

Web Annex 3:

The year 2020 as a ‘super year for nature’ and preparations for FAO’s participation in the UNSG’s Biodiversity Summit 2020 (New York, 22-23 September 2020)

1. 2020 has been referred to as a ‘super year for nature’, with several global conferences aiming to agree on enhanced and accelerated action for protecting biodiversity and slowing climate breakdown over the next decade, including:

- 15th session of the UN Forum on Forests;
- World Congress of the International Union for Conservation of Nature;
- United Nations Summit on Biodiversity;
- 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; and
- 26th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

2. All of these events, except the UNGA Biodiversity Summit, have been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the planetary emergency of inter-related global challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and health crisis. It is a reminder that the destruction and degradation of biodiversity undermines the web of life and increases the risk of disease spillover from animals to people. It also puts the spotlight on the many solutions that already exist and underlines that responses to the pandemic provide a unique opportunity for transformative change as a global community. An investment in biodiversity and the health of our planet is an investment in humanity’s future.

3. As we approach the end of the UN Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020, progress towards global biodiversity targets, including those of the SDGs, has been insufficient.¹ While there are many local examples of success, biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history, with growing impacts on people and the planet.²

4. The 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is expected to adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, “Living in harmony with nature”. This framework, and its effective implementation, must put nature on a path to recovery by 2030 to meet the SDGs. Originally scheduled for October 2020 in Kunming, China, CBD COP 15 will now be held in 2021. FAO is proud to have hosted the 2nd meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework in February 2020. Many subsequent preparatory meetings had to be postponed.

5. FAO continues to support the process of developing a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework and provided inputs to a number of global, regional, sectoral and thematic consultations, including the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework. In

¹ FAO is the UN custodian agency for many biodiversity related SDGs, and a contributing agency to others; SDG 2.4.1, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 12.3.1, 14.4.1, 14.6.1, 14.7.1, 14.b.1, 14.c.1, 15.1.1, 15.2.1, 15.3.1, 15.4.2, 15.6.1., see <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/en/>

² FAO. 2019. *The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, J. Bélanger & D. Pilling (eds.). FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Assessments; FAO. 2019. *The State of the World’s Aquatic Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture*. FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture assessments; FAO. 2020. *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture – Sustainability in Action*; FAO. 2020. *The State of the World’s Forests - Forests, biodiversity and people*; FAO. 2020. *Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020*; IPBES. 2019. *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors).

addition, FAO submitted responses to CBD Notifications 2018-063, 2019-008, 2019-075 and 2019-108. FAO also contributes through the CBD Informal Advisory Group on Mainstreaming of Biodiversity.³ As a member of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP), FAO contributes to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework targets and indicators.⁴

6. At the margins of the 75th UN General Assembly “*The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism*”, the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity “*Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development*” will be convened by the President of the General Assembly in September 2020, at the level of Heads of State and Government.⁵ The Summit will highlight the urgency of action on biodiversity. It will provide an opportunity for Heads of State and Government and other leaders to demonstrate experiences of action on biodiversity, to envision the future relationship with nature, addressing the causes of change, and to raise ambitions for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and its implementation, ensuring that biodiversity and the contributions it provides to all people are at the heart of sustainable development and the fight against climate change.

7. The scope, modalities, format and organization of the summit have been defined in UNGA Resolution A/RES/74/269. The opening segment and the plenary session will highlight the connections between biodiversity, societies and economies. Two leaders dialogues entitled “Addressing biodiversity loss and mainstreaming biodiversity for sustainable development” and “Harnessing science, technology and innovation, capacity-building, access and benefit-sharing, financing and partnerships for biodiversity” will be held. The President of the General Assembly may invite parliamentarians, local governments, the heads or senior representatives of relevant United Nations entities as well as intergovernmental organizations, the secretariats of the Rio and biodiversity-related conventions, civil society, the private sector, including the financial sector, academia, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities to serve as speakers in the leaders dialogues, taking into account gender balance, level of development and geographical representation.

8. The President of the General Assembly will prepare a factual summary to reflect the discussions of the summit prior to the CBD COP15.

9. The UN systems agencies are invited to participate in the summit to highlight the need to support a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and to consider initiatives, including through the United Nations Environment Management Group, in support of the summit and its preparation, particularly with regard to sharing relevant good practices, challenges and lessons learned.

10. FAO is a member of the UN Environment Management Group (EMG) and provides inputs to the EMG Consultative Process on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework⁶, including the preparation of an EMG outcome report provisionally entitled “Preparing a coherent United Nations response to the biodiversity challenge” to be launched at CBD COP15.

11. FAO is also a member of an inter-agency task force in support of the preparation of the Summit established at the request of the President of the General Assembly, co-led by the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Environment Programme. The task force supports the Office of the President of the General Assembly to ensure that the right expertise and substantive inputs from all relevant entities are integrated in a concept note to inform the deliberations of the Summit, and assist in preparing other substantive inputs, such as draft key messages and a draft programme for the Summit.

³ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2019/ntf-2019-045-mainstreaming-en.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.bipindicators.net/list-of-global-indicators-available-for-review>

⁵ The Biodiversity Summit is convened in response to CBD Conference of the Parties Decision 14/34 and UNGA Resolutions 73/234 and 74/269, which determined the scope, modalities, format and organization of the summit.

⁶ <https://unemg.org/our-work/emerging-issues/biodiversity/>; <https://unemg.org/events-for-the-emg-consultative-process-on-the-post-2020-global-biodiversity-framework/>