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Volume 63, Issue 2
Thursday, 23 June 2022



Beyond 30%: Why rightsholders are key to the realization of the Area-Based Conservation Target of the post 2020 GBF

Kevin Lunzalu, Kenyan Youth Biodiversity Network

Rightsholders, especially those living in and around conservation areas, will be directly affected by the outcome of the area-based conservation topic in the ongoing post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework negotiations. The target champions the protection of at least 30% of land and sea areas globally by 2030. A rights-based approach is critical for the successful realization of this quantitative target.

While the target mentions terrestrial and marine spaces in global space, its implementation will be anchored on local-scale contexts, which calls for full and effective participation of rightsholders such as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, youth and women. Communities whose livelihoods directly depend on natural resources must be engaged in the conceptualization, implementation, monitoring and assessment of such schemes, and this target must not compromise their fundamental right to access, benefit-sharing and land ownership. Furthermore, the protection of biodiversity-rich areas will only be successful if elements of effective local community engagement recognized by the Convention, such as free,

prior and informed consent are recognized in any conservation-related action within lands and territories that belong to IPLCs.

The best possible outcome of negotiations under this target would be one that adequately responds to the concerns raised by various rightsholders, such as where the 30% of conservation areas will come from, the role of traditional approaches to conservation, the expected impact on communities that live within and around earmarked areas and the varying definition of protected areas in sub-contexts.

Additionally, it should be recognized that in countries such as Kenya, about 70% of wildlife is found outside state-protected areas, hence the fate of such biodiversity should be discussed. Without addressing the current and foreseen drivers of biodiversity loss through systematic transformative change, it remains unclear whether the proposed 30% is truly the solution to sustaining the world's key biodiversity areas.

The post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework has to put an end to the oppression of Indigenous Peoples

Documentation and Information Network for Indigenous Peoples' Sustainability (DINIPS.org)

Indigenous Peoples have successfully managed their ecological investments to allow biodiverse species to autonomously continue developing their own genetic diversity in healthy ecosystems. The post 2020 GBF should work to end oppression of Indigenous Peoples and the women that lead them in more successful economic models of biodiversity protection through ecosystem health. This GBF could build on the CBD to include clarification of Indigenous Peoples' rights since the Convention was written. Access and Benefit Sharing should have the flexibility to be directly accessed by Indigenous Peoples in order to protect biodiversity.

Each Indigenous People determines that the benefits they seek are ecological and/or monetary. Ending oppression would allow Indigenous Peoples to maintain ecological systems that allow continued direct access to ecological

benefits of biodiversity residing in ecosystems while ensuring that biodiversity increases. ABS can support biodiversity increases far from Peoples' islands and coasts by ensuring that Indigenous Peoples are still able to make decisions about protecting marine life (resources) that visit their traditional fishing (economic) areas.

Indigenous Peoples have maintained sustainable institutions that develop wealth from marine ecosystems. They should be able to continue accessing benefits of biodiversity held in ecological trust for future generations. The GBF should support alternatives to the model of transferring wealth from ecological systems to financial systems that has driven biodiversity loss. States that ensure Indigenous Peoples' management of their ecological investments can promote biodiversity and share in the benefits, while realizing the CBD and its core instruments.

“This is our land, and we won’t leave”: the Maasai under attack in the name of conservation

Simon Counsell, Survival International

Thousands of Maasai people have fled their homes following a brutal Tanzanian police crackdown on protests against government attempts to evict them to make way for trophy hunters and conservation. The Tanzanian government’s action has drawn widespread condemnation from international organisations.

On June 8th, an estimated 700 officers arrived in Loliondo, Northern Tanzania, to demarcate a 1,500 square kilometre area of Maasai land as a Game Reserve. On June 10, they fired on the Maasai community protesting against the eviction. At least 18 men and 13 women were shot and wounded. One person was confirmed dead.

Over the last week, police have been going house-to-house in villages, beating and arresting those they believe distributed images of the violence or took part in the protests. A 90-year-old man was beaten by police because his son was accused of filming the shooting. Close to 3,000 tribespeople are camping out in the bush while some of Maasai leaders have been imprisoned. Many require urgent subsistence needs and medical supplies. More than a hundred Maasai fled to Kenya. Some members of the Maasai in Kenya, who were protesting to the Tanzanian embassy in solidarity with the Maasai in Tanzania, were tear-gassed by police last Friday. A Maasai man said: “I love

this place because it’s my home... They want our land because we have water sources, and we have them because we protect them. We have been living with wildlife for generations. They don’t want the Maasai because people coming here don’t want to see the Maasai.”

On 13 June 2022, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights strongly condemned the violence. Nine UN Special Rapporteurs called on the Tanzanian Government to immediately halt plans for relocation of the people living in Loliondo and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

The violence seen in Tanzania is the reality of conservation in Africa and Asia: daily violations of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ rights. These abuses are systemic and are built into the dominant model of conservation based on racism and colonialism. They are likely to accelerate if protected areas are nearly doubled, to 30% of the planet, as is proposed in GBF Target 3. We can no longer turn a blind eye to human rights abuses committed in the name of ‘conservation.’ Target 3 should be fundamentally reformulated, the 30% target dropped. Instead, the protection of biodiversity through supporting Indigenous Peoples and their lands should become its main purpose.

Horizon scanning and technology assessment: Why the urgent need?

Lim Li Ching, Third World Network

New genetic engineering techniques, including synthetic biology, are expanding the scope, applicability and depth of intervention. Such advances at the technical level are raising novel biosafety risks that urgently warrant updated assessment methodologies and regulations to address significant knowledge gaps and increasing uncertainty about how these technologies will impact biodiversity and human health.

Parties to the CBD already have obligations under Article 7 to identify and monitor processes and activities that have or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to monitor their effects. They also have obligations under Article 14 to assess the impacts of projects, programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse effects on biodiversity. These obligations can be operationalized through horizon scanning and monitoring and technology assessment, respectively. In the discussions on synthetic biology, Parties also agreed in 2018 that “*broad and regular horizon scanning, monitoring and assessing of the most recent technological*

developments is needed...”.

The current Target 17 and Target 19.2 of the Global Biodiversity Framework contain text proposals for **technology horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment**. These should be supported to ensure that the GBF is fit for purpose, allowing for the rapid developments of new genetic engineering technologies to be reviewed, and their potential adverse effects anticipated, monitored and assessed. In addition, text calling for access to and transfer of technology should be coupled with the notion of technology horizon scanning, monitoring and assessment, so that any technology that is transferred is subject to this process. This will help ensure that only technologies that are appropriate, socially acceptable and environmentally sound are accessed and transferred.

Read TWN Briefing Paper ***The need for horizon scanning and technology assessment to address the evolving nature of genetic engineering*** (June 2022) here:



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