

# ECO

www.cbd-alliance.org  
twitter: CBDAlliance

Volume 63, Issue 1  
Tuesday, 21 June 2022



## THE INGREDIENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL GBF

The elements that should form part of it and those that shouldn't  
And the reasons why

READ THE FULL DOCUMENT HERE:



## The post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework must be guided by objectives, principles and articles of the Convention

*Simangele Msweli, African Wildlife Foundation*

The Convention on Biological Diversity has objectives, principles and articles enshrined in its founding documents. These are supposed to guide its work and yet, time and again they are undermined to achieve narrow interests at the expense of biodiversity and people.

For instance, while the CBD has a clear objective on sustainable use, we continue to witness attempts to dilute or eliminate reference to it. Nowhere is this more evident than in target 5 of Part 2 of the report on OEWG 3, where language with negative connotations on sustainable use is being introduced. Ironically, sustainable use requires an integrated delivery of all three CBD objectives. Therefore, any attempts to portray sustainable use as a means to overexploit biodiversity are totally misplaced and have no place in the GBF.

Article 20 of the Convention articulates the responsibility of developed country Parties in supporting

implementation activities in the developing country Parties through providing financial resources and transfer of technology. Despite this, we continue to witness attempts on Target 19 to introduce language that will give increased responsibility for resource mobilization to developing countries. For example, language proposing the doubling of domestic resource mobilization, which is nearly impossible for developing countries. We are also hearing little to no commitments from developed country Parties to provide adequate funding for the post 2020 GBF.

At the OEWG 4, Parties must negotiate within the framework of the objectives and principles of the Convention, not only when it comes to sustainable use and resource mobilization, but in all areas. The CBD cannot continue to be undermined to serve self and narrow interests.

# DSI: Time for the North to Pay Up

*Edward Hammond, Third World Network*

OEWG 4 delegates are nearing critical decisions on digital sequence information (DSI) that will determine whether future sequence sharing will happen in a multilateral system, or if a more complicated and possibly chaotic situation of varying national approaches to DSI access will emerge as developing country Parties try to avoid being ripped off. Sharing of DSI benefits all, but not in an equitable way. The present system subsidises the Northern biotechnology industry to a far greater extent than it supports the Convention. While the hopes of many in all regions are for a multilateral solution that allows DSI to be widely shared, the form of such a system remains unclear.

DSI inequities are underappreciated in the North, and by Northern scientists, but any potential multilateral system must squarely address them or else developing countries will have no practical choice but to use national benefit sharing rules for DSI similar to those used for physical specimens under the Nagoya Protocol. Africa has said that it will not permit the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to be adopted without a DSI solution. But the

lack of any serious benefit sharing proposals from the North, which should sum well into the billions of dollars, into an international fund, is fuelling fears of a DSI logjam at COP 15.

With backing from the Rockefeller Foundation, philanthropists are being asked to donate to a DSI “bridge fund”. This initiative, however, is drawing concern because it mixes charity with fulfilment of benefit sharing obligations. Southern delegates privately fear that Rockefeller and Northern government pledges will be used to allay Southern concerns but that those promises won't be kept.

If a multilateral solution is found, a key question is the degree to which Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities will govern benefits. Because of IPLCs strong record in conservation, some governments and CSOs advocate for IPLCs to substantially control benefit-sharing funds, and for funds to support IPLCs development of their own knowledge systems and conservation practices.

## On the road to COP 15: IPLCs' hopes at the meeting in Nairobi

*International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)*

As negotiations resume in Nairobi, the IIFB reiterates that failure to adequately recognize human rights in the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is of great concern. While some progress was made during the negotiations in Geneva, a lot still needs to be done to ensure that the new GBF will follow a human rights-based approach, including the respect and recognition of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' rights to their land, territories, traditional knowledge and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

We underscore the importance to recognize IPLCs' contribution to the One Health approach, traditional knowledge of species and treatments, respect for traditional knowledge, FPIC and benefit sharing in accessing our traditional knowledge and ancestral resources. The “Science briefs on targets, goals and monitoring in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework negotiations” (CBD/WG2020/4/INF/2/REV2) state that: “*it is clear that protecting at least 30% of the earth will not occur without the leadership, support and partnership of Indigenous*

*Peoples and local communities*”. This is true, not only for Target 3 but for the whole GBF. In order to achieve a true partnership and thus the 2050 Vision of “*Living in harmony with nature*” a human rights-based approach in targets, goals, objectives and the monitoring framework will be vital for the survival of biodiversity.

The post 2020 GBF must mainstream a human rights-based approach and adopt mechanisms to address past wrongs and be guided to stop the continuing disregard of the rights of IPLCs. We must not continue to allow human rights abuses in the name of conservation. **IIFB stands with our brothers and sisters from the Maasai Indigenous community in Loliondo, Tanzania which is being forcefully evicted from their ancestral lands to create a game reserve for hunting.** The dire situation that they are facing is a reflection of the failure to implement a human rights-based approach. IPLCs do not see nature as separate from people, and neither should the post 2020 GBF. IIFB would like to urge all Parties to the CBD to agree on a way forward that puts the rights of the stewards and guardians of the world's most precious ecosystems at the centre of policy to conserve this Planet.

# Developed countries must commit and take action now

*Helena Paul, Econexus*

We hear a lot about **ambition** in relation to the Global Biodiversity Framework, but what exactly does this mean? And where is the evidence for it? So much of what is proposed is simply inadequate to halt the loss of biodiversity.

It is also very discouraging to see such deep divisions on basic principles reflected in the [much bracketed] Geneva text. How are these divisions to be addressed? Parties need to pull together but at present it appears as though they are still pulling further apart.

The co-chairs are calling for compromise, but this could result in the progressive watering down of potential commitments until they become meaningless. Much of the responsibility lies with developed countries that have still not made the commitments required according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities

(CBDR).

Those with the most responsibility for biodiversity destruction should be leading the way to reversing it and regulating the corporations under their jurisdiction. Above all they need to allocate immediate and adequate funding to addressing the biodiversity crisis.

Instead, some seem bent on promoting 'innovation' (undefined) to address it. However, optimism about new technologies to address issues of biodiversity loss and inequity is almost certainly misplaced and potentially dangerous, whether it is geoengineering or gene editing.

So, in Nairobi we need to see all sides coming together in a spirit of real cooperation and unity to urgently address the biodiversity crisis. **We are watching you.**

## Who makes decisions at the CBD? The increasing power of business in biodiversity protection

*Philip Seufert, FIAN International (based on discussions during a virtual CSO webinar hosted by FIAN last May)*

The next few months will show if the world's leaders are willing to agree on a GBF containing bold steps to ensure a sustainable and just future for humanity and all life on Earth. As Parties and other actors meet in Nairobi for what could be the decisive round of negotiations, it is worth asking who actually influences the decisions made in the CBD – is it governments, rights holders or business?

When attending recent CBD meetings, one could not help but notice the big number of corporate and business-related actors. Whereas some may say that the colossal task of halting and reversing biodiversity loss requires involving all actors, we should also be very cautious of the implications. In 2015-16 civil society researchers made public the "Gene Drive Files" (<http://genedrivefiles.synbiowatch.org>). These documents showed how corporate and philanthropic actors had spent millions of dollars to influence CBD decisions on the use of this new and dangerous technology. This caused a scandal at the time and prompted the CBD to put in place rules on conflict of interest.

Methods included placing pro-technology scientists in CBD expert groups, organizing events to advertise the supposed benefits of gene drives and financing delegates'

participation in CBD meetings. Public-private partnerships, private funding, aggressive lobbying and the production and dissemination of questionable 'scientific' evidence ('junk science') are other methods applied to undermine democratic processes. Another important way of influencing decisions is to coin concepts and frame discussion in a business-friendly way. In the context of the GBF negotiations, 'Nature-based solutions' is one of the buzz phrases which has an appealing ring to it, but is based on a vague definition, scientifically questionable claims about the mitigation potential of ecosystems, weak safeguards and is geared mainly to offsetting schemes, which cynically link biodiversity protection directly to extraction. As such, NBS risks becoming a license for business as usual.

Corporations and their operations are important contributors to biodiversity loss and ecosystem destruction. They are also accountable to their shareholders to whom they pay dividends. This is very different from the responsibility of States to uphold human rights and the public interest. Prioritizing the needs of IPLCs as rights holders must be the guiding star of this week's negotiations.

# A truly ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework

*Cristina Eghenter, WWF International*

The OEWG 4 negotiations in Nairobi are expected to provide impetus for coming closer to an agreement on an ambitious, transformative and inclusive GBF to first halt and then reverse biodiversity loss by tackling the drivers of nature destruction and transforming the conditions for a more equitable land and natural resource governance.

What is an ambitious, transformative and inclusive GBF? It is a framework with goals and targets that are more ambitious than the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The stakes are higher and the risks of failing biodiversity and our future even greater. Likewise, it is a framework that must strive to combat the propensity to poor performance, low achievement and weak commitment in order to safeguard our one and common Earth, for present and future generations. And it can do so only insofar as it is based on a just, rights-based and whole-of-society approach.

The ambition of the new GBF cannot be exclusively defined by quantitative measures and high

numbers/percentages in goals and targets. Ambition requires transforming models of production and consumption to adhere to environmental standards and human rights.

It is about changing governance systems to ensure that biodiversity is fully valued and that rights holders, those closer and most dependent on biodiversity, are fully part of any planning and decision-making that could impact their lives. Ambition should be at the core. It is about effectively and equitably tackling the root causes of biodiversity loss, recognizing rights and rewarding the contributions of the main custodians of biodiversity (IPLCs, both women and men) and securing the right of the youth to enjoy nature and life on this planet.

Will the OEWG 4 negotiations bring us closer to a truly ambitious GBF? The biodiversity loss and climate crises are demanding no less. Custodians and defenders of nature are expecting no less.

## Rights of Nature in the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

*Rachel Bustamante, Earth Law Center*

Over 35 countries (either constitutionally, through legislation or courts and at various levels of government) already embrace Rights of Nature. The GBF has the opportunity to align with and support this growing global movement!

The Rights of Nature is an imaginative solution to our biodiversity crisis, wherein Nature is recognized as a living being and rights-bearing entity, and in practice helps to: create an overarching norm or code of conduct for international environmental law that respects biodiversity alongside human interests; enhance biodiversity restoration while also strengthening the protection and fulfilment of human rights; and reimagine 'sustainable development' to that of ecological sustainability: guiding development, economics,

governance and laws towards achieving the GBF shared 2050 Vision.

Over 200 organizations and individuals across 40+ countries supported adding Rights of Nature into the GBF, following a report released by a coalition of groups led by Earth Law Center, Rights of Nature Sweden, and Rights of Mother Earth in August 2021. The recent OEWG 3 report indicates renewed support for Rights of Nature in bracketed text. At this OEWG 4, we implore your consideration and invite your efforts to include Rights of Nature (or Mother Earth) in the post 2020 GBF. Help us transform our relationship with Nature!

Read text proposals and an infographic here:



Read the **Women's Caucus - UN CBD** recommendations bringing women's priorities to the negotiation table and highlight human rights and gender equality in the post 2020 GBF.



They are the result of a participatory process which included a workshop of members and ally organizations.

***It includes a new stand-alone gender equality target, Target 22, proposed by Costa Rica, and later supported by the GRULAC, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Cameroon and Tanzania, as well as diverse ally organizations.***

**The opinions, commentaries and articles printed in ECO are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organizations**