**Proposal on the Structure of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

*Submission to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity in response to its call for proposals (CBD/WG2020/1/L.2), by the Biocultural Heritage Working Group[[1]](#footnote-1): International Institute for Environment and Development, Association for Nature and Sustainable Development (ANDES, Peru), Chinese Centre for Agricultural Policy and National Farmer Seed Network (China), Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), and Lok Chetna Manch (India), in collaboration with the International Network of Mountain Indigenous Peoples (INMIP).*

**Introduction**

We would like to congratulate the Executive Secretary on the great progress to date and hard work to develop an effective post-2020 framework, and we thank you for the opportunity to submit this proposal.

The Biocultural Heritage Working Group emerged in 2005 out of deep concern for the protection of indigenous peoples’ rights to their traditional knowledge, territories and resources, and the continuation of their traditional lifestyles through which much of the world’s biodiversity is conserved. The recent IPBES Global Assessment found that indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are the best guardians of biodiversity: nature is generally declining less rapidly in indigenous peoples’ lands than in other lands. At least a quarter of the global land area is traditionally owned or managed by indigenous peoples, and in addition, a diversity of local natural resource users manage significant areas of land. However, areas managed by IPLCs are facing growing resource extraction, commodity production, mining, transport and energy infrastructure, leading to loss of traditional livelihoods and traditional knowledge, and hampering the ability of IPLCs to conserve and manage biodiversity.

It is clear that Aichi Target 18 on respecting traditional knowledge (TK), innovations and practices and customary use of biological resources will not be met by 2020, as limited progress has been achieved and TK is in continuous decline (Global Biodiversity Outlook 4). Across the world, TK and customary use are being eroded by modernisation through education policies, agriculture, health etc, exploitation of indigenous lands and resources, and continued racial discrimination, economic deprivation, and youth out-migration for education and work. State-run protected areas are adding to these pressures in many countries (eg. in Africa) by imposing western conservation models, rather than supporting indigenous peoples’ holistic development models which require balance with nature. Amongst the key levers for transformational change, the IPBES Global Assessment identified the need to support actions by IPLCs, including through justice and inclusion in conservation and adherence to human rights; recognising the knowledge, innovations and practices, governance institutions and values of IPLCs; and recognising their land tenure and resource rights in national law.

The **Sharm El-Sheik Declaration on Nature and Culture** (CBD/COP/14/INF/46), developed by over 200 participants at the Nature and Culture Summit in 2018, acknowledges that living in balance with nature is a fundamental part of the cosmological vision of indigenous peoples and local communities, and that achieving the CBD’s Vision of ‘Living in Harmony with Nature’ rests on recognition of indigenous peoples’ and local communities rights to territories, natural resources, customary use and related traditional knowledge. The Declaration recommends ensuring that the links between Nature and Culture, and the traditional territories and cosmological vision of IPLCs, are considered in the development of the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework. It calls on Parties to accelerate the recognition of indigenous peoples’ lands, waters and territories of life as a means to trigger transformational change in the protection of biological diversity.

Given that most of the world’s biodiversity is under the stewardship of IPLCs, **the recognition, protection and strengthening of areas and territories conserved and managed by IPLCs** needs to be given strong prominence in the post 2020 Framework if it is to succeed. This needs to be given urgent priority to protect biodiversity against the indirect drivers of change, which will take time to address, and also provides a mechanism to address the direct drivers (changes in land use, direct exploitation etc). Recognition of IPLC conserved areas and territories is also important for ensuring that the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals are met and that human and indigenous rights are respected.

Much evidence shows that traditional knowledge of IPLCs is effective in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in different natural resource sectors (eg. agriculture, fisheries, forestry) (see for example Berkes et al 2010; Pretty et al, 2009 & 2011; T.G.Graddy, 2013). But traditional knowledge does not exist is isolation – it is maintained through traditional cultural practices and beliefs. Our research found that traditional knowledge, biodiversity, landscapes, and cultural and spiritual values are closely interlinked and inter-dependent (Swiderska et al, 2009). The strong geographical overlap between areas of high biodiversity and cultural diversity provides further evidence of their mutual inter-dependence (Harmon 2007; Maffi 2007). Yet cultural diversity is also declining rapidly - UNESCO has estimated that 50-90% of all languages will be lost by 2100 (UNESCO, 2003). We are facing a double extinction crisis – biological and cultural – with many common drivers of change.

Thus, **efforts to conserve biodiversity must also focus on conserving culture**, or on conserving interlinked ‘biocultural diversity’ or ‘biocultural heritage’. This also needs to be reflected in the post 2020 framework if it is to succeed. Biocultural Heritage Territories, for example, strengthen indigenous peoples’ holistic cosmovision as the means to achieve conservation, and foster alternative biocultural economies linked to customary sustainable use. The approach, first piloted in Peru’s Potato Park, has proved effective for conserving wild and agricultural biodiversity. It has been successfully scaled out within Peru and to China, and is being piloted in India, Kenya and Tajikistan.

**Biocultural Heritage and Biocultural Diversity**

The following working definition of ‘**biocultural heritage**’ was developed by the Biocultural Heritage Working Group in 2005 as part of research on protecting traditional knowledge: “Knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities, which are collectively held and are inextricably linked to traditional resources and territories, biodiversity, cultural and spiritual values and customary laws, shaped within the socio-ecological context of communities”. The concept was inspired by the holistic worldview of Quechua people in the Potato Park. It was validated through research with 11 ethnic groups in Peru, Panama, India, China and Kenya which found that the key elements identified are inter-dependent parts of complex adaptive systems (Swiderska et al 2009). See [www.bioculturalheritage.org](http://www.bioculturalheritage.org)

‘**Biocultural diversity**’ has been defined as: “the diversity of life in all its manifestations: biological, cultural and linguistic, which are interrelated (and possibly co-evolved) within a complex socio-ecological adaptive system” (Maffi, 2007)

**Structure of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework**

Building on the OEWG 1 discussions and the IPBES Global Assessment, we support the need to learn from the successes and failures of the Aichi targets, and to give priority to unmet Aichi Targets, including Target 18. The new framework should give particular priority to the following issues:

* Addressing the indirect drivers of loss of biodiversity and culture (eg. perverse incentives, agricultural subsidies) since these are the root causes of the problem
* Mainstreaming biodiversity and culture across development sectors
* Backing the local and indigenous stewards of biodiversity since they manage much of the world’s biodiversity, and are already living in harmony with nature or have the motivation to do so given the right support (eg. recognition of collective land rights; policies that support culture and traditional knowledge).
* Supporting the recognition, protection and strengthening of IPLC conserved territories and areas, including biocultural territories, landscapes and seascapes, since these are effective measures for conserving biodiversity and achieving the SDGs.

The new framework should also recognise the importance of mountain ecosystems, which sustain approximately one quarter of the world’s biodiversity, half of the world’s biodiversity hotpots, and important agrobiodiversity and cultural diversity, and provide 60-80% of the world’s freshwater. Mountain biocultural diversity is increasingly threatened by development pressures, such as mining, infrastructure, modernisation etc.

We suggest prioritising the above issues in the Goals and Targets; the number of targets could be reduced to prioritise these issues which are critical for achieving transformational change.

The role of indigenous peoples and local communities, including women, elders and youth, in biodiversity conservation should also be recognised and protected as a **cross-cutting issue** across all Goals and Targets, along with their human rights and rights enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

It is important that Parties accept some kind of compliance mechanism to ensure the Goals and Targets are implemented – otherwise the new framework is unlikely to succeed.

**Rationale and Scope**:

As well as the issues addressed in the Non-paper 02-Zero draft (WG2020-01, 18 July 2019), this section should highlight the vital role of indigenous peoples and local communities and traditional knowledge and culture in addressing the challenges facing biodiversity; and the need to protect human rights and indigenous peoples’ rights and ensure gender-responsive approaches, in order to effectively conserve biodiversity and ensure synergies with efforts to achieve the SDGs.

**Vision:**

It is important that the Vision, when explained in simple language and articulated in more detail to foster linkages with the 2030 mission (as proposed in the Non-paper 02-Zero draft) also shows the interlinkages to local livelihoods of IPLCs. If expressed as ‘Ecosystem services are able to meet the needs of society’ this should include meeting the needs of IPLC biodiversity stewards.

**Mission:**

The Mission could include both a statement of the desired status of biodiversity to be achieved by 2030, and critical actions to achieve this, including the following (with reference to Non-paper 1 version 2 – 30 August 2019):

* Addressing indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and culture loss, and mainstreaming biodiversity and culture objectives across sectors
* Protecting and promoting customary sustainable use by IPLCs
* Milestones could be included, including on the recognition and protection of IPLC’s conserved areas and biocultural landscapes, territories and waters by 2030

**Goals, Targets and Sub-Targets**

It may be best to adapt the five goals of the current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and update the current targets – rather than changing the framework – to promote continuity and avoid potential additional work. Either way, it is critical that recognition and protection of IPLC territories and areas is given central priority, along with addressing the indirect drivers and mainstreaming biodiversity and culture across sectors (these should not just be ‘enabling actions and conditions’). Our comments are framed in relation to the current Aichi Goals and Targets.

Given the importance of IPLCs and traditional knowledge in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, a specific **Goal** should be included on: “Back [support] the local and indigenous stewards of biodiversity”. This could replace the current *Strategic Goal E* on “Enhancing implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building” – or the two could be merged into a new Goal on “Back the local and indigenous stewards of biodiversity and enhance implementation”.

Under this new Goal:

* The Aichi **Target 18** should be reworded so that traditional knowledge and customary laws and practices are not only ‘respected’, but are also preserved, protected, and the erosion of indigenous knowledge and culture is halted, by 2030. This target (or a sub-target) should include mainstreaming traditional knowledge and culture across development and conservation sectors to halt their erosion.
* An additional Target should be added on protecting IPLC rights, eg: “By 2025, ensure the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, environmental defenders and local biodiversity stewards are fully protected in national law, including human rights, rights to ancestral lands, territories and waters, the right to a healthy environment, the rights enshrined in the UNDRIPs, and recognition of traditional governance systems”.
* A Target should be added on recognising and protecting IPLC conserved territories and areas, including sacred natural sites and biocultural territories, landscapes and seascapes, by 2025.
* Exiting Target 19 should be revised to say (words added in bold) “By 2025, **the traditional** knowledge **and** science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied **equally in decision-making**”
* Existing Target 17 and Target 20 could be combined.

*Strategic Goal A* on Addressing the underlying causes and mainstreaming - is also very important. It should include targets on:

* Removing perverse incentives (eg. harmful subsidies)
* Integrating biodiversity and culture and ensuring full and effective IPLC participation across development sectors and policy and planning processes at national and local level – including natural resource sectors (eg. agriculture, fisheries), extractive sectors, infrastructure and tourism.
* Integrating biodiversity objectives in private sector policies and practices

*Strategic Goal B* – Reduce direct pressures. A specific target on mountain ecosystems should be added.

*Strategic Goal C*:

* Target 11: Specific targets for expanding protected areas should be avoided as this could result in rights violations for IPLC or undermine customary sustainable use - the IPBES Global Assessment concluded that protected areas are not yet effectively or equitably managed. Instead, ambitious targets should be agreed for recognition of IPLC’s conversed areas and biocultural territories.
* Target 13: This target should prioritise conservation of genetic diversity in situ, through IPLC-led integrated landscape approaches such as biocultural heritage territories, that ensure the continued evolution and co-evolution of genetic diversity and link domesticated and wild populations, for food security and resilience to climate change. As the IPBES global assessment found, many crop wild relatives important for long-term food security lack effective protection. The Target should also enhance recognition and support for the critical role of IPLC women in sustaining genetic diversity.
1. Contact: Krystyna Swiderska (IIED): Krystyna.swiderska@iied.org [↑](#footnote-ref-1)