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Necessary ingredients for a successful Global Biodiversity Framework

CBD Alliance

The next strategic framework must truly embrace transformative change if we want to stop the ongoing ecosystemic collapse and mass extinction. To achieve this, the root causes of such collapse must be addressed at systemic level by changing the current patterns of continued economic growth, limiting the sectors and practices that destroy biodiversity, such as industrial monoculture agriculture, mega-infrastructure, extractive industries, manufacturing, mass tourism, and putting environment, equality and inclusion at the center.

True transformative change would need to look into the economic sectors that are at the root cause of biodiversity loss. The biodiversity mainstreaming exercise should be addressing this, by defining real policies to limit activities of destructive sectors. Yet, it is being sidelined from the post 2020 process, with extremely little participation of civil society and IPLCs. In the post 2020 process there needs to be a duly participative process, especially involving IPLCs, youth, women and civil society, that defines limits to the destruction that productive sectors can cause. The current mainstreaming exercise is not sufficient for this.

The current proposed structure for the GBF does not address the urgent need for technology assessment procedures/mechanisms to ensure the timely assessment of new and emerging technologies and their potential negative impacts prior to any deployment. History has taught us that many technologies which may seem to be promising at first, can have severe negative impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems, health, and livelihoods of IPLCs and farmers in the long run. Therefore, technology assessment and the precautionary principle should be at the heart of the post 2020 framework.

Real 'solutions' to our many crises lie in the diverse systems of indigenous technologies and traditional knowledge developed in place. It has been clearly demonstrated that IPLCs protect nature better than any

other type of protection mechanism. Therefore, the GBF should set up a work program that guarantees all the measures and rights IPLCs need in order to protect their territories from further degradation.

The GBF must make all financial flows consistent with the pathway towards halting ecosystem degradation and restoring nature. It should thereby avoid financial sources that depend on destructive activities, such as market based mechanisms. We are further concerned many Parties continue to invest far more resources in harmful subsidies for destructive sectors than they invest in biodiversity conservation.

The GBF must be based on the three objectives of the convention, the continuity of the Protocols, and on principles of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities, and a human rights-based approach. It should especially take into account the impact of unsustainable production and consumption by the developed world on developing countries and the inequality and biodiversity loss they cause. This also entails the responsibility of the developed country Parties to provide new and additional financial resources. The framework must be both constructed and implemented with full and effective participation of all rights-holders groups, including IPLCs, women, youth, and civil society.

The current proposed structure of the post 2020 framework, as well as the focus on the chosen thematic areas so far, do not reflect the needed transformative change, nor the other points outlined above. On the contrary, it seems to focus only on conserving and restoring, and on proposals that avoid affecting business as usual. We are already pressing on planetary limits and destroying the biodiversity essential to the survival of all species - including human beings. The real reasons why biodiversity is disappearing so quickly are not being addressed. This is like bailing out a sinking ship. We cannot go on pretending that economic growth, especially when dependent on high energy use, can be reconciled with maintaining the ecosystems fundamental to life. We have to act now, and a first step is to have a draft zero text that reflects the necessary transformative change.

Overly Simplistic

Dr. Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition, Paraguay

Of course, it would be nice if we could keep things simple as far as the post-2020 Post Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is concerned. For the average SBSTTA participant, often a renowned expert in the biological sciences, this implies the post-2020 process should result in a limited number of concise, “smart” and biological science-based targets like “Species loss shall be halted”, or “50% of ecosystems shall be protected.”

But sadly, the experience with the first Strategic Plan of the CBD has learned that such overly simplistic targets simply do not work. As pointed out in the background documents to today’s SBSTTA discussion, a target like Aichi Target 11 (AT11) was not very challenging for biodiversity policy makers to implement as protected areas tend to fall fully under the mandate of national biodiversity departments. Moreover, protected areas were often established in deserts, mountain areas, polar zones, or other zones that are relatively unattractive for agriculture or other sectors triggering land use change. Yet there is little evidence of the effect AT11 has actually had on halting biodiversity loss as many of these areas were not threatened in the first place, so their additionality was questionable (to use a climate policy term). Meanwhile, most other Aichi targets were not reached, as they necessitated action outside the biodiversity sector, including on tricky matters like subsidy reform that directly touch on the economic interest of mighty corporations. However, it is crystal clear biodiversity loss will not be halted as long as some countries invest up to 250 times more money in biodiversity destruction than they receive in financial resources for biodiversity conservation. Efforts for resource mobilization are simply futile if governments do not commit to redirecting incentives, and investments, away from infrastructure, agriculture, forestry and other projects that harm biodiversity.

So life, or rather protecting it, is not that simple. Biodiversity loss will only be halted if not only its direct drivers, but also its underlying drivers are addressed in the GBF. This means that more scientific basis is needed on the behavior of that highly complicated species called homo sapiens. Social sciences can provide this basis. Research in fields like Earth System Governance, transformative institutional change, inclusive development and gender mainstreaming can help the biodiversity sector design tools, policies and governance systems that address the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss, and the factors that drive biodiversity conservation and genuine benefit sharing. For example, social science can analyze not just which perverse incentives should be reformed, but also identify the institutional perverse incentives that form an obstacle to such reform, such as the financial dependencies and conflicts of interests that are created by public private partnerships and other forms of collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Social sciences can also help providing a basis for more inclusive biodiversity policy. It can help us formulate strong targets on gender mainstreaming, on area governance and on the most effective ways to foster sustainable use and community conservation initiatives in general. Only by providing a multi-disciplinary scientific basis that includes traditional knowledge, SBSTTA can contribute to a biodiversity regime that is truly rights-based and equitable, effectively addresses the real drivers of biodiversity loss, and empowers groups like women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities to conserve their own ‘territories of life’.

**For those who missed the meeting of the Ad Hoc
Working Group on Article 8j**

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Opening Statement - Working Group on Article 8j

International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity

I'm giving this presentation on behalf of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, IIFB. We would like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Mohawk People. We are grateful for their warm welcome, and for bringing our minds together to offer greetings to all our relatives in the natural world.

There have been many discussions amongst IIFB members to ensure that an enhanced participation mechanism is embedded in any option that might be put forward as a preferred model, however, more deep and meaningful discussions needs to take place for a fully integrated, all empowering and inclusive model to be recommended.

IIFB has proposed the establishment of a new permanent body. However, we are mindful of the challenges that exist at a time when our focus is keenly on the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. For this reason, with the support of the Parties, we are seeking to do this starting at next year's COP15, and to culminate at COP16.

Recent reports by UN experts and human rights organizations document an alarming increase in violent attacks against and criminalization of indigenous peoples, women and youth defending their rights to their traditional lands, waters and natural resources.

Climate change poses threats and dangers to the survival of indigenous communities worldwide, even though indigenous peoples contribute the least to greenhouse emissions. Indigenous peoples are vital to, and active in, the many ecosystems that inhabit our lands and waters and territories and therefore help to enhance the resilience of these ecosystems within.

Mr Chair, in the next couple of weeks in Tiohtiá:ke, we will be discussing the vital role that Indigenous Peoples and local communities play in the implementation of the work of the convention and its protocols. Progress has been made, but it's not enough. For this reason, IIFB recommends that Article 8(j) and related provisions are enhanced in order to achieve the objectives related to the post 2020 Framework, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The in-depth dialogue will highlight the contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities traditional knowledge to the work of the Convention. We look forward to participating actively in the interactive dialogue.

Adequate time needs to be given for statements by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, to be read in full. The IIFB requests, that when we make textual proposals all Chairs of the meetings explicitly call for Parties' support.

Lastly, the IIFB thanks the donors for their financial contributions which enables us to participate in these CBD meetings. We also thank Canada for supporting the Indigenous Peoples and local communities Dialogue on the Post 2020 Framework workshop.

Thank you, Mr Chair.

CBDA Closing statement Working Group on Article 8j

CBDA Alliance

First, we would like to express our support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities and their positions expressed these days. We strongly point out that the way forward needs to be built based on the progress made so far.

We warn and condemn the consistent and dangerous attempts of some parties to weaken the decisions, deviate from their binding nature, and limit the scope and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities. Such attempts affect the implementation of the Convention itself.

Delegates, the extent and diversity of protected and conserved areas thriving today mainly remain because of the responsible stewardship by Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the world. Without them, particularly without indigenous and local women, who would safeguard our biodiversity and our ecosystems? While progress has been made to recognize such contribution, in too many places still their demands for rights and justice have been met with persecution and even murders and in particular to the most vulnerable groups among IPLCs namely women. The international community cannot remain silent to this situation and the post-2020 framework must ensure a human rights and Indigenous Peoples rights based approach to be implemented as a crucial enabling condition for the achievement of the vision of living in harmony with nature. Instruments such as the Escazú agreement should be adopted by governments to coordinate actions

with the CBD and provide protection for environmental defenders.

We also regret that too many actors in the biodiversity sector continue to push for conventional conservation approaches like strict protected areas that ignore the valuable contribution of Indigenous Peoples' conserved territories and other community conservation initiatives to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. Instead, we need to make sure we put in place effective measures that enable IPLCs to protect their territories.

Finally, it is a shame to leave the 11th meeting of the WG on Article 8j with still so many brackets on the texts as it seems more like an attempt to slow down progress. We reiterate our willingness to work together and strongly encourage delegates at the CBD to increase the political will in this crucial time.

Thank you Mr. Chair

The Convention cannot separate Indigenous knowledge and genetic resources if it wants to respect Indigenous Peoples rights

Geneviève Lalumière, International Planning Committee for food sovereignty (IPC)

There is often a very wide gap between the ways in which the academic community and Indigenous Peoples perceive the world, and the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty is very sensitive to this situation and its impacts within the Convention.

In order for the Contracting parties to make good decisions on Article 8j, it is essential for them to understand the other side of the coin, that is, to understand the point of view of Indigenous Peoples, particularly with regard to the immense treasure that biodiversity constitutes, every animate (and inanimate) being that our Mother Earth carries.

We reaffirm and remind Contracting parties that there are teaching and learning practices that are inherent and unique to Indigenous Peoples and are our own particular preferred pedagogy. This ensures our aspirations are formed from within our own people, handed down from our elders, alive in our storytelling, visible in our surroundings and exercised by our desires, not driven from external extractive sources. We question western ideas of knowledge, culture and research and the impacts of these when imposed on Indigenous Peoples.

For Indigenous Peoples, it is IMPOSSIBLE to separate our Indigenous knowledge from what western science call genetic resources. It is a total disrespect for the knowledge and spirituality bequeathed by our elders. We, as Indigenous Peoples, have been given the responsibility to take care of these sacred treasures, to protect and care for them, to learn from them and to use them in a way that ensures their health and survival so that our future generations will also be strong and able. We consider this a vital investment in our future bloodlines and the health of our environment.

Indigenous knowledge holders, farmers and food producers can make vital contributions to impact global policies and decisions that affect us on themes such as climate change, food and seed sovereignty, sustainable development, cultural heritage and biodiversity based on the richness of our living cultures, Indigenous sciences and knowledge systems. These vital contributions must be made in the context of a rights based approach, one that reflects the histories, challenges and issues that are unique to Indigenous Peoples worldwide.

It would be a major step backward in international law if the implementation of this Convention moves forward without the very important recognition of the role of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, emphasizing our right to self-determination, as a separate and distinct document, relevant only to Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration was developed for a number of very good reasons, not least of which was the ongoing exclusion of Indigenous Peoples from the benefit of international human rights and environmental standards.

The International Planning Committee for food sovereignty would like to recall the crucial importance of Indigenous Peoples' wisdom in preservation of biodiversity. Never forget that it is western science that has destroyed our natural treasures, thus it should support the Indigenous Peoples' solutions to recover and preserve it.