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**United Nations  
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**Expert meeting on the development of post-2010  
global biodiversity targets**  
Nairobi, 2–3 October 2009

**Report of the expert meeting on the development of post-2010  
global biodiversity targets**

**Introduction**

1. In 2002, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a Strategic Plan including the target of achieving by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national levels as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. At its tenth meeting (October–November 2010), the Conference will review progress made towards the achievement of its strategic plan and 2010 target, and adopt an updated and revised Strategic Plan containing new biodiversity targets.
2. The current meeting was organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a follow-up to the expert meeting on 2010 biodiversity targets held by UNEP on 15 February 2009. It was intended to provide some specific inputs into the design and development of post-2010 biodiversity targets based on the recommendations and outcomes of various meetings and consultations held to date.

**I. Opening of the meeting**

3. The meeting was opened at 9.15 a.m. on Friday, 2 October 2009, by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Director of the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation of UNEP. He said that the task facing the biodiversity community was to assess progress on tackling biodiversity loss to date and to consider the future, given that the post-2010 biodiversity targets needed clarification. He conveyed the enthusiasm of UNEP for working with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and contributing to the process of defining and negotiating post-2010 targets. Stressing the importance of biodiversity indicators, he said that presenting tangible scientific facts was an important factor and that the topic had to be engaged on a far wider scale if the broader population were to gain an understanding of the problem.
4. Mr. Robert Höft, Environmental Affairs Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, welcomed the current meeting as an important and specific step in helping to consider post-2010 targets that were beginning to emerge from submissions and views received. He thanked UNEP for its active support in facilitating the consultations, including the series of subsequent regional meetings. It was now necessary to begin solidifying the targets and to gradually move towards concrete proposals for a post-2010 biodiversity framework.
5. Mr. Carlos Martin Novello, Senior Adviser to the President of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, acknowledged that ideas for the post-2010 targets to date had been limited and welcomed the opportunity offered to make them more

specific. He pointed out that, for the targets to be effective, they would have to gain recognition at all levels and that UNEP had an important role to play in bringing the issue to widespread attention. He named 2050 as the ultimate date for solving the problems of biodiversity loss and said that a series of milestones should be established to reach that target.

6. Mr. Balakrishna Pisupati, UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, noted ongoing work in the United Nations System, explaining that the Environment Management Group was due to produce a report by the end of 2009 showing individual agencies' work. He also emphasized the need for wide stakeholder involvement in all regions, calling for Africa, Asia and Latin America to become engaged.

## **II. Organization of the session**

### **A. Attendance**

7. A complete list of participants is set out in annex II to the present report.

### **B. Agenda**

8. The chair adopted a participatory approach in dealing with the agenda for the meeting, involving on open discussion among participants, who were all technical and scientific experts. That allowed flexibility in the nature and direction of proceedings, optimizing the use of the participants' time and skills, and enabling emerging priorities to be tackled.

## **III. Presentations and discussion**

9. Mr. Höft gave a presentation on the status of updating the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity. He provided an overview of the process as well as views and proposed elements for the post-2010 plan received to date. He noted that the submissions and discussions showed large areas of convergence, including the need to link actions addressing biodiversity loss with sustainable development objectives and to complement actions on biodiversity conservation and restoration with a greater emphasis on addressing the indirect and direct drivers of biodiversity loss as well as a need to cover the three objectives of the Convention in a balanced manner.. He reported that most submissions had called for a long-term goal of 2050 with a shorter-term target of 2020 which should put us on a path to achieve the long-term vision. He introduced a set of possible sub-targets which could be discussed during the meeting.

10. Mr. Matt Walpole, Head, Ecosystem Assessment Programme, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, described the Centre's work as responding to and supporting UNEP with emphasis on science rather than political elements, coordinating 40 international agencies to improve the development, uptake and use of biodiversity indicators. He explained that data sets for indicators were sometimes not in place, leaving significant gaps in understanding in some areas, and stressed that indicators must underpin targets and that metrics must be simple and clear. Acknowledging that funding was limited, he suggested that indicators and targets must be based on existing data used more effectively and that the integration of targets and indicators was central to maximizing effectiveness.

11. In the ensuing discussion, several participants said that full engagement with the Convention on Biological Diversity by all countries was vital. There was broad agreement that increased understanding of biodiversity was crucial to obtaining wider buy-in from stakeholders outside the immediate biodiversity arena.

12. One participant questioned why biodiversity had not been as successful as climate change in achieving a high profile and suggested that raising awareness of biodiversity's role in poverty reduction and climate change mitigation, for example, was central to engaging political action and financing. He further stressed the importance of inviting as wide a body of representatives as possible to forthcoming meetings on the post-2010 agenda, and of close cooperation with the Environmental Management Group.

13. One participant called for a focus on short-term and medium-term targets given the urgency of the issue, laying emphasis on finding ways to implement the Convention and to translate recommendations into national action plans, thereby coordinating and integrating biodiversity into wider planning and development agendas.

14. Subsequently, the meeting was divided into two working groups tasked with devising a vision for 2050 and a target for 2020, respectively.
15. Subsequently, the chair of the 2050 vision group reported back. There had been considerable discussion on the merits of a positive and hopeful approach, versus one based on fear as a call to action, together with recognition that looking towards 2050 took any vision beyond an immediate operational frame, meaning that it was vital to tackle drivers affecting biodiversity loss by 2020 if any progress was to be achieved by 2050. There had been recognition of the value of professional communications in the crafting and dissemination of messages. Further debate had centred on the position of human well-being as the main goal of biodiversity action, as opposed to a wider ethical imperative.
16. The chair of the 2020 target group had discussed a catchphrase to enhance understanding of biodiversity and had agreed that selling the idea of halting biodiversity loss should contain both threats and the promise of benefits to humans and ecosystems. The group had been in agreement that one problem of selling the idea of halting biodiversity loss was that it was difficult to apportion blame to any individual sector responsible for the destruction of biodiversity, and that the various sectors needed to be made aware of their responsibilities and encouraged to work with others in efforts to combat biodiversity loss.
17. In the ensuing discussion, there was considerable debate on branding, communication campaigns and the merits of multiple deadlines and milestones for the purpose of formulating targets. There was also significant discussion on the political element of the 2050 vision concerning its detailed wording, some of it relating to consistency with the objectives of the Convention in terms of language and ethos.
18. The meeting was then divided into three working groups: group 1 was to refine the 2050 vision and 2020 goal, and groups 2 and 3 were to refine the 2020 targets.
19. Subsequently, the chair of group 1 reported back on the group's work, drawing attention to two texts before the participants drafted during the group's discussions. He explained that the group had aimed for consistency between the texts, and had provided explanatory notes to the terms therein, including the need for the vision to be applicable across all geographical scales and sufficiently flexible to allow for various biogeographic needs and priorities. The group had also noted the need for both tackling issues of viability and sustainability when restoring biodiversity, and for understanding of the interactions between biodiversity and land degradation and desertification, for example, which demanded action from the many sectors working in managing natural resources. He presented a modified 2020 goal, which envisaged urgent and concerted actions by 2015 to halt biodiversity loss by 2020. It was felt that some actions would need to have been taken by 2015 to attain the 2020 goal, and that a five-year time frame would be advantageous in terms of the political cycle and the implementation of financing structures.
20. The chair of group 2 reported back that the group had agreed that part of its task was to identify the underlying drivers responsible for biodiversity loss and determine who or what was responsible for each driver, so that responsibility could be apportioned. The group had suggested that, for the targets to be effective, they had to be achievable within a 10-year time frame (2010–2020). It had also decided that their wording needed to be unambiguous and specific, broad enough to encapsulate everything at risk, but leaving out lower-level activities that had no consequence on the environment. Furthermore, they would have to promise to deliver key services and provide visible and tangible benefits.
21. The chair of group 3 presented revised targets and explained that debate had encompassed many topics, including the merits of including lists of organizations or particular environments in targets, the benefits of keeping targets succinct and clear with clarifications spelled out in explanatory notes and the need to retain such valuable target areas as technology transfer. The group had also reintroduced a target relating to the input and expertise of indigenous peoples from the 2010 targets and presented some key indicators relating to some of the targets. The consolidated text produced by the three groups is set out in annex I to the present report.
22. In the ensuing discussion, issues that occupied participants included the desirability of including 2015 as an interim goal date in terms of potential confusion and of realistic potential to achieve aims within such a time frame. There was support for the idea of a road map, whereby milestones would arise out of time-bound targets in the lead-up to 2020.
23. Several participants said that it was regrettable that drivers of change had not been sufficiently discussed when reviewing the targets, raising the issue of the need to engage high-level political support to address such drivers, many of which lay outside the remit of those usually responsible for the implementation of the Convention. Having a coherent Convention strategy drafted well in advance of the

General Assembly special session on biodiversity in September 2010 was acknowledged as central to that aim.

24. The representative of the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat described the process of reviewing the strategy and other papers in the coming weeks and months, and the urgency of obtaining the input of as many stakeholders as possible. To that end representatives agreed that the outputs of the meeting would be circulated informally during the following week for review and feedback.

#### **IV. Closure of the meeting**

25. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was declared closed at 5.40 p.m. on Saturday, 3 October 2009.

## Annex I

### Post-2010 biodiversity targets: key recommendations<sup>1</sup>

1. Having recognized the need for discussion on the issue of defining and further developing the post-2010 global biodiversity targets, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Countdown 2010, convened an expert meeting on the development of post-2010 global biodiversity targets on 2 and 3 October 2009 at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi. The meeting was intended to provide specific inputs to the design and development of such targets based on the recommendations and outcomes of various meetings and consultations. The present report sets out the key outcomes of the meeting.
2. Participants discussed the need for clear, concise vision and mission statements reflecting the possibility of a long-term vision for 2050 and a short-term mission for 2020 to move the global biodiversity agenda forward beyond 2010.
3. In view of the need for a statement on post-2010 targets that was succinct, strategic and significant, participants suggested three levels of messages as follows:
  - (a) Short, memorable headline statement to which all people can relate;
  - (b) Strategic and politically sound vision statement;
  - (c) Detailed, time-bound and inclusive mission statement.
4. Based on discussions, the following were recommended:

#### I. Short headline statement

5. The suggestions made by participants were:
  - (a) “Sustaining life on Earth”;
  - (b) “To conserve and manage [nature] [biodiversity] to preserve our future”;
  - (c) “Saving [nature] [biodiversity] [in view of its] indispensable role for mankind”;
  - (d) “Biodiversity is life” (official slogan for the International Year of Biodiversity).

#### II. Strategic, politically sound vision statement

##### A. Vision 2050

6. Biodiversity is maintained and restored to secure a healthy planet and to deliver essential benefits for sustainable development and human well-being for all.
7. Set out below is an explanatory text that clarifies the components of the proposed vision statement.

##### “Biodiversity is maintained and restored”

8. The above phrase encapsulates the first objective of the Convention on Biological Diversity: the conservation of biodiversity. It is based on the assumption that drivers and pressures hampering the maintenance of biodiversity will have been tackled by 2015 and removed by 2020. The individual components can be defined as follows:
  - (a) “Biodiversity”: is as defined by the Convention;
  - (b) “Maintained”: has a positive connotation; it makes clear that loss must be halted, but that viability must also be maintained; it tackles resilience and aims at ensuring long-term viability and maintenance of current natural biodiversity processes of change, potentially at all three biodiversity levels (genetic, species and ecosystem);

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<sup>1</sup> The present document should be considered to be a work in progress and not a final product. It contains options and suggestions for further work to be undertaken in this field.

(c) “Restored”: habitat is the primary focus. Restoration of ecosystem services includes natural recovery in addition to reintroduction from off-site stocks and relocation; the quality and quantity dimensions of restoration; restoration to a baseline reflecting scientific knowledge on ecosystem functioning and the aspirations and expectations of those who benefited from ecosystem services prior to their loss. It emphasizes the need to maintain biodiversity viability and enhance ecosystem services.

**“to secure a healthy planet”**

9. The above phrase encapsulates the second objective of the Convention: the sustainable use of biodiversity. It stresses that, while the maintenance and restoration of biodiversity is necessary, it is not sufficient in itself. The phrase:

- (a) Tackles sectoral mainstreaming;
- (b) Requires complementary and concerted actions from sectors relevant to the management of natural resources;
- (c) Focuses on interactions between biodiversity, climate change, land degradation and desertification;
- (d) Emphasizes the essential role of maintaining and restoring biodiversity in tackling climate change, land degradation and desertification. In so doing, users of biodiversity will acquire the benefits that derive from the direct use of biodiversity (food, fibre, fuel, medicinal, recreational, spiritual and cultural benefits and the commercialization of such benefits, i.e., green-based economies) in addition to indirect benefits (climate regulation and mitigation, prevention of the adverse effects of extreme events such as environmental disasters) while being able to continue relying on the natural capital that guarantees such direct and indirect uses;

10. The individual components of the phrase can be defined as follows:

**“Secure”**

(a) Implies that action is urgent and imperative and was used as an alternative to “sustain” (too soft) and “ensure” (biodiversity alone cannot ensure a healthy planet);

**“Healthy planet”**

- (a) Is all-encompassing. Everyone relates to the idea and it emphasizes that all the Earth’s processes – at all scales – are linked and interdependent;
- (b) Refers to the notion that there are planetary limits or thresholds that must not be exceeded if the planet is to remain healthy for humankind and nature;
- (c) Implies resilience;

**“and to deliver essential benefits for sustainable development and human well-being for all”**

11. The above phrase encapsulates the third objective of the Convention: the equitable sharing of benefits derived from the sustainable use of biodiversity. It embraces all human economies and societies; tackles mainstreaming; provides further motivation for biodiversity maintenance and restoration with specific focus on enhancing ecosystem services. The individual components can be defined as follows:

- (a) “Deliver essential benefits”: includes supporting, regulating, provisioning and cultural ecosystem services<sup>2</sup> and actual and option value;<sup>3</sup>
- (b) “Sustainable development and human well-being for all”: stresses that biodiversity is essential for poverty eradication. It is based on the assumption that poverty will be halved by 2015 (Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals) and, it is to be hoped, eradicated before 2050. It also emphasizes the importance of intra-generational and inter-generational equity in accordance with Principle 3 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;<sup>4</sup>

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2 *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*, 2005.

3 The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity initiative, UNEP (<http://www.teebweb.org>).

4 *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex I.

(c) “For all” is a simple phrase that takes into account geographical considerations at the global and local levels (North-South and within countries) and encompasses all peoples, including indigenous people.

### **III. Detailed, time-bound and inclusive mission statement**

#### **A. Options for 2020 target or goal**

12. The following are two options for the 2020 target or goal:

(a) By 2020, take the necessary urgent, concerted and effective actions to respond to the threats facing biodiversity, halting biodiversity loss and initiating the restoration of ecosystems to ensure the delivery of essential benefits and avoid dangerous or irreversible environmental change.

(b) By 2015, initiate the necessary urgent, concerted actions to tackle effectively the pressures on biodiversity, [aimed at halting] [to halt] biodiversity loss by 2020 and avoid dangerous and/or irreversible environmental change, while ensuring the equitable delivery of essential benefits.

13. The following is an explanatory text for the mission statement:

(a) There is a need for a 2020 deadline to achieve the 2050 vision; the urgency conveyed by the deadline is crucial;

(b) “Aim at halting loss”: it should be recognized that halting loss by 2020 may be impossible at the global level, but is possible in most areas or ecosystems;

(c) While biodiversity loss driven by direct pressure and human activities could be halted by 2020, biodiversity loss driven by climate change and indirect drivers, such as globalization, science and technology, demography and cultural factors, may take longer to halt;

(d) The 2015 timeline indicates synergies with the targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

#### **B. Targets<sup>5</sup>**

##### **1. Role of drivers**

14. Drivers of change are one of the key issues requiring attention in the development of post-2010 biodiversity targets. While participants were unable to provide detailed suggestions on ways of responding to the negative impacts of these drivers on biodiversity, they did stress the importance of the following set of drivers in the further development of targets:

(a) Every child is aware of the value of biodiversity;

(b) Biodiversity is integrated into all national development policies and strategies, economic sectors, accounting systems and spatial planning processes at all levels of government [(using strategic environmental assessment and applying the ecosystem approach)];

(b-bis) Responsibilities have been allocated and horizontal cooperation mechanisms are in place between sectors to undertake the actions needed to achieve the 2020 target;

(c) Subsidies harmful to biodiversity are halved;

(c-bis) [could be included under pressures] Governments at all levels have formulated and begun to implement sustainability plans to increase efficiency, reduce waste and limit the consumption of resources within ecological limits.

##### **2. Targets that respond to pressures on biodiversity**

15. The following are targets that respond to pressures on biodiversity:

(a) Conversion of natural habitats is halted (note: overlap with target 14 below);

(b) All harvest of living resources is sustainable and causes no harm to natural habitats;

(c) Pollution from excess nutrients and other pollutants impacting negatively on biodiversity is reduced below critical ecosystem loads;

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5 While discussing the targets, participants were able to identify indicators related to some targets but not all.

- (d) Establishment of new invasive alien species is prevented and existing invasive alien species are eradicated or under control;
- (e) Measures are in place to reduce the impact of climate change on biodiversity and to ensure that climate change adaptation and mitigation responses are not detrimental to biodiversity;
- (f) The impacts of climate change on ecosystems are mitigated.

16. It should be noted that there could be a cross-reference to the climate change mitigation targets agreed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

### 3. Targets to deal with responses required to improve the status of biodiversity

17. The following are targets to deal with responses required to improve the status of biodiversity:

- (a) Ensure the effective conservation of key biodiversity areas for species, critical natural habitats and their ecological interconnections through protected areas and other means (recognizing the role of local and indigenous communities in conservation);
- (b) Contribute towards ending human-driven extinction of species by preventing further deterioration of the conservation status of threatened species and improving the conservation status (e.g., Red List Index) of at least 20 per cent of assessed threatened species, including through off-site conservation, sustainable international trade and other means;
- (c) Prevent erosion of ecosystem integrity and functions by maintaining the distribution and abundance of a full complement of their characteristic species;
- (d) Improve the status of crop and livestock genetic diversity in agricultural ecosystems and of wild relatives inside and outside protected areas and maintain associated local and indigenous knowledge systems, including through off-site conservation.

18. The following are definitions of the concepts described in target (a) above:

- (a) **Key biodiversity areas:** areas important for maintaining species functioning and protecting species vulnerable to extinction;
- (b) **Critical natural habitats:** ecosystems critical for maintaining habitats and providing key ecosystem services;
- (c) **Representativity:** areas representative of a given ecosystem type;
- (d) **Ecological interconnections:** connections that maintain ecological functioning and processes, including migratory corridors and stepping stones;
- (e) **Other means:** other conserved areas, including indigenous reserves, community conserved areas, locally managed marine areas and other types of areas maintained by indigenous and local communities.

19. The following are proposed indicators pertaining to target (a) above:

- (a) Coverage of protected areas and other conserved areas;
- (b) Overlay of biodiversity with protected areas and other conserved areas;
- (c) Areas with recognized importance for preventing extinction protected (e.g., Alliance for Zero Extinction sites);
- (d) Protected area management effectiveness;
- (e) Indicator on free prior informed consent.

20. The following are proposed indicators pertaining to target (b) above:

- (a) Red List Index;
- (b) National status assessments;
- (c) Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora listing;
- (d) Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals listing (Note: conservation status means levels of protection and threat, and viability (population trends)).



21. The following are proposed indicators pertaining to target (c) above:
- (a) Index of ecosystem integrity;
  - (b) Population distribution and abundance;
  - (c) Living Planet Index.
22. The following are proposed indicators pertaining to target (d) above:
- (a) Off-site collections;
  - (b) Domesticated animal resources<sup>6</sup> (Note: this is important but difficult to measure and it is questionable, therefore, whether it should be a target or an indicator or incorporated in another manner. It is not an improvement on the existing 2010 indicators).

#### 4. **Targets for enhancing ecosystem services and human well-being**

23. The following are targets for enhancing ecosystem services and human well-being:
- (a) Safeguard or restore [the] terrestrial, inland water and marine ecosystems that provide critical services, especially for [indigenous and local communities and other] [the poor and] the vulnerable; contribute to poverty eradication [reduction]; and enable climate change mitigation and adaptation;
  - (b) Maintain social and cultural diversity of indigenous and local communities by protecting their traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and rights, including benefit-sharing;
  - (c) All processes and activities involving genetic resources are consistent with the international regime on access to and benefit-sharing of natural resources.<sup>7</sup>
24. The following are proposed indicators pertaining to target (a) above: (see work on measuring ecosystem services)
- (a) Inclusion of ecosystems in national climate change adaptation strategies;
  - (b) Inclusion of climate change adaptation and ecosystem services in ecological gap assessments;
  - (c) Inclusion of ecosystems in poverty eradication strategies;
  - (d) Extent and integrity of key ecosystems [restoration].

#### 5. **Targets in support of enabling measures**

25. The following are targets in support of enabling measures:
- (a) Each Party has developed and implemented an up-to-date national biodiversity strategy and action plans, consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan and based on adequate assessment of the status, values of and threats to biodiversity;
  - (b) Knowledge and technologies on biodiversity, its value and functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss is improved and shared widely through a fully functional intergovernmental platform. (Note: technology transfer is not covered here);
  - (c) Financial resources for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use increased at least tenfold through sustainable financing mechanisms and other means at the national, regional and global levels.

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<sup>6</sup> As referenced by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org))

<sup>7</sup> One participant suggested the following additional text for the target on access to and benefit-sharing of natural resources: "The international regime on access to and benefit-sharing of natural resources is under discussion. The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is so far the only international treaty on access to and benefit-sharing of natural resources that has been adopted, in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and consequently any agreed international regime on access to and benefit-sharing of natural resources will have to take into account the International Treaty as well as other agricultural genetic resources related access and benefit-sharing instruments and processes".

## Annex II

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<sup>8</sup> The list of participants has not been formally edited.

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