

An International Multi-Faith Response to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

This document presents an international multi-faith response to the 1st draft post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The document contains three sections:

- Overall messages and recommendations
- A table with our specific key messages and text proposals
- Annex 1: A full list of faith signatories to this document

This document is also available in digital form at: www.biodiversity.faith

For media inquiries, please contact: Mr. Gopal Patel, gopal@bhumiglobal.org

OVERALL MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We as faith-based organizations welcome the current draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. We are encouraged by much of what we see, however, we strongly feel the text needs further detail and strengthening in certain key areas.

Our key proposals to improve the text are as follows:

- ***The Web of Life***

As people of faith, who believe in the sacredness of all life, we are concerned about the anthropocentric framing of the text. We believe the text needs to reflect the worldviews which are grounded in interconnectedness, interdependence and relationship. Without such perspectives, the text fails to speak to the sacred wisdom and experiences of many people including indigenous peoples, spiritual communities and faith groups.

- ***Ambition***

Given the recent launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the importance of restoration in moving towards a nature positive world, we are concerned about the lack of urgency and ambition to realize this mission by 2030.

While the framework describes a mission to put biodiversity on a recovery path by 2030, the targets aren't ambitious enough to realize that mission.

The text needs to reflect the current and impending biodiversity crisis and increase ambition through the strengthening and or creation of SMART targets.

- ***Cross-Cutting Issues***

We are concerned at the insufficient mention of other interconnected issues such as climate change, pollution and waste, pandemics and habitat loss. This lack of acknowledgement of the complex nature of the biodiversity crisis will lead to only partial solutions. An integrated approach is required, such as the One Health model.

We recognize that there are other related and convergent mechanisms that have within them biodiversity goals. We therefore underscore the need for policy coherence and synchronization of programmes across interconnected processes such as National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions.

In particular, we urge that the framework's mission, goals and targets be coherent with climate change and pollution policies as agreed by parties through other international instruments.

- ***Rights-Based Approach***

We believe that the framework will not and cannot succeed without the knowledge, expertise, and active participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) and other historically marginalized groups. The framework must ensure IPLCs are empowered as active partners and decision-makers, not just as participants, in this process and that their rights to land, water and other resources are respected and protected. Integrating a rights-based approach within the framework will need to be clearly defined so that it captures the issues of power imbalances between different groups and furthers rights of all living beings and the accountability of duty bearers.

- ***Production & Extraction***

Targets should be strengthened to incentivize the just transition of industries which rely on the production and extraction of natural resources towards a nature positive world and systems imbued with the sacred rights of people and planet.

The proposed targets do not recognize, reflect or capture the overwhelming impact that industrial agriculture, food systems and fossil fuel industries have in driving the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem destruction.

The benefits of the ethical utilization of genetic resources must be shared fairly and equitably, to ensure that the development of such technology does not cause harm to the very populations it intends to serve.

An ethical and holistic response to living in harmony with nature cannot occur without addressing the existing economic systems in place that exploit people and planet.

- ***Implementation Mechanism***

More details on the implementation mechanism is needed to guide member states as they set out on raising their ambition and integrating the framework into their national conservation plans. The mechanism should allow tracking of progress and the ability to increase action if sufficient progress is not made.

The implementation mechanism should be agreed upon at COP15 to ensure implementation can start immediately.

As the language around the importance of rights based approaches were removed from the targets, and added into the implementation framework, we emphasize the importance of maintaining this language to ensure that implementing the biodiversity framework does not adversely impact IPLCs and other vulnerable communities in the name of progress.

Recognizing the positive dimensions and contributions of faith based organizations, which motivate many to act for the betterment of the environment, we are encouraged to see the recognition of the role faith based organizations play in cultivating an enabling environment for the implementation of the global biodiversity framework through a participatory and inclusive whole of society approach.

A full financial gap analysis must be completed in parallel with targets to avoid delays in implementation. Resources that are raised must be distributed to the places and people that most require them. Subsidies that are harmful to the environment (such as fossil fuels, industrial animal agriculture, and mining) must also be repurposed.

We wish to see that all targets are legally enforceable.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS ON THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
Section F. 2050 Goals and 2030 Milestones		
Goal A “The increase in the extinction rate is halted or reversed, and the extinction risk is reduced by at least 10 percent, with a decrease in the proportion of species that are threatened, and the abundance and distribution of populations of species is enhanced or at least maintained”	“The increase in the extinction rate is halted or reversed, and the extinction risk is reduced by at least 10 percent, with a decrease in the proportion of species that are threatened, and the abundance and distribution of populations of species is significantly increased ”	We emphasize, in order to ensure restoration is at the heart of our efforts to reduce extinction of species, ambition here needs to be significantly increased.
Goal C “The benefits of the utilization of genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably, with a substantial increase in both monetary and non-monetary benefits shared, including for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.”	“The benefits of the ethical utilization of genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably, with a substantial increase in both monetary and non-monetary benefits shared (particularly with IPLCs) , including for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.”	We must continue to promote the ethical use of such resources and the sharing of benefits with IPLCs and those who protect and preserve traditional ecological knowledge.
Goal D “Adequate financial resources to implement the framework are available and deployed, progressively closing the financing gap up to at least US \$700 billion per year by 2030.”	“Adequate financial resources to implement the framework are available and deployed, progressively closing the financing gap up to at least US \$700 billion per year by 2030 through the distribution of funds from developed world governments and foundations to developing world countries. ”	We emphasize that a pathway for financing conservation efforts in the global south and developing world must be identified. Full financing must be identified and deployed equitably.

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
Section G - 2030 action targets		
Target 1 “Ensure that all land and sea areas globally are under integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning addressing land-and sea-use change, retaining existing intact and wilderness areas.”	“Ensure that all land and sea areas globally are under integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning addressing land-and sea-use change, not just retaining but expanding existing intact and wilderness areas, enhancing connectivity and ensuring the flourishing of biodiversity .	We express that ambition here needs to be significantly expanded to ensure interconnectivity is emphasized in this target.
Target 3 “Ensure that at least 30 per cent globally of land areas and of sea areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and its contributions to people, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.”	“Ensure that at least 30 per cent globally of land areas and of sea areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and its contributions to people , are conserved through effectively and equitably financed , ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures...”	<p>We support the 30% figure suggested here as a first step toward achieving the 2050 vision, understanding that this percentage must increase over time. Targets need to be SMART across the board.</p> <p>Biodiversity provides ecosystem services that are inherently contributing toward the well-being of people and planet, so specifically naming those contributions here is unnecessary and overly anthropocentric.</p> <p>We suggest the phrase financed over managed, to ensure the commitment is to fund conservation efforts.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 4</p> <p>“Ensure active management actions to enable the recovery and conservation of species and the genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species, including through ex situ conservation, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to avoid or reduce human-wildlife conflict.”</p>	<p>“Ensure active management actions to enable the recovery and conservation of threatened species and the genetic diversity of all wild and domesticated species, including through in situ and ex situ conservation, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to avoid or reduce harm to humans or wildlife populations.”</p>	<p>We endorse the proposed language from New Zealand for this target, using a framework of “harm” over “conflict” to draw attention to impacts of human actions.</p>
<p>Target 5</p> <p>“Ensure that the harvesting, trade, and use of wild species is sustainable, legal, and safe for human health.”</p>	<p>“Eliminate unsustainable, illegal and unsafe harvesting, trade and use of wild species to align with One Health approach.”</p>	<p>We endorse the co-chairs’ proposed alternate text with additional language to emphasize a One Health approach.</p>
<p>Target 6</p> <p>“Manage pathways for the introduction of invasive alien species, preventing, or reducing their rate of introduction and establishment by at least 50 per cent, and control or eradicate invasive alien species to eliminate or reduce their impacts, focusing on priority species and priority sites.”</p>	<p>“Identify and manage pathways for the introduction of invasive alien species, preventing, or reducing their rate of introduction and establishment by at least 50 per cent, and control or eradicate invasive alien species to eliminate or reduce their impacts, focusing on priority species and priority sites.”</p>	<p>We endorse the co-chairs’ alternative text for this target and strongly emphasize the need to keep this SMART numerical target to demonstrate ambition.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 7</p> <p>“Reduce pollution from all sources to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and human health, including by reducing nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, and pesticides by at least two thirds and eliminating the discharge of plastic waste.”</p>	<p>“Reduce pollution from all sources to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and human health, including by reducing nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, and pesticides by at least two thirds and eliminating the discharge of plastic waste.”</p>	<p>We recognize the importance of SMART goals and endorse the target’s language to reduce pollution of the 3 priority substances outlined in the IPBES assessment.</p>
<p>Target 8</p> <p>“Minimize the impact of climate change on biodiversity, contribute to mitigation and adaptation through ecosystem-based approaches, contributing at least 10 GtCO₂e per year to global mitigation efforts, and ensure that all mitigation and adaptation efforts avoid negative impacts on biodiversity.”</p>	<p>“Minimize the impact of climate change on biodiversity, contribute to mitigation, adaptation, and resilience through equitable and rights-based ecosystem-based approaches, contributing at least 10 GtCO₂e per year to global mitigation efforts, and ensure that all mitigation and adaptation efforts eliminate negative impacts on biodiversity.”</p>	<p>We recognize the important role that biodiversity plays in our planet’s resilience to climate change. As a first step toward ambitious action on the interlinked issues of biodiversity loss and climate change, it is imperative that this target retain its SMART emissions mitigation target based upon the rationale given by the co-chairs: “Target 8 includes one numeric element based on the United Nations <i>Emissions Gap Report 2020</i>, which concluded that emissions need to be reduced by 32 GtCO₂e for humanity to achieve the goal of halting climate change above 1.5°C. Further to this conclusion, a report by the IUCN and Oxford University suggests that nature-based solutions could provide around 30% of the cost-effective mitigation that is needed by 2030 to stabilize warming to below 2°C. As such, the 10Gt GtCO₂e value was derived by calculating 30% of 32 GtCO₂e.”</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 9</p> <p>"Ensure benefits, including nutrition, food security, medicines, and livelihoods for people especially for the most vulnerable through <i>sustainable management</i> of wild terrestrial, freshwater and marine species and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities."</p>	<p>"Ensure the sustainable and nature-positive management and use of species thereby providing benefits (including nutritional and food security, medicines, and livelihoods), to all people, especially to the most vulnerable, while safeguarding the sustainable and culturally diverse use by indigenous peoples and local communities."</p>	<p>We support the co-chairs' alternative text for this target with several key additions to emphasize equity, justice, and ambition. Avoiding nutrition loss is not sufficient to curb global malnutrition. These targets need to address nutritional security beyond food security, recognising the importance of cultural diversity.</p>
<p>Target 10</p> <p>"Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, increasing the productivity and resilience of these production systems."</p>	<p>"Ensure all areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, adhering to a rights-based approach, in particular through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, thereby increasing the productivity and resiliency of these production systems."</p>	<p>We suggest retaining "productivity" here instead of language related to ecological intensification, recognizing that increased productivity can be achieved through reduction of waste, increasing efficiency without intensification.</p>
<p>Target 11</p> <p>"Maintain and enhance nature's contributions to regulation of air quality, quality and quantity of water, and protection from hazards and extreme events for all people."</p>	<p>"Ensure sustainable human consumption and production in order to enhance ecosystem services for the regulation of air quality, quality and quantity of water, and protection from hazards and extreme events for all people, particularly the most vulnerable."</p>	<p>We emphasize that the human responsibility towards nature needs to be stressed in this target, coupled with increased ambition. Language around "consumption and production" was added to match SDG12. Equitable protections must be forefronted.</p>
<p>Target 12</p> <p>"Increase the area of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces, for human health and well-being in urban areas and other densely populated areas."</p>	<p>"Increase the area of, access to, and benefits from bioregional and diverse green and blue spaces, for human health and well-being in urban areas and other densely populated areas."</p>	<p>We emphasize that green and blue spaces under development must be intentionally created to be bioregional and diverse, ensuring that future projects strengthen the local flora and fauna, safeguarding against the threats of invasive species and greenwashing.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 13</p> <p>“Implement measures at the 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.”</p>	<p>“Implement measures at the 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 ethical use of genetic resources, and as relevant, of associated traditional knowledge, including through mutually agreed terms and prior and informed consent.”</p>	<p>We must, as suggested in goal C, promote the ethical use of such resources and the sharing of benefits with IPLCs and those who protect and preserve traditional ecological knowledge.</p>
<p>Target 14</p> <p>“Fully integrate biodiversity values into policies, regulations, development processes, poverty reduction strategies, accounts, and assessments of environmental impacts at all levels of government and across all sectors of the economy, ensuring that all activities and financial flows are aligned with biodiversity values.”</p>	<p>“Fully integrate biodiversity and its multiples values into policies, regulations, planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies, accounts, and assessments of environmental impacts at all levels of government and across all sectors of the economy and society, ensuring that all activities and financial flows are aligned with the goals of the global biodiversity framework.”</p>	<p>We endorse the co-chairs’ alternate text for this target in order to reduce confusion around the phrase “biodiversity values”. This whole section concerns mainstreaming such values. We add that all sectors of society, including faith-based organizations, should be included in mainstreaming these values.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 15</p> <p>“All businesses (public and private, large, medium and small) assess and report on their dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, from local to global, and progressively reduce negative impacts, by at least half and increase positive impacts, reducing biodiversity-related risks to businesses and moving towards the full sustainability of extraction and production practices, sourcing and supply chains, and use and disposal.”</p>	<p>“Legislate to require all public and private businesses to assess, report, and reduce negative impacts by at least half, and move towards the full sustainability of extraction and production practices (including the phasing out of fossil fuels), sourcing and supply chains, and use and disposal.”</p>	<p>We suggest adding language around legislation in order to clarify how states can implement this target. Language about “reducing biodiversity-related risks to businesses” must be removed, since it runs the risk of protecting businesses that are, in fact, perpetrating harm.</p>
<p>Target 16</p> <p>“Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make responsible choices and have access to relevant information and alternatives, taking into account cultural preferences, to reduce by at least half the waste and, where relevant the overconsumption, of food and other materials.”</p>	<p>“Taking into account cultural preferences, ensure that people are empowered to adopt sustainable consumption practices by improving access to relevant information, alternatives and resources, reducing global waste of food and other materials by at least half by 2030.”</p>	<p>We endorse the co-chairs’ alternative text for this target, adding language regarding empowerment and using cultural preferences as a frame. Overconsumption is a key driver of waste, leading to ethical and moral backsliding.</p>
<p>Target 18</p> <p>“Redirect, repurpose, reform or eliminate incentives harmful for biodiversity, in a just and equitable way, reducing them by at least US\$500 billion per year, including all of the most harmful subsidies, and ensure that incentives, including public and private economic and regulatory incentives, are either positive or neutral for biodiversity.”</p>	<p>“Redirect, repurpose, reform or eliminate incentives harmful for biodiversity, in a just and equitable way, reducing them by at least US\$500 billion per year, including all of the most harmful subsidies, and ensure that incentives, including public and private economic and regulatory incentives, are nature-positive.”</p>	<p>We strongly endorse retaining numeric value (USD 500 billion/year) in this target as a first step toward action at the appropriate level of ambition, understanding that this will need to increase over time. This is important for maintaining the moral vision behind action on this framework. All actions must be nature-positive in order to attain the level of ambition needed.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 19</p> <p>“Increase financial resources from all sources to at least US\$200 billion per year, including new, additional and effective financial resources, increasing by at least US\$10 billion per year international financial flows to developing countries, leveraging private finance, and increase domestic resource mobilization, taking into account national biodiversity finance planning, and strengthen capacity-building and technology transfer and scientific cooperation, to meet the needs for implementation, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the framework.”</p>	<p>“Increase financial resources from all sources to at least US\$200 billion per year, including new, additional and effective financial resources, increasing by at least US\$10 billion per year international financial flows to developing countries, leveraging private finance, and increase domestic resource mobilization, taking into account national biodiversity finance planning, and strengthen capacity-building and technology transfer and scientific cooperation, to meet the needs for implementation, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the framework.”</p>	<p>We endorse this target’s proposed language, recognizing that it is crucial to retain the SMART targets here as a first step toward ratcheting up ambition on implementing biodiversity values through equitable financial transfer.</p>
<p>Target 20</p> <p>“Ensure that relevant knowledge, including the traditional knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities with their free, prior, and informed consent, guides decision-making for the effective management of biodiversity, enabling monitoring, and by promoting awareness, education, and research.”</p>	<p>“Ensure that relevant knowledge, including the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities with their free, prior, and informed consent, guides decision-making for the effective management of biodiversity, enabling monitoring, and by promoting awareness, education and research, at all levels of government.”</p>	<p>We propose this addition to ensure that engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities flows through national to local governance structures and is not siloed into one particular arena.</p>

GOALS AND TARGETS	PROPOSED EDIT	RATIONALE
<p>Target 21</p> <p>“Ensure equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, and respect their rights over lands, territories and resources, as well as by women and girls, and youth.”</p>	<p>“Ensure equitable and effective participation in decision-making related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples, local communities, women and youth, respecting and securing their rights over lands, territories and resources.”</p>	<p>We emphasize that participation in decision-making is not enough. Stronger language is needed, in line with the rights-based approach, ensuring that Indigenous and local communities are integrally involved in conservation planning and restoration efforts. Of particular note is the <i>IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services</i>, which drew directly from indigenous and local knowledge. The report found that Nature managed by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities is under increasing pressure but is generally declining less rapidly than in other lands.</p>

ANNEX 1:

LIST OF FAITH SIGNATORIES TO THIS DOCUMENT

This document is endorsed by:

ACT Alliance

Anglican Consultative Council *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Bahu Trust

Bhumi Global *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Center for Earth Ethics

Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN

Edmund Rice International

Global One 2015

Govardhan EcoVillage *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Hazon

Interfaith Power & Light

International Environment Forum

Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences

Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Missionary Society of St. Columban *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Parliament of the World's Religions *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Sisters of Charity Federation

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

Soka Gakkai International

The Center for Ecumenical and Interreligious Engagement at Seattle University

Thomas Berry Forum at Iona College/Deignan Institute for Earth and Spirit

Unitarian Universalist Association *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

UN Environment Programme Faith for Earth Initiative *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

United Religions Initiative

World Evangelical Alliance *(Member of Drafting Committee)*

WWF Beliefs and Values Programme *(Member of Drafting Committee)*