**CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)**

**NOTIFICATIONS 2019-108 and 2019-115**

Possible targets, indicators and baselines for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Submission by Australia

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**NOTE: Information provided in this response has predominately been drawn from Australian government input**

**CBD Notifications 2019-108 and 2019-115**

**Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Notifications 2019-108 (ref: SCBD/OES/DC/KM/88539) of 3 December 2019 and 2019-115 (ref: SCBD/OES/DC/AC/88568) of 19 December 2019.**

Australia thanks the Secretariat for the invitation to submit views on possible targets, indicators and baselines for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as communicated in Notification 2019-108, and views on possible targets and indicators for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework related to the interlinkages and interdependencies between biodiversity and climate change, as communicated in Notification 2019-115.

Australia’s views in response to both Notifications have been combined into this one submission. We look forward to discussing our views further and in more detail with all Parties and interested stakeholders at the upcoming meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

**Possible Targets**

In developing the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), Australia has consistently advocated for and supported the following:

* The Aichi targets are still in many cases relevant. While they are not perfect, many targets have positive and relevant aspects so they should not simply be thrown out or overridden. Instead, they should be built upon and learned from. Australian acknowledges there are aspects of the Aichi targets that require further articulation or definition, some targets need to be taken further and emphasised, and some issues relating to biodiversity loss are not accounted for at all. For example, Australia supports a stronger focus going forward on the effective management of terrestrial and marine areas, and we believe the GBF should strengthen the recognition of the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) to the protection, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
* Where possible, the GBF should use unambiguous terms, terms with established definitions and use existing agreed indicators against relevant targets. Where new or potentially ambiguous terms are needed, supporting guidance should be provided and agreed to ensure collective understanding and buy-in.
* Also where possible, new targets should be SMART and concepts agreed should be measurable. However, we also acknowledge that qualitative elements, not as easily measured but still valuable in the pursuit of addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss, should not be dismissed.
* The GBF, including its goals and targets, should be accessible to all actors. Individuals, organisations, businesses and stakeholders need to be able to contribute to the achievement of the goals and targets, as opposed to an approach that is too high level and government-action orientated. So much good work happens at the grass roots level and individuals are becoming more knowledgeable and passionate about the conservation and protection of our environment. The GBF should acknowledge this and allow all people to both see themselves and their actions in the framework and also enable them to contribute to it.
* A critical aspect of the GBF being accessible and applicable to all actors is the need for the framework to be easily understood and communicable, and the parallel need for improvements in education regarding the importance of biodiversity.
* We support a more equitable focus under the GBF on all three components of the CBD. Sustainable use considerations will be critical going forward, alongside the protection and conservation of biodiversity.

In addition to these fundamental aspects of the GBF, we also support a stronger representation of IPLCs and a more gender responsive framework.

* Australia would like to see IPLCs better reflected and acknowledged, not only in the goals and targets but also in any overarching principles and enabling conditions of the GBF. The important contributions of IPLCs and traditional knowledge and practices to the protection, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity should be appropriately reflected. This clear recognition will also enable an appropriate work programme to be agreed and progressed under the broader Convention and Article 8(j) over the next ten years.
* Recognising that IPLCs spent two days ahead of the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) (WG8(j)-11) in a workshop on “IPLCs and the post-2020 framework” we are still of the firm view that the outcomes of this meeting and the views expressed by IPLCs need to be considered in the discussions on the GBF. The workshops outcomes were provided to Parties and consist of proposed goals, targets and indicators that are of relevance and importance to IPLCs. We advocated for the outcomes of this meeting to be considered by the Co-Chairs in the development of the zero draft of the GBF and this was reflected in the outcomes of the WG8(j)-11 meeting. We again wish to reiterate the need to fully consider and include, as appropriate, the proposals of IPLCs within this process.
* We should also be working to ensure diverse participation and representation of IPLCs, including women and girls, youth, and elders (as appropriate) in decision-making related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, informing equitable representation and rights that acknowledges intergenerational inequality. This may in fact form part of a target or a broad principle of the GBF.
* The CBD is a leader in the UN system regarding IPLCs and this must be maintained and enhanced. The CBD should strive to continue to be a leader in this space under the GBF.
* Australia is also strongly supportive of a more gender responsive GBF which should include explicit recognition of women and girls, in terms of their important role in biodiversity protection and conservation, but also regarding the different impacts that biodiversity programmes, policies and interventions have on men and women.

In addition to the above, Australia would like to highlight four key elements that need consideration under the GBF. We note most of these issues were not further explored through thematic workshops. The elements we see as being critical are: the effective joint management of land and sea; addressing invasive alien species; combating waste and pollution and moving towards a circular economy; and the co-benefits of nature. We have further expanded on these themes below.

*Effective Joint Management of Land and Sea*

The GBF should be ambitious and not limited to the expansion of protected area boundaries through increased percentage targets. The status quo will not enable the CBD to meet its objectives and a new way of thinking is needed. An increased focus on effective management practices in all land and sea scapes by all land and sea stewards (e.g. protected areas, private covenants, indigenous protected areas and agricultural areas) to improve sustainable use and provide improved positive biodiversity outcomes, is required.

Australia also strongly supports improved joint management, collaboration and integrated landscape management opportunities, particularly with IPLCs, farmers and private landowners being further enhanced under the GBF.

*The co-benefits of nature*

The societal, economic and human well-being benefits of biodiversity should be further enhanced under the GBF. An increased focus on the co-benefits of healthy biodiversity provides opportunities to build new or expand existing partnerships with a range of sectors and actors. It also expands the conservation narrative to encompass the critical links between biodiversity, human health and economic stability. There are also strong linkages between this theme and action regarding climate change and biodiversity.

*Waste, pollution and moving towards a circular economy*

Recognising the strong global interest in strengthening linkages to the second objective of the CBD in the GBF (sustainable use of the components of biodiversity), pollution, waste and moving towards a circular economy should be a strong focus. Pollution and waste were considered as part of the Aichi targets, but this should be expanded upon, particularly in the context of growing populations and climate change. Parties and other interested individuals should work together to formulate a measurable and ambitious waste and pollution target.

Consideration should also be given to including references in the GBF to circular economy values - which will protect the environment, better manage our valuable and finite resources and create jobs and economic opportunities. In addition, considering a move towards a circular economy would not only help retain the value of materials in the economy for as long as possible, but would also promote economic benefits such as creation of industries, jobs and new revenue streams.

*Invasive species*

Given the threat to biodiversity of invasive alien species, and the benefit, nationally and globally, of strong biosecurity systems we strongly support the strengthening of invasive alien species measures in the GBF. Aichi target 9 remains relevant but progress was difficult to measure so we believe this target could be better articulated and built upon. For example, the work undertaken to date on priority pathways could be expanded so that a new target could focus on the known or existing pathways in addition to a focus on minimising the impacts of invasive alien species. While there was no thematic workshop on this issue, the work of the AHTEG on invasive alien species could inform considerations.

**Release of the zero draft of the GBF**

Australia is pleased to see the above four key elements included to some extent within the recently released zero draft of the GBF. However, more work must be done this year in developing and agreeing the GBF, particularly in regards to these key areas, to ensure we adopt an ambitious, targeted approach that appropriately addresses the drivers of biodiversity loss. We look forward to working with Parties and observers throughout this year to achieve this.

**Possible Indicators**

Australia is still of the view that existing biodiversity related indicators should be considered in the first instance in the development of the GBF, alongside targets. The development of indicators in parallel with the development of the framework and its targets will help to ensure that the necessary indicators and data-generating mechanisms are in place at the moment when targets are adopted and action can be taken immediately by all Parties and stakeholders. We also reiterate previous comments that indicators from a wide range of sources including those in the footnote to SBSTTA recommendation 23/1 should be provided to Parties for consideration and analysis at least six weeks ahead of the SBSTTA-24 meeting to adequately information discussions.

Considering and using existing biodiversity-related indicators and their methodologies as a basis for formulation of indicators for the GBF. Utilising existing arrangements, including those reported under other frameworks, would help to avoid confusion and duplication of effort, and would help promote consistency in data generation nationally and internationally.

Indicators from a range of sources, including those outlined in the footnote to the SBSTTA23 recommendations, and those used in other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (like the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES)) and other international fora (like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) that are biodiversity focused should be considered in the context of targets being discussed and agreed.

The SDGs will not suffice on their own as a source for indicators. This is where other sources, like the CMS, CITES, FAO, OECD, IUCN, World Database on Protected Areas, the UN World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Global Core Set of Forest-related Indicators and the Montreal Process, to name a few, can be utilised.

We are still of the firm view that the CBD Secretariat should undertake an exercise in identifying all existing biodiversity-related indicators from a range of sources, including those listed above. Identified indicators could be grouped into general themes to allow easy allocation against targets as that work progresses. This robust list of existing indicators, possibly grouped into themes, should be made available to Parties at least six weeks ahead of the 24th meeting of the SBSTTA in May. The scientific body of the Convention is the most appropriate body to be providing advice on such a matter.

Australia recognises that circumstances and contexts change. New science and improved data is continually becoming available at a national and international level. We therefore believe it is important to maintain a certain level of flexibility going forward. Effective indicators must be sensitive to changes in condition, drivers and pressures. This is particularly important as good management needs to be predictive, responsive and adaptive to changing conditions.

Indicators may also need to allow for the possible future exploration of new or revised monitoring arrangements or tools for those targets that are more qualitative or which are not so easily measured. Just because indicators do not exist for targets or because targets are not easily measured, does not mean they are not valuable or don’t have a place in the GBF. We should strive for predominately SMART targets and at least in the first instance, existing, agreed and defined indicators but some issues do require a more qualitative approach and these should not be discounted.