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**Re: Invitation to submit proposals on the structure of
the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

**Submission by:
Center for Large Landscape Conservation (CLLC)**

**Considerations for the structure of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework
Connectivity conservation as a model for cross-cutting targets and indicators**

The Center for Large Landscape Conservation commends the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) held from 27-30 August in Nairobi. As invited in notification 2019-075, we submit to the CBD Executive Secretary this proposal regarding the structure of the framework. We build upon the increasing focus throughout this process on the role and opportunities for connectivity conservation to enhance an inspiring, measurable, and achievable Framework. We outline that connectivity conservation – especially if applied as a cross-cutting innovation - serves both as a model for enhancing achievement of any future targets that may be agreed, and for structuring the Framework.

Pinpointing connectivity in outcomes of the first meeting

We begin by noting that the *Draft Report of the Meeting*, when covering discussions of the future work programme of the Working Group, refers to a range of issues, included but not limited to “...**synergies and connectivity**” ([Document CBD/WG2020/1/L.1](#), paragraph 68, line 5). Additionally, the *Non-paper submitted by the Co-chairs of the discussion group ‘Possible elements of a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework for further discussion’* lists “**Connectivity**” as one of the “Cross-cutting issues and approaches” to possibly be reflected in in the GBF ([Non-paper 1 version 2 – 30 August 2019](#), Section II, 8(a)(vii)). It is further acknowledged that some of the issues listed within the Non-paper may be placed under different headings as discussions evolve, and specifically its footnote 21 regarding the states that these “...could also be reflected in other elements of [...] the framework, such as in goals or targets or under the element related to means of implementation and enabling conditions, depending on how they are phrased, [while] [s]ome Parties noted that these issues should not be considered peripheral issues”.

Zoning in on a connectivity target and indicators

The Center welcomes these developments, and brings attention to two specific submissions in this regard:

I. In response to notification 2018-063 *Invitation for views on the preparation, scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework*, the Center made the [submission](#) dated 14 December 2018 that includes the proposal:

“...for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to include a milestone that by 2030 at least 30% of Earth be covered by well-connected systems of protected areas and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and managed, where appropriate, as ecological networks.”

This suggested formulation is listed as number 2 in Section (i) “Protected areas and other effective area based conservation measures” of the Annex “Suggested Target Formulation and topics” to the *Synthesis of Views of Parties and Observers on the Scope and Content of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework* (Document:

[CBD/POST2020/PREP/1/INF/1](#)). It is to be emphasized that over 100 submissions from governments, organizations, and individuals were received during this phase¹, and the synthesis document includes six specific references to the need for increasing focus on “connectivity” as a key solution to maintain high rates of biodiversity.

II. In response to notification 2019-008 *Initial discussion document on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework*, the Center and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) made the [submission](#) dated 15 April 2019 that includes the aforementioned proposal for a “Connectivity Target”, and further proposes the following “Connectivity Conservation Indicators”:

- 1) **The number, percentage, and total area in square kilometers of terrestrial and marine protected areas, other conserved areas, and Key Biodiversity Areas, that are connected, where necessary and appropriate, to each other;**
- 2) **The number of individual, and combined proportions, of connectivity conservation areas in terrestrial, marine, and freshwater habitats;**
- 3) **The rate of decrease in fragmentation, and increase in restoration and connectivity of terrestrial, marine, and freshwater habitats;**
- 4) **The number of countries, their laws, regulations, and policies, and the number of implementing initiatives that discourage fragmentation and encourage connectivity conservation;**
- 5) **The number of countries, communities, and partners working on and encouraging connectivity conservation; and**
- 6) **The number of linear infrastructure development projects that avoid connectivity conservation areas, and/or, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for reducing the risks to ecological connectivity.**

This target and indicators are presented in response to the identified demand for building on the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and mainstreaming across all sectors. During this phase of the process, out of the 75 submissions (20 from Parties, one from a Non-Party, and 54 from Observers), 19 contributions make one or more reference to the related terms of “connectivity”, “fragmentation”, and “corridors”. This totals 28 references indicating that connectivity conservation in its various forms is a necessary, if not transformative, solution that can elevate biodiversity conservation for the post-2020 era. We recognize, as has been expressed throughout this process, that all necessary aspects of target-setting and indicator formulation may not be fully reflected in the above suggestions, but have sought to express them in concrete terms that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART).

Enhancing current and future targets

The above proposals are put forward in view to the fact that across all current and any future targets, connectivity has an important and not fully realized role to play. This is most starkly demonstrated by:

- Aichi Target 11 being the only target to specifically address connectivity measures, but then only as a way to improve area-based conservation – and albeit in a qualitative yet unqualifiable way - seeking “By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal marine areas, [...] are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative, and **well-connected** systems of protected areas and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures [OECMs], and **integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes**”;
- Target 5 also relating to connectivity, but in form of an unqualifiable response to drivers that seeks, “By 2020, the rate **of loss of all natural habitats**, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and **fragmentation is significantly reduced**”; and
- Other targets alluding – but not being specific to - elements of connectivity, as demonstrated by Target 1 that, “By 2020, at the latest, **people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take** to conserve and use it sustainably”, Target 7 that “By 2020, areas under agriculture and forestry **are managed sustainably**, ensuring conservation of biodiversity”, and Target 14, that “By 2020, **ecosystems that provide essential services**, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are **restored and safeguarded**, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities and the poor and vulnerable”.

The Center therefore reemphasizes that connectivity conservation measures play a critical role in sustaining and enhancing biodiversity, increasing resiliency to climate change, and retaining ecological processes essential to all life on Earth. An authoritative definition well-illustrates this: *Connectivity conservation is a conservation measure in natural areas that are interconnected and in environments that are degraded or fragmented by human impacts and development where the aim is to maintain and restore the integrity of the affected natural ecosystems, linkages between critical habitats for wildlife, and ecological processes important for the goods and services they provide to nature and people* (Lausche, B. et al (2013) [*The legal aspects of connectivity conservation: a concept paper*](#)).

In this regard, connectivity conservation is a measure that provides results that simultaneously avoid fragmentation and degradation, and maintain, enhance, and restore the interconnectedness of Nature. It has a more integral role to play in the GBF, as it serves as a measurement of ecological health, a tool to address direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, and mechanism for strategic cooperation. Moreover, it is highly relevant to all objectives of the Convention, the threats and enablers of biodiversity loss, and the delivery of resources and elements necessary for attaining other targets that may be proposed.

Connectivity as a model for cross-cutting innovation

Specific focus on connectivity within the frame of the GBF is especially relevant to the reinforcement of the health and integrity of place- (structural connectivity) and species- and process-based (functional connectivity) conservation measures. Furthermore, it also reinforces the achievement of other targets by activating the capacity, mainstreaming, and implementation across human society that ensures maintenance and restoration of migratory, genetic, and nutrient flows essential to functioning and resilient ecosystems that underpin well-being. It is highly relevant to the achievement of any future targets for biodiversity conservation by:

- Providing a comprehensive and transformative solution that includes species, habitats, ecosystems, and people;
- Emphasizes synergies between biodiversity and climate change;
- Shifts approaches to sustainable use and access and benefit sharing based on heightened coordination of competing uses;
- Clearly links with the UN 's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Climate Agreement, and a wealth of relevant multilateral environmental agreements; and
- Provides specifics for the roles and responsibilities of actors in the development and implementation of measures to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (“Living in harmony with nature”).

Connectivity conservation is integrative to the GBF and can be best activated as a cross-cutting target with indicators for amplifying mainstreaming and configuring synergies with other conventions that can be used for integration. This is demonstrated by the proposal with quantitative and qualitative aspects that allow for the measurement of the overall target supported. The determinative, and necessary, factor is that outcomes of each specific indicator are based on metrics for the relative strategies, processes, and outputs. These metrics support the active participation of communities, the contribution and support of governments, collaboration and engagement of numerous levels of governance, stimulation of resources and enabling conditions, catalyzing of action, and lasting implementation of goals through assessment and incentivizing performance.

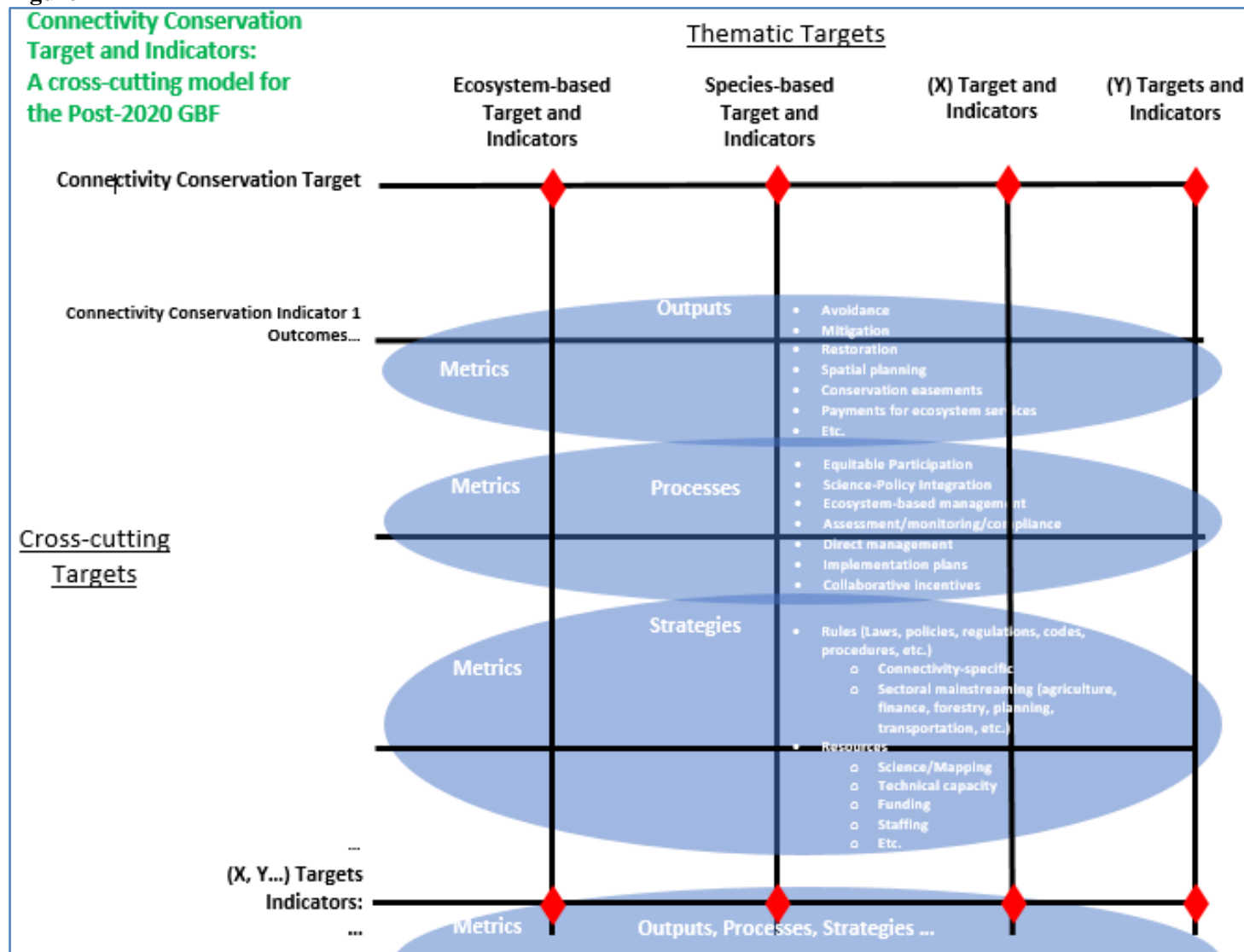
As depicted in Figure 1, we now employ the proposed target and indicators for connectivity conservation to illustrate how the GBF could be structured irrespective of the final, agreed upon terminology that may include goals, targets, sub-targets, indicators, metrics, etc. This conceptual configuration assumes the following:

- A proposed pyramidal representation of the Framework is retained;
- The 2030 Mission and/or apex goal is simple, clear, understandable, and measurable
- Key milestones are identified for the three objectives of the Convention and linked across timeframes up to 2050,
- A smaller number of more specific thematic targets and indicators have been determined and cogently grouped;
- A consistent set of cross-cutting issues and approaches are identified and concurrently developed, each with their own targets and indicators; and
- The means of implementation and enabling conditions are analogous;

On the **X axis** are located the limited number of specific thematic targets with their own indicators representing, and allowing for measurement of, key elements (those included here being hypothetical) underpinning the three objectives of the Convention. On the **Y axis** are located the various cross-cutting targets, subsequent indicators and specific desired

outcomes. Embedded within these overarching indicators and outcomes are the three sets of metrics (strategies, processes, and outputs) that flow from bottom to top, and are intended to be tailored to the specific cross-cutting issue and context. The red diamonds represent the intersectional performance of both the specific thematic targets/indicators and the cross-cutting targets and indicators supported by the sets of specific metrics. In this way any target and indicator can be measured on its own, as well as in combination with any cross-cutting target to better understand and evaluate the multidimensional relationship and multiplying effects. Standing alone, and/or in combination, the targets and indicators are SMART, and the means of implementation can be identified and adapted throughout the timeframe(s).

Figure 1



¹ <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/submissions>.

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