCO₂e per year to global mitigation efforts, and ensure that all mitigation and adaptation efforts avoid negative impacts on biodiversity.

Priority 3: Provide a clear plan for delivering the finance

There is a substantial gap between the resources needed to tackle the biodiversity crisis and what is available. In 2019, US\$124–143 billion was spent on biodiversity conservation globally, compared with the total estimated need of US\$722–967 billion per year. We urgently need to scale up public finance,

source new forms of investment, and mainstream biodiversity across all public finance to fill the financing gap of up to US\$824bn per year.

Developing countries found the lack of resources a major challenge to achieving the Aichi Targets. These issues are therefore critical for the GBF. The first draft of the GBF makes good progress in this area, by including stronger finance and resource commitments in Goal D, and Targets 18 and 19.

However, there needs to be a clear plan for how the finance will be delivered, particularly from more wealthy countries in the lead up to COP15, for developing countries to have trust in the process and help to ensure all countries endorse the GBF. As developing countries have experienced through the Paris Agreement, for example through the \$100bn climate finance commitment that is yet to be reached, commitments are welcome but not enough in themselves. A clear plan in place to deliver on the finance and resources is needed, including how it will reach local communities, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders working at the community level to implement the GBF.

Recommendation: Embed a delivery plan in the GBF to meet the financial commitments (proposed new text underlined):

Goal D: The gap between available financial and other means of implementation, and those necessary to achieve the 2050 Vision, is closed and guided by a clear delivery plan.

Target 19: Documented through a clear delivery plan, increase financial resources from all sources to at least US\$ 200 billion per year, including new, additional and effective financial resources, increasing by at least US\$ 10 billion per year international financial flows to developing countries, leveraging private finance, and increasing domestic resource mobilization, taking into account national biodiversity finance planning, and strengthen capacity-building and technology transfer and scientific cooperation, to meet the needs for implementation, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the framework.

Priority 4: Strengthen transparency provisions

The GBF has the potential to catalyse transformative change by becoming a 'learning framework', committed to facilitating and enabling governments to each meet their specific biodiversity challenges, while sharing experiences with the global community. Strengthening and embedding whole-of-society planning, reporting and review processes will be key to the GBF's success.

Draft one of the GBF is much weaker on transparency compared to previous versions. For example, reference to the 'Global Stocktake' has been removed along with most of the detail. It is also very light on reporting requirements and does not reflect a whole-of-society approach. This is concerning, because without strong transparency it is difficult to judge progress and hold countries accountable. It could lock in years of challenges with tracking progress.

Transparency discussions are also ongoing within the Paris Agreement, and there could be lessons to learn from that process. For example, adopting a 'ratchet' mechanism to ensure no backtracking on ambition, and to encourage countries to enhance their ambition at each reporting period. Including the principle of progression in the GBF's Responsibility and Transparency section could spur Parties into such action.

Recommendation: Strengthen the transparency provisions, including reference to the need for a whole-of-society approach and to work towards an approach that scales-up ambition at each reporting period and embeds a clear and transparent Global Stocktake process.

Priority 5: Strengthen Enabling Conditions and Implementation Support Mechanisms

The Enabling Conditions and Implementation Support Mechanisms are critical to enabling to delivery of the GBF. If these sections are weak, it can undermine progress and substantially reduce the GBF's potential to deliver the intended outcomes for biodiversity.

The Enabling Conditions outline what is needed and the Implementation Support Mechanisms outline the resources, capacity development, knowledge, technology and technical support needed to get there. They work hand-in-hand to support the GBF's Targets and Goals. A large part of the reason for

failing to meet most of the Aichi Targets is the lack of a clear implementation plan to achieve them. The GBF must avoid this outcome.

The Enabling Conditions and Implementation Support Mechanisms in draft one of the GBF are substantially stripped back compared to earlier versions. The Implementation Support Mechanism in particular has very little detail.

An example is the current omission of any reference to human rights in these sections of the GBF. For decades, the international community has recognised the links between human rights and environmental protection, including biodiversity conservation. People can only enjoy their human rights when biodiversity is safeguarded. To ensure the GBF is aligned with other international agreements, human rights must be better reflected, included in the Enabling Conditions.

The lack of detail in these two sections of the GBF is concerning. It could slow the rapid implementation of the GBF and leave parties to make their own interpretation of implementation needs and the conditions needed to enable this – creating a matrix of approaches that are difficult to track and could lead to perverse outcomes.

Recommendation:

- *Strengthen the Enabling Conditions by embedding equity, incorporating a rights-based approach that also reflects human rights, and reinserting recognition of intergenerational equity, as well as reflecting the points from Section 1 above on equitable governance.*
- *Strengthen the Implementation Support Mechanisms by expanding to include the key provisions into the next version of the GBF so it is part of the final agreed text. Key provisions should include references to the delivery plan for the finance commitments (as outlined in section 3 above), as well as capacity building opportunities to support Indigenous Peoples and local communities to be trained on how to negotiate, both for a strong outcome at Kunming and to enable better engagement and influence of decisions that affect their land (see this [recent blog](#) by Daniel Kobei, Chair of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity). There is a note suggesting that the provisions of the Implementation Support Mechanisms are yet to be agreed, and it is critical that this to be done in time for COP15 so these become embedded as part of the agreed text.*

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