

The Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments for Biodiversity's (AC SNG) views on the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The AC SNG is a permanent structure officially recognized by the CBD through Decision X/22 of COP 10 that aims to bring the voice of subnational governments into the agenda of the CBD. It is currently coordinated by Regions4 (formerly known as the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, nrg4SD) in collaboration with the Government of Quebec (Canada). The AC SNG is supported by two subnational initiatives that contribute to its objectives and values, one of them being the Regions4Biodiversity Learning Platform (R4BLP) an initiative of Regions4 that consists of a global community of proactive subnational governments working together to exchange knowledge and technical capacities, and the Group of Leading Subnational Governments (GoLS), led by the government of Aichi (Japan), an operational partner of the AC SNG that disseminates the importance of subnational governments to global discussions by fostering open dialogues with the Parties.

In response to CBD Notification 2019-075 - Invitation to provide proposals on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the AC SNG would like to provide the following proposal.

Structure of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

The AC SNG celebrates the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) first meeting results and welcomes the recognition of the role and importance of subnational governments in the post-2020 era. We took great note of the summary of the first round of consultations, and the co-chairs' documents, especially the comments regarding the participation of subnational governments. We acknowledge the several requests and propositions for a better consultation and involvement process with the different stakeholders, and the need for appropriate structures to allow and enable stakeholders to participate in the development and implementation of the framework.

The AC SNG believes that the processes for developing and implementing the Post-2020 GBF must be well understood and clear to all, and should generate broad support not only from the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), but also from all stakeholders, including subnational governments. The notion of support by all, including every level of government, is essential to effectively protecting biodiversity for cities, subnational governments, countries, and globally. Worldwide efforts will only be effective if concerted and collaborative action is undertaken in all scales of work and activity sectors (public and private) and by involving young people, women, Indigenous communities, and civil society as a whole.

We therefore would like to emphasize that the structure of the Post-2020 GBF should include the role and contribution of subnational governments¹ since they have the prevailing authority and responsibility regarding biodiversity conservation. Subnational governments also play a major role in bringing about the integration of conservation measures by several groups and sectors recognized by the CBD: youth, women, indigenous communities, the private sector, and civil society. Given their authority with respect to land use planning, subnational governments can also be responsible for the integration of conservation measures at the city and local levels. In this context, recognition of their role would allow for a better integration of conservation measures by these groups and sectors of interest. This could be accomplished in the preamble of the 2020 GBF.

Appropriate wording would make it clear that subnational governments are likewise encouraged to help implement these new targets. We suggest that the CBD considers continuing using the wording “Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities” as agreed at COP 10 by the adoption of decision X/22 related to the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, with the objective to avoid confusion in future documents of the Convention. In that sense, we recommend the CBD Post-2020 GBF to clearly consider the importance of vertical mainstreaming and cooperation with subnational governments as partners of the Parties to the Convention.

Additionally, in regards to the subnational governments, we would like to emphasize that the Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments for Biodiversity, as the official voice of subnational governments for the CBD, can represent and carry out this consultation process. We thus strongly recommend that the Advisory Committee obtain an official status in the negotiations under the CBD, which would respond to that need of an institutional structure for subnational governments. We also invite the Parties to nominate their subnational governments as members of the Advisory Committee.

¹ Subnational governments: the first immediate level of government below the national and above the local. It involves regional governments such as states, provinces, prefectures, domains, territories, lander, cantons, autonomous communities, oblasts, etc., depending on the country. Subnational governments are distinct from "local governments", which include all levels of government below the subnational.