

BUSINESS VIEWS ON THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

POLICY STATEMENT

Key messages:

1. ICC stands ready to support a successful fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in Kunming, China in October 2020 at which 196 governments are expected to negotiate and adopt a new post-2020 global framework for biodiversity (Post-2020 Framework).
2. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment report released in May 2019 clearly indicates the need for decisive action and the adoption of an ambitious Post-2020 Framework.
3. ICC recognises the urgency of addressing continuing global biodiversity loss and supports the CBD 2050 Vision of “Living in harmony with nature” and the Post-2020 theme “Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth”.

4. ICC – as the institutional representative of 45 million companies worldwide – calls on governments to ensure that the Post-2020 Framework is ambitious and based on the latest science. The Post-2020 Framework should also seek to raise awareness on the interdependency of people and nature, foster broad multi-stakeholder participation, encourage economic and financial incentives to support the mainstreaming of biodiversity, be aligned with other related UN conventions and the Sustainable Development Goals, and support and enable strong commitments to its implementation.
5. Together with 13 partners, ICC launched [Business for Nature](#), a global coalition calling for action to reverse nature loss and restore the planet’s vital natural systems. ICC is working with its partners in the coalition to bring a united business voice to this vital international discussion to help deliver solutions that will effectively address the challenges of biodiversity loss and promote sustainable use of the world’s biological resources. This ICC Policy Statement will contribute to this effort.

Implementation:

Leading up to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Kunming, China in October 2020.

Document review:

December 2020

In the 2018 Sharm El Sheikh Declaration, the 196 Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) committed to developing, through enhanced strategic collaboration and cooperation with non-State actors, an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework (Post-2020 Framework) that builds on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the 2010-2020 strategic plan and that is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Post-2020 Framework, which is expected to be negotiated and adopted at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the CBD, in October 2020 in Kunming, China, is a unique opportunity for world leaders to address one of the defining global challenges of our time.

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), as the voice of global business, recognises the urgency of addressing continuing global biodiversity loss,¹ and supports the CBD 2050 Vision of “Living in harmony with nature”² and the Post-2020 theme “Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth”. ICC further welcomes the proposed multi-stakeholder approach and stands ready to work with all stakeholders to support an ambitious Post-2020 Framework that is based on the latest science, including the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment report.³

Below are the views and recommendations of ICC to seize the 2020 opportunity to adopt an ambitious new deal for nature and people.

1. ICC calls on governments to ensure that the Post-2020 Framework is based on ambitious, measurable targets that reflect the latest science.

A stocktaking of the existing Aichi Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 reveals that most targets have not been sufficiently implemented, and that for several of them, there has been little progress. To ensure more effective implementation of the Post-2020 Framework, Parties should set specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) targets that are ambitious, limited in number, clearly communicable and allow for progress to be tracked, including through milestones.

For the Post-2020 Framework to be successful in achieving its goals, it is essential that the targets be underpinned by the latest science, reliable data and coherent policies that are effective and harmonised across related UN conventions. In particular, it will be necessary to update all SDG targets which are currently aligned with the Aichi Targets to reflect the revised ambition of the Post-2020 Framework.

The Post-2020 Framework should follow a holistic and integrated systems-based approach to achieving the aims of the CBD by fostering closer collaboration and information sharing between all stakeholders, including policy makers, scientists, economists and business. The trend towards open science and open data is beneficial for the exchange of information and collaborative approach which is necessary to achieve the objectives of the CBD and should be supported in the Post-2020 Framework.

¹ See <https://iccwbo.org/content/uploads/sites/3/2019/05/icc-centenary-declaration.pdf>

² Under which “By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”

³ See <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services>

Such a holistic approach should also ensure that the CBD and its Protocols act as a coherent whole with mutually consistent targets toward the same overarching aims. Moreover, it would be beneficial for Parties to work towards increasing the knowledge base necessary to inform both policy development and implementation, public and private research and scientific collaborations that can lead to beneficial outcomes for biodiversity conservation and the SDGs.

2. ICC calls on governments to work with business to mainstream biodiversity

The business case for companies to consider biodiversity in their policies, strategies and operations has been recognised and leading companies have voluntarily incorporated sustainability policies into their everyday operations, including taking action towards sustainably using, protecting and restoring biodiversity.

These actions may be incorporated into corporate strategies and reporting requirements and include, e.g.: investment in conservation-related research, development and practical implementation; the creation and strengthening of sustainable supply chains; programmes which build capacity, transfer technology and enhance monitoring and reporting performance; and innovation for the development of products that directly contribute to improved environmental sustainability.⁴ Much work is also being done by non-governmental actors to create frameworks, tools and methodologies that help businesses to evaluate their environmental impact, including in relation to biodiversity.⁵

An important aim of the Post-2020 Framework should be to raise awareness across all segments of society, including business, of the urgency of halting biodiversity loss and encourage all stakeholders to do more to achieve its goals. To engage business, it is also essential that the framework define an ambition and goals that are relevant to and resonate with business, and that a coherent policy framework is defined that supports and provides a level playing field and incentives for the scaling up of business efforts to use biodiversity in a sustainable way.

To be effective in promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity among business, ICC recommends that the Post-2020 Framework:

- provide for biodiversity and ecosystem policies and regulation that are based on scientific and economic principles and evidence;
- define specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound (SMART) targets that can help guide companies for implementing their own biodiversity plans and initiatives;
- encourage research and scientific collaborations, both public and private, which can help inform business decision-making to achieve beneficial outcomes for biodiversity conservation;

⁴ Examples of pledges and individual and collaborative business initiatives can be obtained from the following sources: [Business4Nature](#); [Act4Nature](#); [Business and Biodiversity Pledge](#).; [Japan Business Initiative for Biodiversity](#); [Joint Nature Conservation Committee Report No: 613: How plant breeders protect and promote biodiversity \(European Seed Association\)](#); [www.ForwardFarming.com](#)

⁵ Examples include [Business4Nature](#); [Natural Capital Protocol](#); [Natural Capital Impact Group](#); [Kering Environmental Profit and Loss tool](#)

- support closer collaboration and information sharing between all stakeholders, including policy makers, business, economists and scientists, to achieve a more holistic and integrated approach to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, including exchange of relevant data and practices, as well as information on indicators and methodologies between different stakeholders and disciplines;
- provide incentives and support for business by promoting the integration of biodiversity considerations in investment decisions and measurement tools; and
- encourage an ‘action agenda’ that would seek to identify leaders from business and other non-State actor groups to help increase awareness of biodiversity issues and develop and share best practices.⁶

3. ICC calls on governments to foster broad participation in policy development and implementation

The development of a Post-2020 Framework and its subsequent effective implementation can only be achieved through on-going dialogue and collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including business. Forward-looking businesses understand that global economic prosperity relies on sustainable use of the world’s biological resources. Many companies around the world are showing increasing engagement on biodiversity-related issues, as evidenced by a growing number of pledges and voluntary initiatives⁷ that are directly relevant to the objectives of the CBD, as well as to the SDGs more broadly. This engagement is likely to increase if the appropriate enabling policy framework and incentives are put in place to encourage business to take further action and support a transformation of current economic and financial incentives.

Closer collaboration between policy makers and all relevant stakeholders, including business on the design and implementation of biodiversity and ecosystem related policies and regulations will help ensure that they take into account the technical and operational realities of business, thus increasing the likelihood of being effectively implemented in practice.

ICC encourages Parties to take full advantage of business engagement and experience with biodiversity-related issues to help inform the development of the Post-2020 Framework and related international and national policies and regulations. ICC stands ready to help support enhanced dialogue between business and government on expectation and ambition setting, on the type of framework conditions necessary for business to invest in actions that support the CBD’s goals, and on the assessment of the results of implementation.

4. ICC calls on governments to take a holistic approach to the CBD and its Protocols

The considerations set out above should apply equally to the CBD and its Protocols. A holistic approach to the CBD and its Protocols requires that these all share and work towards the same ultimate goals.

⁶ See current [CBD action agenda platform](#)

⁷ See footnote 2 above

In the context of the Nagoya Protocol, new SMART targets should be directly linked to the CBD's and the Protocol's objectives, and its aim to "contribut[e] to the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components".⁸ This will facilitate assessment of whether the current systems and mechanisms under the Nagoya Protocol are effective in achieving its goals, and are contributing towards the goals of the CBD.

The Post-2020 Framework should provide for the Nagoya Protocol to support the public and private research and development activities, information exchange, and scientific collaborations that are necessary to foster innovation that contributes to achieving the objectives of the CBD as well as the SDGs, in keeping with the trend towards open science and open data.⁹

As with other biodiversity policies and regulations, it is important to ensure closer collaboration between policy makers and relevant stakeholders, including business, on the design and implementation of access and benefit sharing related policy and regulations. Taking into account business and scientific expertise, experience and best practices will help ensure that policies and regulations take into account relevant information and practical realities, and will increase their chances of being effective in practice.

⁸ [Nagoya Protocol, Article 1: Objective](#)

⁹ However, see recent article where scientists have expressed concerns that the Nagoya Protocol's enforcement in some instances might actually exclude developing countries and their scientists from international research and collaboration, negatively impacting the Protocol's stated goals and the facilitation of "fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources" - <https://www.dsmz.de/press/press-releases/singleview/the-nagoya-protocol-creates-disadvantages-for-many-countries-when-applied-to-microorganisms>



About The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the world's largest business organization representing more than 45 million companies in over 100 countries. ICC's core mission is to make business work for everyone, every day, everywhere. Through a unique mix of advocacy, solutions and standard setting, we promote international trade, responsible business conduct and a global approach to regulation, in addition to providing market-leading dispute resolution services. Our members include many of the world's leading companies, SMEs, business associations and local chambers of commerce.

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