

IUCN position paper

**Convention on Biological Diversity
Twenty-fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and
Technological Advice (SBSTTA25)
15-19 October 2023, Nairobi, Kenya**

Summary of Key Messages

IUCN presents views and recommendations for different SBSTTA25 agenda items. Overall, it is imperative to finalize the outstanding items from COP15 to support Parties and relevant stakeholders in the immediate implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Facilitating the implementation of the GBF and the monitoring of its progress

- Consistency with indicators used in other international processes, especially the SDG monitoring framework, remains extremely important to reduce national reporting burdens and avoid duplication of efforts.
- Contributions of non-State actors must be considered in the global review of collective progress. The [IUCN Contributions for Nature Platform](#) can be an important information source in this respect.
- For the programmes of work to play an important role in guiding the implementation of the targets of the GBF, IUCN recommends that if updated, the programmes of work establish clear objectives, aligned with the GBF, include concrete activities, updated timelines, and periodic revisions of progress.

Findings from the assessments by IPBES and the IPCC and their implications for the work undertaken under the Convention

- IUCN invites Parties to consider the findings of these assessments across all relevant agenda items.
- IUCN also urges Parties to integrate the findings of these assessments in their national implementation processes, as appropriate, and suggests that the Executive Secretary collaborates with IPBES and other relevant organisations in enabling the uptake of the findings of the assessments in decision-making.

Invasive alien species

- IUCN reiterates its continued support to the work of the Inter-Agency Liaison Group on invasive alien species (IAS) towards the implementation of Target 6, including in developing capacity-building materials to address the technical and scientific needs of Parties.
- IUCN recommends that assessments on the impacts for all the 3,500 known invasive alien species recognised by the IPBES Assessment are undertaken and completed, using the Environmental Impact Classification of Alien Taxa ([EICAT](#)), in order to provide Parties with detailed information to support the prioritisation of IAS as requested in Target 6.

Biodiversity and climate change

- IUCN stresses the importance of considering climate change beyond Targets 8 and 11 to achieve the GBF. Existing and projected impacts of climate change on biodiversity should be taken into account when implementing all targets.
- Nature-based solutions must not be used either as a substitute for or as a means to postpone ambitious GHG emission reduction efforts that science tells us are required today.
- IUCN invites Parties to use the [IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions](#) to enable the coherent design, execution and evaluation of nature-based solutions.

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Facilitating the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the monitoring of its progress (Agenda item 3)

(a) *Monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*

IUCN is supportive of the prioritisation of effort from the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group so far, including clarification of the “binary indicators”, the proposed disaggregation of existing headline indicators, and filling remaining gaps in the suite of headline indicators. IUCN emphasizes that **consistency with indicators used in other international processes, especially the SDG monitoring framework¹, remains extremely important in order to reduce national reporting burdens and avoid duplication of efforts.** For example, for Target 6 on IAS policy response and its application as SDG indicator 15.8.1.

IUCN notes however, that some of the headline indicators measure outcomes rather than actions. For example, there is no headline indicator in Target 4 for the key action of “Ensure urgent management actions ...”. The proposed indicator (the Red List Index) measures an outcome (and as such is appropriate as a headline indicator for Goal A) and not the action necessary to achieve that outcome; one possibility to explore might be disaggregation of the Red List Index. IUCN and its SSC Post-2020 Biodiversity Targets Task Force stand ready to help develop such an action indicator.

(b) *Mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review*

In decision 15/6, the Conference of the Parties mandated SBI to develop concrete procedures for conducting the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Framework. In the same decision, SBSTTA was requested to provide advice on the scientific, technical and technological inputs that should inform the global review.

Since the concrete procedures and possible constitutive elements of the global review are yet to be defined by the SBI, **IUCN suggests that the draft SBSTTA recommendation includes the scientific, technical and technological inputs**

needed for the global review. In other words, a technical assessment of the implementation of the targets and progress in implementing the goals. The global review of progress must take stock and inform subsequent revisions of national action plans/national targets to increase ambition and achieve the mission and vision of the GBF.

The list of the sources of information contained in paragraph 3 of the draft COP recommendation should consider sources for the global review, not only the sources for a global report. IUCN invites Parties to expand the list of sources of information to include reports from the Subsidiary Bodies of the Convention and relevant Working Groups, progress reports on the programmes of work, and where relevant and appropriate, national reports related to the implementation of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, especially the biodiversity-related Conventions.

IUCN further notes that the contributions from non-State actors are not being explicitly considered as inputs in the proposal contained in the note by the Executive Secretary. At present, the template for the 7th national reports does not provide a space nor guidance to take into account implementation by non-State actors, and their inclusion is optional in the NBSAP template (Decision 15/6). **A global review of collective progress, while being a Party-led process, would be incomplete without accounting for the contributions of the whole of society. The [IUCN Contributions for Nature Platform](#) provides a mechanism for IUCN Members and constituents to document where they are undertaking (or planning to undertake) conservation and restoration actions and as such, may be an important information source in this respect.**

Finally, IUCN suggests that the questions to be answered through the scientific and technical inputs could also be included as an annex in the draft recommendation.

(c) *Approaches to identifying scientific and technical needs to support the implementation of the Framework,*

¹ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/>

including its implication for the programmes of work of the Convention

IUCN welcomes the rapid analysis in SBSTTA/25/INF/1 and generally supports the proposed approach for updating in a strategic manner the programmes of work of the Convention.

The programmes of work can play an important role in guiding the implementation of the GBF.

The rapid analysis demonstrated the considerable number of programme areas, objectives, activities, COP decisions and plans adopted over the years to support the implementation of the Aichi Targets, and now the 2030 Action Targets. **IUCN recommends that if updated the programmes of work establish clear objectives, aligned with the GBF, include concrete activities, updated timelines, and periodic revisions of progress** that could be considered as sources of information for the global review of collective progress, and enhance their effectiveness. Already existing guidance could be considered as tools and resources for supporting the implementation of the programmes of work and the Framework.

IUCN concurs that more work is needed to identify gaps in the programmes of work and where further guidance may be needed, and **strongly supports inviting inputs from relevant international organisations and other stakeholders to identify and address these gaps, to, among other things, avoid duplication of work and to leverage synergies.** IUCN stands ready to engage with Parties and the Executive Secretary in this endeavor.

For instance, in the absence of a dedicated programme of work on species conservation and observing the weak progress towards Aichi Target 12, **IUCN invites Parties to use the [Global Species Action Plan \(GSAP\)](#) as key guidance to integrate species conservation across the GBF and enhance implementation of species-related targets.** The GSAP has been developed by IUCN and its Members, Commissions and Partners in consultation with the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions. The GSAP sets out key strategic interventions and actions required to achieve successful outcomes for the conservation and sustainable use of species in all the GBF Targets.

(d) Plant conservation

IUCN supports the update to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) in the form of a set of complementary actions related to plant conservation to support the implementation of the GBF. We commend the work of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation and its Secretariat. This update to the GSPC is aligned with the Global Species Action Plan mentioned above. These two documents provide flexible and useful frameworks for CBD Parties and stakeholders to update their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and take urgent actions for threatened species, including plants.

Findings from the assessments by IPBES and the IPCC and their implications for the work undertaken under the Convention (Agenda item 4)

The various assessments from both IPBES and IPCC provide critical scientific information for the implementation of the Convention and the GBF. **IUCN invites Parties to consider the findings of each of these assessments under the relevant agenda items they are related to.** IUCN remarks, in fact, that of the 4 assessments under consideration, 2 contain a draft recommendation for the COP, one does not have any draft recommendation, and another contains draft conclusions.

IUCN also **urges Parties to take into account the findings of these assessments in their national implementation processes, as appropriate.** Capacity should also be developed, where needed, to adequately consider the findings. **IUCN suggests that the Executive Secretary collaborates with IPBES and other relevant organisations in enabling the uptake of the findings of the assessments in decision-making.**

On the specific notes by the Secretariat, IUCN presents the following considerations:

Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature (SBSTTA/25/6): IUCN notes that in paragraph 4 of the draft recommendation, the COP would welcome its own decisions adopted at its 15th meeting, namely

decision 15/22 para.1, and decision 15/10 para.1, therefore suggests it deletion.

Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species (SBSTTA/25/7): Some of the actions listed under paragraph 4 of the draft recommendation could be carried out by Parties and other stakeholders, but others could benefit from additional guidance and work under the Convention (for example (g), (k) and (m)). IUCN suggests splitting the paragraph to address on one hand what Parties are encouraged to do, and on the other actions that could benefit from the support of the Executive Secretary in collaboration with relevant organizations and other stakeholders. Further, the draft recommendation could be considered alongside the draft recommendation in SBSTTA/25/11, paragraph (c).

Invasive alien species (Agenda item 5)

IUCN supports the proposed recommendation to COP in SBSTTA/25/10 and welcomes the revised guidance set out in the Annexes to the Recommendation based on the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Invasive Alien Species and further complemented through the peer-review process. IUCN and its Species Survival Commission Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) which is a member of the Global IAS Information Partnership (GIASIP), have mobilised key datasets on invasive alien species (IAS), their impacts and their distribution. As such, **IUCN particularly welcomes the importance given in the Annexes to the need for efficient, timely and high quality up-to-date standardised data and recognises that long-term funding is needed to support their proper operation and maintenance.**

As an active member of the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species (IALG-IAS), IUCN further welcomes the request to the Executive Secretary to continue to collaborate with IALG-IAS and reiterates its continued support to its work towards the implementation of Target 6, including on the development of capacity-building materials to address technical and scientific needs of Parties, and on determining approaches to prevent and control the invasion of pathogenic agents.

IUCN welcomes the IPBES *Thematic Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and Their Control* and its findings, and highlights that managing biological invasions is realistic and achievable. This will require strategic actions and integrated governance at local, national and regional scales, supported by enhanced collaboration across sectors, countries, and international and regional mechanisms. **IUCN urges Parties to consider the findings of the IPBES Assessment when updating their NBSAPs and setting their national targets and strategies on IAS and building early warning and response capacity to improve preparedness.** IUCN invites Parties to include an additional paragraph in the draft recommendation to COP to that effect.

IUCN is ready to engage with all relevant stakeholders in building on the IPBES Assessment on IAS and **recommends that assessments on the impacts for all the 3,500 known invasive alien species recognised by the IPBES Assessment, using the Environmental Impact Classification of Alien Taxa (EICAT) are undertaken and completed, in order to provide Parties with detailed information to support the prioritisation of IAS as requested in Target 6.**

IUCN notes that an invaluable amount of data has been collated to support the findings of the IPBES Assessment, and encourages Parties, in line with the revised Annexes, to allocate the necessary resources to incorporate this data into existing databases and processes, including the IUCN Global Invasive Species Database (GISD), EICAT, and the Global Register of Introduced and Invasive Species (GRIIS), and the binary national Target 6 invasive species response indicator. These datasets, if accessible and adequately resourced and maintained, will be critical in providing the up-to-date and robust information needed to support implementation of Target 6, and to fill the knowledge and data gaps highlighted in the Summary for Policymakers.

Biodiversity and climate change (Agenda item 7)

IUCN generally supports the draft recommendation under this agenda item, and offers Parties the following considerations:

The Conference of the Parties could take note of, and incorporate the key messages of the IPBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop on Biodiversity and Climate Change in the recommendation text, expressly mentioning that “the mutual reinforcing of climate change and biodiversity loss means that satisfactory resolving either issue requires consideration of the other” and that “the explicit consideration of the interactions between biodiversity, climate and society in policy decisions provides opportunities to maximize co-benefits and to minimize trade-offs and co-detrimental (mutually harmful) effects for people and nature”. This will facilitate future debates in the CBD regarding the role of biodiversity to tackle climate change.

IUCN stresses the importance of considering climate change beyond Targets 8 and 11 to achieve the GBF. In this regard, **existing and projected impacts of climate change on biodiversity should also be taken into account when implementing Target 2 on restoration and when designing effective management actions to significantly reduce species extinction risk as well as to maintain genetic diversity (Target 4).** IUCN encourages Parties to include text to this effect in paragraph 5 of the draft recommendation.

IUCN also welcomes the recommendations for Parties when undertaking actions to ensure the achievement of Target 8 and 11, as presented in paragraph 4, in particular that these actions are jointly undertaken with the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples. In addition, further guidance could be developed and/or collected to assist Parties, especially concerning how to avoid and mitigate negative impacts of climate change responses, such as when deploying renewable energy generation and distribution as part of the energy transition², and how to integrate Nature-based Solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches in NBSAPs and deploy them.

We refer to our [submission](#) (page 3 to 13) for information regarding the relationship between

biodiversity and climate change responses and page 14 onwards for more details regarding the differences between ecosystem-based approaches and Nature-based Solutions and how they work together. IUCN reiterates that Nature-based Solutions (NbS) must not be used either as a substitute for or as a means to postpone ambitious GHG emission reduction efforts that science tells us are required today.

IUCN further invites Parties to use the [IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions](#) that offers 8 specific criteria and 28 indicators to enable the coherent design, execution and evaluation of Nature-based Solutions. The application of such a framework is essential to prevent any unanticipated negative outcomes or misuse, and help funding agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of interventions.

Given the cross-cutting nature of climate change in relation to the GBF, **IUCN recommends conducting a rapid analysis of the biodiversity and climate change programme, similar to the one presented in SBSTTA/25/INF/1 by SBSTTA26.** Such an analysis would identify gaps in guidance needed for the integration of climate considerations in the implementation of the GBF.

Finally, IUCN notes that Indigenous peoples and local communities are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change, due to their dependence upon, and close relationship, with the environment and its resources. Despite being custodians and stewards of the world’s most intact ecosystems, including over a third of the world’s remaining irrecoverable carbon, Indigenous peoples and local communities have received less than 1% of climate change funding to date. Independently of the source of funding, scaling-up investments for climate action need to consider this. IUCN invites Parties to include a reference in the draft recommendation in this respect.

² IUCN has developed guidance for Mitigating biodiversity impacts associated with solar and wind energy development : guidelines for project developers <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.CH.2021.04.en> and is currently

developing guidance for optimal spatial planning and cumulative impact assessment for the renewable energy sector.