

Summary of the UN Summit on Biodiversity: 30 September 2020

Humanity is waging war on nature, UN Secretary-General António Guterres told Member States during the opening segment of the UN Summit on Biodiversity, and one consequence is the emergence of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and COVID-19. The degradation of nature is not purely an environmental issue, he pointed out. It spans economics, social justice, and human rights, and can result in geopolitical tensions and conflicts.

Guterres and other speakers at the Summit, held in a socially-distanced UN Headquarters with Heads of State and Government and Ministers joining virtually, expressed concern that none of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be met by the 2020 deadline. They pointed out that 13 million hectares of forest are lost and one million species are at risk of extinction every year. In the last 50 years, vertebrates have declined by 68%. If we continue down this path, food security, water supplies, and livelihoods will be threatened, as will our ability to fight diseases and face extreme events.

Urging an end to the “rape of nature,” Munir Akram, President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), said political will, not finance, is the key to contain economic greed and policy negligence. Volkan Bozkir, President of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), called on Member States to use the Summit to build political momentum towards the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) to be adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), expected to be held in Kunming, China, in 2021. Kunming must do for biodiversity what Paris did for climate change in 2015, said Bozkir, by elevating the discourse to the mainstream and placing it firmly on the political agenda.

The Summit focused on the theme “Urgent Action on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development,” to highlight the urgency of action at the highest levels in support of a post-2020 GBF that contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, “Living in harmony with nature.”

The opening segment included a “fireside chat” between the heads of UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the CBD, and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity

and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). They described biodiversity as a “shock absorber,” and said the time to “pollute our way to wealth” has passed.

Statements by His Royal Highness Charles, the Prince of Wales, and a youth representative were followed by a plenary session consisting of statements by 48 Heads of State and Government and Ministers.

Two Leaders’ Dialogues took place in the afternoon, on: 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.

The first Dialogue, chaired by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, included statements by 15 Heads of State and Government and Ministers on behalf of countries and groups, and the heads of five international organizations.

The second Dialogue was chaired by Ralph Everard Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden. It was addressed by 13

In this Issue

A Brief History of the UN Summit on Biodiversity	2
UN Summit on Biodiversity Report	3
Plenary	3
Leaders Dialogue 1 – Addressing Biodiversity Loss and Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Sustainable Development	5
Leaders Dialogue 2: Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation, Capacity Building, Access and Benefit-Sharing, Financing and Partnerships for Biodiversity	6
Closing Segment	7
A Brief Analysis of the UN Summit on Biodiversity	7
Upcoming Meetings	9
Glossary	9

Heads of State and Government and Ministers on behalf of countries and groups, and six heads of international organizations and stakeholder representatives.

The Summit convened on Wednesday, 30 September 2020 from 10:00 am - 18:18 pm EDT (GMT-4). Statements by Heads of State and Government and Ministers continued in a “spill-over event” after the meeting.

A Brief History of the UN Summit on Biodiversity

The UN Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted on 22 May 1992 and opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio “Earth Summit”). It entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 196 parties to the Convention, which aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Three protocols have been adopted under the Convention:

- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (January 2000, Montreal, Canada) addresses the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms that may have adverse effects on biodiversity, taking into account human health, with a specific focus on transboundary movements. It entered into force on 11 September 2003 and currently has 172 parties.
- The Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (October 2010, Nagoya, Japan) provides for international rules and procedures on liability and redress for damage to biodiversity resulting from living modified organisms. It entered into force on 5 March 2018 and currently has 47 parties.
- The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (October 2010, Nagoya) sets out an international framework for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and technologies, and by appropriate funding, thereby contributing to the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of its components. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and currently has 123 parties.

Key Turning Points

2010 Target: In April 2002, at COP 6 in The Hague, the Netherlands, parties adopted a Strategic Plan 2002-2010 (decision VI/26) to guide further implementation at the national, regional, and global levels. The stated purpose of the plan was to effectively halt the loss of biodiversity so as to secure the continuity of its beneficial uses through the conservation and sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Parties also committed themselves to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional, and national levels as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. This target was subsequently endorsed by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the UNGA and was incorporated as a target under the Millennium Development Goals.

Aichi Biodiversity Targets: At COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010 parties adopted the CBD’s second Strategic Plan for

Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (decision X/2). Under the theme “Living in Harmony with Nature,” the purpose of the Strategic Plan was to promote effective implementation of the Convention through a strategic approach, comprising a shared vision, a mission, and strategic goals and targets, that will inspire broad-based action by all parties and stakeholders. The Plan contains the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity: “By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”

COP 14: At COP 14 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2018, parties adopted decision 14/34, which set forth a comprehensive and participatory process to update the Convention’s strategic plan, and established an Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to update the Strategic Plan and develop a new post-2020 GBF. This Working Group (WG) is tasked with advancing preparations for the development of the GBF, which was expected to be adopted at COP 15 in October 2020, in Kunming, China, but had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Francis Ogwal (Uganda) and Basile van Havre (Canada) were appointed as WG Co-Chairs.

UNGA Decision: In Resolution 73/234 adopted on 20 December 2018, UNGA decided to convene a summit on biodiversity at the level of Heads of State and Government before COP 15, to highlight the urgency of action at the highest levels in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda and places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

First Meeting: The first meeting of the WG on the GBF, which took place on 27-30 August 2019, in Nairobi, Kenya, deliberated on the structure of the GBF and the future work of the WG. The WG adopted conclusions of the meeting compiled by Co-Chairs Ogwal and van Havre and the Report of the Meeting, which reflects decisions made by the WG including agreement on:

- a non-paper on possible elements of the GBF;
- the preliminary list of meetings, consultations, and workshops for the development of the GBF;
- the dates and venue of the second and third meetings of the WG;
- submissions on the structure of the GBF to be submitted to the Secretariat by 15 September 2019;
- the provision of a zero-draft text of the GBF six weeks before the second meeting of the WG; and
- a detailed workplan to be prepared by the Co-Chairs and the Secretariat, to be presented at the informal briefing of the Co-Chairs on 24 November 2019 during the meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

The WG also agreed to request SBSTTA to provide guidance on specific goals, targets, indicators, baselines, and monitoring frameworks related to the drivers of biodiversity loss for achieving transformative change, within the scope of the three objectives of the Convention.

Second Meeting: The second meeting took place from 24-29 February 2020 in Rome, Italy. Participants commented on the zero draft of the GBF that was released in January 2020 and approved the final recommendation of the meeting compiled by the Co-Chairs. In the recommendation, the WG, *inter alia*:

- notes the progress made during its second meeting, as reflected in the text annexed to the report of the meeting;
- invites SBSTTA-24 to provide elements for the development of the GBF for consideration by the third WG meeting;
- invites SBSTTA to provide a scientific and technical review of updated goals and targets, and related indicators and baselines;
- requests the WG Co-Chairs and the Secretariat to prepare a document, updating the elements of the draft framework that were reviewed by the second WG, and to update the tables in the appendices to the draft framework;
- requests the Secretariat to provide scientific and technical information to support the SBSTTA's review, including an analysis of linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- requests the WG Co-Chairs and the Secretariat to prepare a first draft of the GBF.

UN Summit on Biodiversity Report

In his opening statement, UNGA President Volkan Bozkir said 13 million hectares of forest are lost and one million species are at risk of extinction every year, and 68% of vertebrates have been lost over the past 50 years. He noted that a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, with an emphasis on protecting biodiversity, can help unlock an estimated USD 10 trillion dollars in business opportunities, create 395 million jobs by 2030, and encourage a greener economy.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres cautioned that humanity is waging war on nature, and one consequence is the emergence of deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, and COVID-19. Underlining that the degradation of nature is not purely an environmental issue, he said it spans economics, social justice, and human rights, and can result in geopolitical tensions and conflicts. He called for: embedding nature-based solutions in pandemic recovery plans; ensuring that economic systems and financial markets account for, and invest in, nature; and raising the USD 300-400 billion needed to protect nature, which he noted is much less than current levels of harmful subsidies for agriculture, mining, and other destructive industries.

Munir Akram, ECOSOC President, called for an end to the “rape of nature,” saying political will, not finance, is key to containing economic greed and policy negligence. He called for the UN development system to align with the global biodiversity targets.

COVID-19 has strengthened the recognition of governments of their shared responsibility towards the future of this planet, Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of Egypt and host of COP 14, observed, while calling for stronger links between biodiversity and sustainable development, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity into economic sectors.

Xi Jinping, President of China and host of COP 15, called for: balancing economic development and ecological protection; upholding multilateralism; a post-COVID 19 green recovery; and upholding the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. He said China will make efforts to peak carbon emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner then moderated a “fireside chat.” He said the “planetary blind spot” of our economies, because of which they fail to recognize the value of ecosystem services, could mean our generation will become the “librarians of extinction.”

In the first round of comments, IPBES Chair Ana María Hernández Salgar said humanity has already lost 14 out of 18 “contributions” that nature provides us, including its ability to regulate pollination, climate, and air quality.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, CBD Executive Secretary, described nature as a “shock absorber,” saying 14 out of the 17 SDGs depend on biodiversity.

UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen called for: scaling up proven solutions such as urban planning efforts to integrate nature into cities; actively restoring natural environments; and safeguarding the rights of indigenous peoples.

In the second round, Hernández called for integrating biodiversity and nature in all policies and across all sectors. Mrema noted progress has been made where conservation measures have been put in place, such as in fisheries management. Andersen said the time to “pollute our way to wealth” has passed, pointing to the COVID-19 pandemic as a reminder of the risks entailed in “pushing nature into a corner.”

His Royal Highness Charles, the Prince of Wales, called for a new “Marshall Plan” for a “blue-green recovery” through a new circular economy, including implementing carbon pricing and ending subsidies for fossil fuels.

Youth representative Archana Soreng, UN Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, called for policy-makers to “nurture” indigenous practices and revisit their approach to conservation, suggesting that removing indigenous people from their land to protect biodiversity is a “colonial” practice.

Plenary

Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of Guyana, for the Group of 77 and China, called for strengthened political will for the post-2020 GBF, which he highlighted must include a strong resource mobilization component and address the three objectives of the Convention in a balanced manner. He called on developed countries to substantially increase their financial commitments for actions that halt biodiversity loss.

Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi, for the Least Developed Countries, lamented that none of the Aichi Targets were achieved in full, and that biodiversity-related financing has stagnated in many countries. He called for collective measures to stop the ongoing devastation of biodiversity, including incorporating inequality reduction into development models, reducing unsustainable production and consumption, and reducing waste.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, for the European Union (EU), stressed the need for global rules that are clear and measurable, and allow for accountability. She drew attention to the European Green Deal, Biodiversity Strategy, and Farm to Fork Strategy as measures to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises.

Emmanuel Macron, President of France, called for new models of production and trade, and for the post-2020 GBF to incorporate specific and measurable commitments, as well as mechanisms for implementation and accountability. If 2020 is the year of raising awareness, he said, 2021 must be the year of action.

Zuzana Čaputová, President of Slovakia, said protected areas will cover three-fourths of all national parks in her country by 2030. She expressed support for the EU's 2030 Biodiversity Strategy.

János Áder, President of Hungary, noted that the loss of pollinators will have catastrophic effects on agricultural systems and food security, and called for urgent action and international cooperation to protect biodiversity.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of Turkey, underscored the need for a post-2020 GBF that contains clear and measurable targets, and for the private sector to make investments in biodiversity.

Andrzej Duda, President of Poland, called for greater international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity.

Iván Duque Márquez, President of Colombia, called for: 30% of the world's land and marine areas to be protected by 2030; sustainable consumption and production; biodiversity mainstreaming; and leveraging resources from all sources to protect biodiversity.

Martín Alberto Vizcarra, President of Peru, highlighted his country is part of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, and called for governance systems that encourage democratic participation in ecosystem management.

Simonetta Sommaruga, President of Switzerland, highlighted the need to rethink the current economic model, and to put in place safeguards to ensure that financial flows do not negatively impact the environment. She expressed support for the High-Ambition Coalition for Nature and People and mentioned Switzerland's commitment to achieve the goal of "zero land-use change" by 2050.

King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, Jordan, said his country will propose a UN instrument aimed at protecting and extending the legal right to exist to selected ecosystems and all species of flora and fauna, to empower legal action on behalf of nature's rights.

Alois, Hereditary Prince and Acting Head of State of Liechtenstein, called for production and consumption patterns to be guided by sustainability, and for a transformation of our relationship with nature, with "the right knowledge, proper technology, and correct values."

Alexander Van der Bellen, President of Austria, described nature as the "biggest ally" in the fight against climate change, and said an inclusive biodiversity dialogue for 2030 has been launched in Austria, towards a new national post-2020 biodiversity strategy.

Reuven Rivlin, President of Israel, described "new bonds of trust and cooperation" to protect biodiversity through regional partnerships and cooperation, including with the State of Palestine and the United Arab Emirates, saying as "nature knows no boundaries, divisions of the past must be overcome for a better future."

Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka, called for a transformation in global environmental governance, and for increased global efforts to better manage the nitrogen cycle.

Albert II, Prince of Monaco, said marine biodiversity needs to be better understood, and two-thirds of ocean biodiversity is in danger unless threats like plastic pollution and ocean acidification, among others, are addressed.

Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, said the culture and economy of his country, which is a megadiverse country, rely on biodiversity. He described a national ban on single-use plastic

in place since 2017, and a moratorium on logging in place since 2018.

Borut Pahor, President of Slovenia, described efforts in his country to address biodiversity loss, including environmental taxes and the celebration of World Bee Day to raise awareness of the importance of pollination.

Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa, said that, while COVID-19 had affected the ability of national economies to respond to environmental issues, these must be prioritized during the post-pandemic recovery. He described efforts in his country to understand and control animal-borne diseases.

Muhammadu Buhari, President of Nigeria, described his country's biodiversity strategy, and a potential mangrove restoration project in the Niger Delta.

Taneti Maamau, President of Kiribati, said biodiversity protection is not a question of morality but of human survival, and Kiribati is in the process of acceding to the Nagoya Protocol.

Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of Zimbabwe, highlighted the importance of capacity building and technology transfer, and the interlinkages between biodiversity, food security, disaster risk reduction, health, and climate change. He said the goals of the post-2020 GBF must be aligned with the SDGs.

Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, called attention to his country's three-pronged approach of protection, conservation, and recovery. He invited the international community to more effectively control the trade in endangered species.

Azali Assoumani, President of Comoros, said leaders must work quickly to preserve biodiversity, which represents humanity's safety net. He called for urgent and decisive action to conserve natural resources and use them sustainably.

Jeanine Áñez Chávez, Acting President of Bolivia, highlighted the need for integrated and sustainable development. The predominant development model has led to an unprecedented planetary transformation, she said, and the high economic cost of conserving biodiversity will have to be borne by all in solidarity.

David Kabua, President of the Marshall Islands, called for an ambitious post-2020 GBF, an ambitious outcome on the negotiations for an international legally binding instrument on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and firm political ownership from all countries.

Danny Faure, President of the Seychelles, called for transformative change in how we value and use nature, and for the post-2020 GBF to simultaneously address species loss, biodiversity protection, and ecosystem restoration while allowing for sustainable development.

Jair Bolsonaro, President of Brazil, said the CBD enshrines the sovereign right of countries to use their national natural resources, and "this is precisely what Brazil plans to do." He called on countries to reinforce their commitments under the CBD in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Mohamed Juldeh Jalloh, Vice President of Sierra Leone, said Sierra Leone has established a Ministry of Environment, and is working to mainstream biodiversity in national development planning, and address challenges such as limited knowledge about biodiversity conservation and intra-government coordination.

Giuseppe Conte, Prime Minister of Italy, observed that the COVID-19 pandemic provides the opportunity to align climate and biodiversity global goals. He emphasized that during Italy's

Presidency of Group of 20 in 2021, the climate and biodiversity goals will be addressed in an integrated manner.

Mark Rutte, Prime Minister of the Netherlands, announced that his country will invest EUR 5 billion in environmental protection over the next 10 years, including in facilitating the country's transition to a circular economy.

Lotay Tshering, Prime Minister of Bhutan, said 70% of Bhutan's territory is covered by forests, and the country is "carbon negative" as hydropower is its only source of energy.

Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the UK, said the UK is setting biodiversity targets into law and addressing land use subsidies to support biodiversity. He added that the natural world will remain at the top of the Group of 7's agenda during the UK's G7 Presidency in 2021.

Mohammad Shtayyeh, Prime Minister of the State of Palestine, noted that his country has joined the CBD, developed a database of endangered species, and identified actions to safeguard them.

Andrej Plenković, Prime Minister of Croatia, said halting biodiversity loss requires a whole-of-society approach, and described national efforts to encourage changes in consumption patterns.

Pravind Jugnauth, Prime Minister of Mauritius, outlined goals to protect 16% of its terrestrial biodiversity and 10% of its coastal biodiversity by 2025. He described a July 2020 oil spill near its coast as an "environmental disaster," and lamented its long-term damage to mangroves.

Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark, emphasized concerted efforts among Nordic countries to reduce plastic marine litter, and said Denmark plans to cut 70% of its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa, Prime Minister of Tonga, said small island developing states (SIDS) share a "unique and intimate interconnection with the land, water, and coastal ecosystems," and that biodiversity underpins their economies.

Magzum Mirzagaliyev, Minister of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources, Kazakhstan, on behalf of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), pointed to a range of natural challenges faced by LLDCs including melting glaciers in mountainous countries, and expressed support for a post-2020 GBF. In his national capacity, he spoke of long-term efforts to create corridors for animal migration and extend the number of protected areas in the country.

Sabri Boukadoum, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Algeria, called for an ambitious post-2020 GBF, pointing to climate change, land degradation, and human factors as key threats to Algeria's biodiversity.

Ohn Win, Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Myanmar, underscored the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development, highlighting his country's focus on nature-based solutions to halt biodiversity loss and enhance sustainable use.

Adrián Peña, Minister of Environment, Uruguay, stressed the importance of reducing carbon emissions, conserving water, managing waste, protecting oceans and coastal environments, and involving citizens. He said COP 15 should be a chance to earmark more financial resources to promote an ecological transition.

Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Environment, Japan, said the post-2020 GBF needs to redesign our socio-economic system, including by ensuring sustainable supply chains. He drew attention to the Satoyama Initiative, which promotes integration

of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in production landscapes.

Dmitry Kobylykin, Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment, Russian Federation, underscored the importance of mechanisms for business involvement such as public-private partnerships, and the role of indigenous peoples. He said the post-2020 GBF should be an effective targeted addition to current multilateral conservation instruments; correspond to the reality of our current time; respect sovereignty over natural resources; and facilitate implementation of the 2030 Agenda's socio-economic and environmental aspects.

Paul Chet Greene, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Immigration, Antigua and Barbuda, said the Summit presents an opportunity to establish political will. Underscoring that ecosystems are the commercial engine of SIDS' economies, he said the post-2020 GBF must bring about transformative changes in national goals, policies, and actions.

Abdullah bin Mohammed Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, United Arab Emirates, called for prioritizing environmental protection, and outlined his country's measures and policies for the conservation of endangered species and protected areas.

Oleg Țulea, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Moldova, encouraged all CBD parties to scale up their actions in implementing global biodiversity targets. He said the Republic of Moldova is integrating nature-based solutions in climate change adaptation efforts.

Leaders Dialogue 1 – Addressing Biodiversity Loss and Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Sustainable Development

This session was chaired by Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, and Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Noting that the international community needs to step up efforts to protect the planet's natural resources, Merkel welcomed the Biodiversity Summit as the place to agree on next steps to "turn the tide on the global scale." She said Germany spends EUR 500 million annually for the protection of biodiversity and has launched the Legacy Landscape Funds to work with private donors to halt biodiversity loss.

Khan said Pakistan is working with local communities to protect biodiversity and plant 10 billion trees. He noted that the area covered by national parks in Pakistan has increased from 30% in 2018 to 39% in 2020.

Moderator Svenja Schulze, Minister of the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety of Germany, stressed the need to mainstream biodiversity across sectors.

Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, underscored the importance of healthy marine ecosystems for the economies and livelihoods of Pacific States, and called for oceans to be a central issue in the post-2020 GBF. He also emphasized the need to mainstream biodiversity in post-pandemic recovery.

Wilfred Peter Elrington, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Belize, for the Alliance of Small Island States, called for an ambitious and transformational post-2020 GBF that is adequately resourced, tackles the challenges faced by SIDS, includes all stakeholders, and takes a whole-of-society approach.

Sooronbay Jeenbekov, President of Kyrgyzstan, requested Member States to support a draft resolution submitted to UNGA by Kyrgyzstan, which calls for urgent joint measures to protect

the environment, preserve biodiversity, and ensure environmental safety.

Filipe Nyusi, President of Mozambique, called for international solidarity, noting that his country requires greater material and human resources to comply with international frameworks on biodiversity.

Edgar Lungu, President of Zambia, said the COVID-19 pandemic undermined conservation efforts, and listed the promotion of climate-smart agriculture and fish farming as two recent national policies aimed at protecting biodiversity.

Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President of Costa Rica, said the international community must adhere to three values in order to address environmental degradation: responsibility, humility, and equity. He warned the commitments listed in the Leaders' Pledge for Nature must become a reality.

Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia, described the benefits of ecotourism practices in the Tusheti region, the country's "reservoir of biodiversity," and underlined the importance of educating the next generation on the importance of a healthy natural habitat.

Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia, said the international community needs more "eco-systemic" and long-term thinking, adding that current production and consumption models are unsuitable; nature-based solutions are underused; and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration must be at the center of post-pandemic recovery efforts.

Mokgweetsi Masisi, President of Botswana, said biodiversity is the mainstay of Botswana's tourism, which in turn accounts for 5% of gross domestic product (GDP). He noted successes, such as conservation efforts to bring back rhinoceroses from the brink of extinction, adding that local communities are key partners in these efforts.

Sebastián Piñera, President of Chile, underscored the need to listen to science, scale-up ambition, protect oceans, and change lifestyles. He invited leaders to commit to ensuring that 30% of land and oceans are protected by 2030.

Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand, outlining his country's measures and policies to tackle biodiversity loss, stressed the importance of engaging all stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society. He called on all countries to work together through multilateral processes.

Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, underlined the need to partner with indigenous peoples and seek local perspectives, highlighting his country's measures related to investments in nature, protected areas, and single-use plastics.

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Namibia, expressed concern about declining biodiversity and the failure to meet the Aichi Targets. She called for higher ambition and the scaling up of resources for developing countries, including finance, capacity building, and technology transfer.

Elba Rosa Perez Montoya, Minister of Science, Technology and Environment, Cuba, stressed the need for the post-2020 GBF to be a stage for genuine commitments for finance and resources for developing countries.

Konstantinos Hatzidakis, Minister of Environment and Energy, Greece, said the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to rethink our relationship with nature, while stressing the need for a green recovery and calling for urgent action on biodiversity protection.

Qu Dongyu, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization, highlighted the importance of biodiversity for

food security and nutrition, and for smallholder farmers and rural communities. Highlighting the need to radically transform economies, he expressed his commitment to support governments in mainstreaming biodiversity across economies and societies.

Audrey Azoula, Director-General, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, underscored the need for a new pact between humans and nature, which she said should protect 30% of the Earth's maritime and land ecosystems. She underlined the need to use education, local knowledge, and science to restore ecosystems.

Bruno Oberle, Director General, International Union for Conservation of Nature, underscored the need to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and strive for net restoration by 2050. He said that the post-2020 GBF needs to be clearly linked with the 2030 Agenda.

Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President, Inter-Parliamentary Union, noted tackling poverty is essential for biodiversity protection so that people do not need to harm the environment to sustain livelihoods.

Pavan Sukhdev, President, World Wide Fund for Nature International, underscored that our planet is "flashing red signs of systemic failure." He called for recognizing the right to a healthy environment as a fundamental human right and for committing to a post-2020 GBF that makes the world "nature positive" by 2030.

Leaders Dialogue 2: Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation, Capacity Building, Access and Benefit-Sharing, Financing and Partnerships for Biodiversity

This session was chaired by Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment and Climate, Sweden, and Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Noting that the international community is lagging behind on achieving the goals of the three Rio Conventions, Gonsalves observed that "our world is badly wounded." He underlined that the solutions are multilateralism, national actions, and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Lövin noted that the pandemic has exposed the vulnerability of humanity, but also shown that leaders around the world can act quickly and decisively when faced with a common threat. Calling for a green transition and for "massive financial resources" to be unleashed around the globe to invest in nature, she said the Swedish government has agreed to a "record sized budget" of USD 560 million for investments in nature for 2021.

Frank Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji, on behalf of Pacific SIDS, said the world is "in a state of climate emergency by land, air, and sea," and "we are on the frontlines of an existential reckoning, the likes of which humanity has never seen." He urged Member States to commit to a sustainable and regenerative economy, and not return to the status quo.

Lenín Moreno Garcés, President of Ecuador, noted that three-quarters of new diseases are caused by the toxic relationship between mankind and nature, and described the pandemic as "a cry from the heart of our planet itself, urging us to more and more effective action." He called for an ambitious, robust, and realistic post-2020 GBF, and transformation of patterns of production and consumption.

Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Maldives, described efforts to phase out single-use plastics, shift to renewable energy, join the Blue Prosperity Coalition, and found the Group of Friends to Combat Marine Plastic Pollution.

Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of Luxembourg, spoke of various national initiatives, including the launch of the first European sovereign bond, and public-private partnerships to promote sustainable forestry models internationally.

Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, said more resources must be mobilized for biodiversity conservation at the national and global levels, and there are economic gains to be made in the “oceans economy,” but only if sustainability is prioritized.

Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, warned we are moving towards “the ultimate extinction of human beings,” and called for all financial investments to be made with sustainability in mind, as well as for increasing public awareness of biodiversity through education.

Leo Varadkar, Tánaiste of Ireland, warned the biodiversity and climate crises must be addressed together, and said Ireland plans to use its upcoming seat on the UN Security Council as a platform to highlight the threat posed by environmental degradation to human security.

Andrej Babiš, Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, underscored the importance of: heeding recent scientific reports on climate change and biodiversity; a green post-COVID-19 recovery; and actively engaging all relevant stakeholders in national efforts to improve conservation.

K.P. Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal, outlining his country’s measures on protected areas and law enforcement regarding poaching, called for more ambitious targets, sustained investment in biodiversity, and commitment and action from all actors.

Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, called for recalibrating humanity’s relationship with nature from “parasitic” to “symbiotic,” and urged using the delay of COP 15 to scale up ambition.

Amadu Ba, Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Senegalese Diaspora, Senegal, urged re-examining humankind’s relationship with nature, and stressed his country is committed to combating biodiversity loss, including through protected areas.

Dato’ Shamsul Anuar bin HJ Nasarah, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Malaysia, expressed optimism about the future beyond 2020, and stressed the importance of engaging with non-state actors such as indigenous peoples, local communities, and the private sector.

Gilberto Silva, Minister of Agriculture and Environment, Cabo Verde, called for increased international cooperation, more financial support, and access to finance, knowledge, and technology transfer to achieve global biodiversity protection goals.

Guy Ryder, Director-General, International Labour Organization, underscored that present and future jobs depend on preserving the planet’s ecosystems.

David Malpass, President, World Bank Group, called for repurposing harmful subsidies in agriculture, fisheries, and fossil fuels. Mari Pangestu, World Bank Managing Director of Development Policy and Partnerships, said the post-2020 GBF will inject urgency in growing out of poverty in harmony with nature.

Thomas Buberl, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), AXA Group, said his company: supports the Financing for Biodiversity Pledge; is committed to double its climate and biodiversity funds; and has joined the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure.

Shinta Kamdani, CEO, Sintesa Group, said her company focuses on long-term value rather than on efficiency alone.

She called on businesses to scale up and speed up action on biodiversity protection, and on governments to adopt a strong post-2020 GBF.

Valérie Plante, Mayor of Montreal and Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) Global Ambassador for Local Biodiversity, said cities and local and regional governments are active in protecting ecosystems globally, as demonstrated by the Edinburgh Declaration on the post-2020 GBF.

Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, SDG Advocate, called on world leaders to learn from indigenous peoples and knowledge, put a halt to extraction and deforestation, and “build a pact with nature.”

Closing Segment

In her closing statement, Amina Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General, said climate change and biodiversity loss are best addressed through nature-based solutions. She called for GDP calculations to take biodiversity into account and stressed the post-COVID recovery was a unique opportunity to transform our relationship with the environment.

UNGA President Bozkir closed the summit on an optimistic note, underlining that “humankind is capable of incredible feats” and the pandemic provides a unique opportunity for a “green reset.” He pointed to the upcoming second UN Oceans Conference as a pivotal moment in this reset, and to the Edinburgh Declaration as a sign that cities will play a pivotal role.

The meeting adjourned at 18:18 pm EDT.

A Brief Analysis of the UN Summit on Biodiversity

Stony plains expanse

Nature providing pasture

On which all depend

—Lisa Farroway

(The haikus in this analysis are from *Inspired by Nature: Celebrating Biodiversity with Haikus*, published by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), CDB, and UNDP)

War on nature. The rape of nature. Humans as parasites, or as “librarians of extinction.” Flashing red signs of systemic failure. Pleading nature, crying from the heart. Slope of doom. The last hour. Existential threat. The imagery evoked by world leaders at the UN Summit on Biodiversity appeared to indicate that COVID-19 may finally have brought the message home to our leaders: our planet is in dire crisis, and something must be done.

What exactly needs to be done was less clear. Setting future targets had not worked—all of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted ten years ago to be achieved by 2020 have been missed. “We are tired of pledges, agreements, and failed commitments,” youth representative Archana Soreng warned delegates at the Summit.

Will a new post-2020 global biodiversity framework succeed, where earlier targets failed? That, at least, is where many leaders seemed to invest their faith. This analysis briefly summarizes the concerns and priorities that world leaders listed for the future of biodiversity, as biodiversity took center stage at the UN for the first time since the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was opened for signature at the Rio Earth Summit nearly 30 years ago.

While People Act Slow*Old is the tortoise**He has seen the world change fast**While people act slow*

—Saskia Marijnissen

Ten years after leaders adopted the set of 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets to stem the loss of biodiversity, little has changed. The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), found that out of 18 critical contributions that nature provides to people, 14 have already been lost, including the ability to regulate pollination, climate, and air quality. Unless we reverse these biodiversity trends, we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, cautioned Ana María Hernández Salgar, IPBES Chair, especially those related to hunger, poverty, climate, water, health, cities, and oceans. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse are listed among the top five threats facing humanity in 2020 by the World Economic Forum, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) President Bozkir warned.

Worse still, our skewed relationship with nature was the reason why world leaders could not attend the Summit on Biodiversity in person. COVID-19, much like Zika, Ebola, or HIV/AIDS, is amongst the 60% of infectious diseases considered zoonotic, originating in animal populations under severe environmental pressure, as Bozkir reminded the few delegates attending in person, sitting far apart in the socially-distanced UNGA hall, and the many who could only participate virtually. The world is paying a heavy social and economic price for this first warning, a message that was repeated during the SDG Moment on 18 September and commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations on 21 September.

Reflections on what went wrong, and what is needed in the future, occupied most of the day. Leaders lamented that protected areas, while burgeoning, have not sufficiently expanded; ecosystems are degraded and need to be restored; biodiversity has not been mainstreamed sufficiently; and land and oceans are not used sustainably. Many speakers pointed to unsustainable production and consumption as a key driver of biodiversity loss. “It is our duty to transform patterns of production and consumption. We cannot allow the unfettered exploitation of nature,” said Lenin Moreno Garcés, President of Ecuador.

Chameleon Vision: What is to be done?*Chameleon vision**One eye on what is to come**The other looks back*

—Julie Larsen Maher

For many speakers, the current crisis reinforced the need to transform economic systems to better take account of biodiversity. “We need an economic system that prioritizes biodiversity as much as gross national product,” said Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, and President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). “We must shift away from economic models that value growth for growth’s sake towards a circular economy,” agreed Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa.

Leaders at least agreed that biodiversity must be a shared responsibility. They also agreed that this moment in history, when the pandemic has forced change, is an opportunity for a “green reset.” This was the time, said Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, for a green transition and for “massive financial resources” to be unleashed around the globe to invest in nature.

However, other leaders pointed to stagnating financial support to protect biodiversity. French President Emmanuel Macron described biodiversity as “our health insurance,” but not everyone appeared to be willing to pay the premium. USD 300-400 billion is needed annually to protect nature, said UN Secretary-General António Guterres, which is less than current subsidies for biodiversity-harming sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and mining.

A handful of Member States announced or reaffirmed financial contributions for biodiversity during the Summit, among them Germany and Sweden, but this did not appear to be a high priority for most. Other ways of funding biodiversity protection were discussed—including collaboration with the private sector, taking into account the real cost of nature’s services to correct skewed balance sheets, and diverting financial streams from destructive practices. “Financial systems and calculations of GDP need to incorporate biodiversity in their calculations,” said UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed. The time to “pollute our way to wealth” has passed, said UN Environment Programme Executive Director Inger Andersen.

In this regard, some pointed to initiatives such as the Task Force for Nature-related Financial Disclosures with cautious optimism, saying its reporting framework, due to be published in 2021, will direct financial flows to protect, rather than destroy, nature.

The need to nurture indigenous practices and empower local communities was strongly voiced by Soreng. “For centuries, we have been responsible stewards for biodiversity, and confronted states and corporations,” she said, describing the deprivation of land rights of indigenous communities in the name of conservation as “the greatest land grab of history.”

Gazing Over Troubled Seas: Momentum towards a post-2020 global biodiversity framework*Prehistoric bird**Gazing over troubled seas**Not alone just yet*

—Onno van den Heuvel

2020 was initially meant to be a “super year” for biodiversity, the 2030 Agenda, and climate change. The Summit on Biodiversity was expected to be a crucial milestone to build momentum towards an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF), in the lead-up to the fifteenth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP 15), much as the 2014 UN Climate Summit paved the way for the success of the Paris Agreement.

A laundry list of wishes for the post-2020 GBF was presented throughout the day: clear, concrete, and measurable targets; accountability; ensuring implementation; strong resource mobilization and support; a principles-based approach, mainly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for national sovereignty over natural resources; strong links with the 2030 Agenda; and a “whole-of-society” approach.

Many pointed to the Leaders' Pledge for Nature, signed by 75 countries and the EU before the Summit, as a promising sign of gathering momentum for an ambitious post-2020 GBF. The pledge, dubbed the "High Ambition Coalition for People and Nature" by many speakers, contains commitments to transition to sustainable production and consumption, mainstream biodiversity, end environmental crimes, and strengthen means of implementation. A similar High Ambition Coalition emerged ahead of the 2015 Paris Climate Conference and played a significant role in the adoption of the Paris Agreement. However, the signatures of many leaders from megadiverse countries are missing from the Leaders' Pledge for Nature—including Australia, the US, China (the host of COP 15), Brazil, and India.

While many parallels were drawn to the 2014 Climate Summit, the Summit on Biodiversity did not see a 400,000-person march in the streets of New York. This could be because of the pandemic, but it could also be because the biodiversity crisis is still a somewhat silent crisis, and its links to the COVID-19 pandemic are not yet widely known.

We'll Rise Up and Act

Once in a lifetime

Let nature inspire us all

We'll rise up and act

—Naoko Ishii, former CEO, GEF

To avert the existential biodiversity crisis that we now face, leaders agree that we need fundamental change. As they also recognized during the SDG Moment and the UN75 commemoration, far deeper, systemic, transformational change is necessary—a complete upheaval of our familiar but faulty model of development.

We know the disease, and we know the cure. But the treatment regimen cannot begin because one critical ingredient is missing. Political will.

Upcoming Meetings

Thematic Consultation on the Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:

The consultation will consider elements of the draft monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework developed for peer review in preparation for the 24th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to the Convention on Biological Diversity. **dates:** 6-8 October 2020 **location:** online **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/POST2020-WS-2020-04>

5th Session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA):

UNEA-5 will take place under the theme "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals." Its aim will be to connect and consolidate environmental actions within the context of sustainable development and motivate the sharing and implementation of successful approaches. **dates:** 22-26 February 2021 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **www:** <https://environmentassembly.unenvironment.org/unea5>

Third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: The third and final meeting of the working group is expected to meet in the first quarter of 2021 to conclude negotiations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. **dates:** first quarter 2021 **location:** TBD **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/WG2020-03>

24th meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice: This SBSTTA meeting is expected to address the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, synthetic biology, marine and coastal biodiversity, biodiversity and agriculture, biodiversity and health, invasive alien species, and other issues in advance of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15). **dates:** first quarter 2021 **location:** Canada **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBSTTA-24>

Third meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on

Implementation: This meeting of the SBI will address issues surrounding the effective implementation of the CBD in advance of COP 15. **dates:** first quarter 2021 **location:** Canada **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SBI-03>

UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP15): CBD COP 15 will review the achievement and delivery of the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. It is also anticipated that the final decision on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be taken, together with decisions on related topics including capacity building and resource mobilization. **dates:** second quarter 2021 **location:** Kunming, China **www:** <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/COP-15>

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

2021: The 9th session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will take place over eight days in July 2021 under the theme "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, that promotes the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development." **dates:** TBC **location:** UN Headquarters, New York (TBD) **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

Glossary

2030 Agenda	2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
GBF	Global biodiversity framework
GDP	Gross domestic product
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNGA	UN General Assembly
WG	Working Group