



ICC Comments on First Draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) – as the institutional representative of more than 45 million companies in over 100 countries, and as Permanent Observer to the UN General Assembly and official UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Focal Point for Business and Industry – holds a deep commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

ICC recognises and supports the need for urgent and ambitious action by all stakeholders to accelerate the transformation of economic, social and financial models to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, enable responsible use of natural resources and move to a nature-positive¹ economy. We welcome the recognition of the essential role of business in this process and are committed to work with all stakeholders to help deliver on an ambitious, clear and effective Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (“the Post-2020 Framework”)², based on the latest science, that can help business deliver solutions to effectively address the challenges of biodiversity loss and promote sustainable use of the world’s biological resources.

The private sector has a critical role to play in advancing the biodiversity and climate agendas in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Businesses make a crucial contribution in creating value for society at large, as a driver of innovation and technological development, as a key engine of sustainable economic growth and employment, as well as a source of finance, technical expertise and advice.

Companies are already taking action to integrate biodiversity considerations into their strategies, operations, innovations and investments, but much more needs to be done to leverage and amplify the energy, capabilities and expertise of the business community and scale up its actions as a driver for positive change. The Post-2020 Framework will be essential to guide and accelerate businesses’ action on biodiversity by building upon their experience and expertise, as well as supporting and incentivising even more businesses

¹ In the context of this paper, the concept “nature positive” means “avoiding and reducing pressures on nature, regenerating natural capital stocks and restoring of ecosystems” in line with the definition provided by the Science-Based-Targets-Network.

² In the 2018 Sharm El Sheikh Declaration, the 196 Parties to the UN CBD committed to developing an ambitious Post-2020 Framework, building on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, that is scheduled to be adopted at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Kunming, China, in 2022.



to embed biodiversity values into their decision-making.

ICC supports the CBD's objectives and efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. ICC shares the ambition expressed by many initiatives³ for a global biodiversity framework that will accelerate the transformation of the economic and financial system, and scale and speed up public and private sector action and investment to ultimately achieve the transition to a net zero emissions economy and generate more nature-positive outcomes for people and the planet in line with the SDGs. ICC stands ready to support governments in their endeavour and will continue to contribute actively to upcoming discussions, working with all stakeholders to help secure an ambitious outcome at COP15.

This paper has been developed as a concrete contribution to the upcoming CBD intersessional meetings taking place from 14 to 29 March 2022 and will be further updated and revised in the lead up to COP15.

What business needs from the Post-2020 Framework

To enable and encourage businesses to fully play their role, the Post-2020 Framework should:

- **Set ambitious, clear overall goals which will provide a common lodestar for all stakeholders.** We support the call to ambitious and urgent action and recognise the need to progress on all three objectives of the CBD. To facilitate implementation, the goals need to be clear and communicable in terms that can resonate with all stakeholders. Meaningful definitions of key terms will also be essential to create a common understanding among stakeholders in the implementation of the Post-2020 Framework.
- **Set implementable and workable SMART targets with clear language** that companies can understand and translate into concrete actions. The language in several of the targets is complex and includes many technical terms. The text of the targets and the monitoring framework should be focused, simple and clear to ensure the broadest possible outreach, awareness, and uptake among the broader business community, including micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs). The draft Post-2020 Framework has recognised this to be essential to effective implementation (*section K. Outreach, awareness and uptake*). The targets should serve as a strong basis for countries to develop clear pathways to enable business to contribute to the achievement of the goals. Clarity on how business contributions will be taken into account in national reporting towards the achievement of goals and

³ Initiatives and pledges include: Business for Nature, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures, Leaders Pledge for Nature, Science-Based Targets Initiative for Nature.



targets would also be useful. Here governments could learn from experiences and best practices with the Nationally Determined Contributions process as well as take into account other internal and national efforts and agreed reference systems. Experience has shown that business in-country engagement in the development and implementation of the climate targets is critical in order for governments to further ramp-up the ambition of their national contributions.

- **Accelerate action to develop the tools and enabling conditions that will ensure that the value of nature is integrated into all decision-making and investments, at all levels of government, society and across all sectors of the economy.** Integrating nature and biodiversity into policies, regulations, strategies, plans and actions will require that the financial and non-financial value of nature for people and the economy are assessed and made explicit, and that impacts and dependencies on nature, as well as synergies and trade-offs informed by science be recognised and integrated by all key actors. Standard methodologies for accounting nature/biodiversity will be important and ICC welcomes existing initiatives that can help develop these.
- **Provide guidance for the development of effective and coherent policy frameworks that will provide incentives and support action** by all companies to move away from negative impacts towards positive outcomes for biodiversity, across all operations throughout value chains⁴. While reporting and disclosure requirements are important, prioritising support and incentives for concrete action are even more essential to ensure successful implementation. Biodiversity is a relatively new concept for most companies, and MSMEs in particular will need extensive support, clear information and tools to help them in this transition. Leveraging and incorporating learnings from existing measurement and monitoring mechanisms into future frameworks should be preferred to building new structures. Without creating more confusion or additional burdens for companies, appropriate mechanisms, proportionate effective measures and financial flows, should all be aligned to create an enabling environment for all businesses to contribute and transform their practices. Effective and coherent regulatory frameworks should enable and support research and innovation which can make an important contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, while providing co-benefits for other SDGs, in particular for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- **Ensure that biodiversity policies are integrated and coordinated with other environmental, social and economic policies** so as to provide clear and coherent signals to companies, and to ensure acceptance and support by all

⁴ The “value chain” refers here to the full range of activities needed to create a product or service.



stakeholders. In this respect, we fully support the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach of the Post-2020 Framework (*section I, Enabling Conditions*) to ensure that biodiversity is addressed in a holistic manner together with other societal, environmental and developmental goals. Actions to implement the Post-2020 Framework, the Paris Climate Agreement and the SDGs should be aligned and coordinated, while understanding and managing interdependencies and potential trade-offs. The Post-2020 Framework requires the buy-in of different parts of governments and all stakeholders to ensure the best chances of effective and rapid implementation and concrete progress. It should promote inclusive solutions that integrate the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainability and approaches to biodiversity conservation that take into account the rights and impacts on communities.

- **Further reinforce the linkages between climate change and biodiversity objectives** to ensure that climate action also benefits biodiversity, and that biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use is more clearly recognised for its contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Reinforcing the linkages with climate action and aiming for an increase in positive biodiversity outcomes from climate action will help businesses understand the need to also address biodiversity issues and clarify the need to ensure that resources devoted to climate action also benefit biodiversity.
- **Encourage multilevel and multilateral collaboration, dialogue and partnerships including business, governments and all stakeholders** to ensure timely, effective and collaborative action towards the Post-2020 Framework's goals. We support the whole-of-society approach taken by the Post-2020 Framework which should encourage policies supportive of scientific and other collaborations that bring together and mobilise resources and expertise of companies and other stakeholders.
- **Align public and private finance flows** so as to incentivise investments and market-oriented approaches and decisions that move away from negative impacts towards positive outcomes for biodiversity. While ICC welcomes recent commitments and initiatives and recognises that progress has been made towards scaling up financing for biodiversity, there remains significant untapped potential to build on existing efforts and utilise public policy levers and the right market-based instruments – at national and global levels – to decisively align all financial flows with global climate and biodiversity objectives. An important objective should be to leverage biodiversity co-benefits from, and ensure that biodiversity considerations are integrated into, the increasing flow of finance that is directed towards climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as finance for other broader development projects. A clear, coherent and operational Post-2020 Framework will be



critical to send the right market signals.

- **Ensure that the approach to access and benefit sharing becomes more effective, equitable and inclusive in creating and delivering value and benefits for all countries and stakeholders.** ICC supports the principle that benefits created from genetic resources should be shared fairly and equitably. However, the current approach to access and benefit sharing is not fulfilling this objective and should be critically reviewed and re-designed to become truly effective in creating and delivering value for all of society, including indigenous peoples and local communities.

The Post-2020 Framework should integrate goals and targets that support research and innovation and create value and benefits to help advance developmental and socio-economic goals, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, as well as other SDGs. Research and innovation are fundamental to the process of creating value from genetic resources that can be shared. Valuable non-monetary benefits include the production of data for informing conservation decisions, the development of technological solutions that support biodiversity, climate and the SDGs, the sharing of skills and knowledge, and the advancement of the sustainable use of genetic resources to meet people's needs. Support should be provided to make the process of value creation from biodiversity and traditional knowledge more inclusive so that more countries and stakeholders are able to generate benefits from the use of genetic resources.

In essence, goals and targets contained in the Post-2020 Framework should: 1) support R&D that creates value and benefits to help advance developmental and socio-economic goals, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, as well as other SDGs; 2) support fair and equitable sharing of the value and benefits created from genetic resources; and 3) reinforce capacity for research and innovation to help all countries create value and derive knowledge from genetic resources.

Comments on specific targets

- **Target 15**

ICC welcomes the inclusion of a target that recognises the key role of business and its importance in the implementation of the Post-2020 Framework. The business community stands squarely behind the objectives of the CBD and the Post-2020 Framework and is committed to accelerating its actions to halt and reverse nature loss and restore natural systems on which economies, well-being and prosperity depend.



ICC believes that government action to create and maintain enabling frameworks should be the main focus of the target. Governments have a crucial role in creating an enabling environment and coherent policy frameworks that incentivise and support business action to move away from negative impacts to positive outcomes throughout their value chains, and to incorporate environmental, social and governance considerations into all business planning and operations. Support, clear guidance and information will be essential in particular for MSMEs, given their limited capacity and resources. Therefore, we believe that government policy action should be at the heart of Target 15.

While useful and effective reporting and disclosure requirements have a role to play, ICC recommends prioritising support and incentives to evolve and transform business processes and drive change in production and consumption practices so that they provide net positive effects on nature and society and significantly reduce biodiversity loss. Flexibility will be necessary with respect to reporting requirements for MSMEs given their limited capacity and resources.

The target should also emphasise the need to integrate biodiversity values into all decision-making and investment processes.

▪ Target 13

ICC reiterates the edits it proposed during the last session of OEWSG-3 to help ensure that ABS measures are effective in delivering value for countries, stakeholders and society in general, and creating and sharing these benefits equitably and fairly. Experience has shown that the implementation of ABS measures in itself is not sufficient to promote benefit creation and sharing, and in many cases, has inadvertently discouraged this by raising hurdles to scientific research and innovation, and the value and benefits that they can bring. It should also be recalled that some countries choose to exercise their sovereign rights by not introducing ABS measures. In line with the stated aim of the Post-2020 Framework to have outcome-oriented goals, the proposed edits are intended to focus on increasing the positive impact of ABS regimes for biodiversity goals and other SDGs, as opposed to the current language which focuses only on increasing the number of measures, regardless of the impact of these.

Current Target 13: Implement measures at global level and in all countries to facilitate access to genetic resources and to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, and as relevant, of associated traditional knowledge, including through mutually agreed terms and prior and informed consent.



Proposed Target 13: Ensure that access and benefit sharing measures at global and national level are effective in facilitating access to genetic resources and in ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, and as relevant, of associated traditional knowledge, including by promoting scientific research and innovation to advance the sustainable use of genetic resources, biodiversity conservation and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, whether or not through mutually agreed terms and prior and informed consent.

Indicators at national level relating to access could include the time and resources spent by governments and users of the system to obtain authorisations as well as the number of authorisations delivered. While we recognise the challenges in compiling data, indicators at national level relating to benefits could include monetary benefits received by national authorities, the participation of researchers from the provider country in research projects and scientific publications relating to genetic resources from the country, and finally information or outcomes of research shared with stakeholders in the country.

Capacity building initiatives under Target 19 should also include increasing capacity for research and innovation using genetic resources, with corresponding indicators.