



International Union for Conservation of Nature

Statement delivered by Mr. Narinder Kakar, Permanent Observer of IUCN to the United Nations.

On the occasion of the Tenth Session of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Interactive debate on consolidation of focus areas, focusing on possible goals and targets on the topic of: 'Ecosystems and Biodiversity' on 3 April 2014

Co-Chairs:

IUCN commends the work done to compile the documents on the Focus Areas and on the inter-linkages between them, to facilitate the work for the formulation of the SDGs. We feel that these documents provide the basis for developing the SDGs and appropriate targets.

We are pleased to note that the documents include a focus area on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and that nature is portrayed as a solution to development challenges in various focus areas. Indeed the document tables most of the crucial and relevant issues that need to be considered when designing the goals and targets for the SDGs framework. We strongly urge inclusion of a goal focusing on preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services as essential nature-based solutions to address sustainable development challenges. We propose formulation of a SDG that could be called **“Enhance the benefits for all from biodiversity and ecosystem services in a just world that values and conserves nature”**.

IUCN also believes that SDGs should be formulated in such a way so as to emphasize the synergistic links between the various dimensions of sustainable development. We are pleased that some inter-linkages are reflected in the documents under consideration. However, some more inter-linkages need to be reflected between biodiversity and focus areas on health, education, energy and sustainable cities, marine resources and oceans, and forests, among others. We would like to point out that while the relevance of biodiversity and ecosystems services for Focus Area 19 (Peaceful and non-violent societies) is captured in the Annex, it is not reflected under the same Focus Area in the revised Focus Areas document. Similarly, on Focus Area 7 on Energy and Focus Area 15 on Climate, the role of biodiversity and ecosystems as a connecting point between these two areas could be made more explicit.

With regard to specific targets, IUCN would like to highlight those that are directly related to biodiversity and ecosystems services and would have impact in multiple focus areas. Such targets cover a wide range of issues including the maintenance and restoration of ecosystems, the governance and sustainable use of natural resources, the issue of land degradation neutrality, access and availability of water and disaster risk reduction, among others. A list of such essential targets and their relationship to various Focus Areas is provided in the

note which IUCN had the honor to submit to the Secretariat and to Member States' Missions on 28 February 2014 with its comments to the initial document on Focus Areas released by the Co-Chairs on 21 February. The IUCN Note can also be accessed on the UN/DESA website.

We would also like to reiterate the importance of building on the adopted biodiversity commitments viz. the Aichi Targets adopted in Nagoya in October 2010 which provide relevant quantitative targets for a number of goals in the SDGs package.

Co-chairs: IUCN greatly appreciates the work done to produce the Focus Areas and inter-linkages documents which cover crucial elements for the SDGs framework. We hope the OWG would now move forward, building from these elements, and complete the task assigned by Rio+20 to develop SDGs and targets.



28 February 2014

IUCN's PROPOSITION OF KEY TARGETS TO INTEGRATE BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN THE SDGs FRAMEWORK

I. General comments

1. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) welcomes the document prepared by the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. We highly commend the work of the Co-Chairs and the secretariat in compiling the numerous submissions and reflecting the main views of different stakeholders in an organised and clear manner. The document also gives continuity to the work undertaken to achieve the Millennium Development Goals especially the goal of eradicating poverty. IUCN shares the view that **poverty eradication** is multidimensional and it is therefore linked to all other focus areas. Hence, all action taken under other goals should contribute to poverty eradication. As an organization whose mission is primarily to promote the conservation of nature for sustainable development, we note also and commend the inclusion of many aspects of the role of nature in enhancing human wellbeing in several focus areas.
2. IUCN would like to reiterate its views that the SDGs framework should be formulated in such a way as to:
 - Emphasize the interconnectedness between the different dimensions of sustainable development;
 - Include a goal addressing the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services as essential solutions from nature (nature-based solutions) in addressing some of the global development challenges;
 - Build on relevant existing commitments made by the international community.
3. IUCN wishes to continue contributing to the work of the OWG and it is in this context that we would like to offer, through this note, some general comments concerning in particular the inclusion of biodiversity and ecosystem services (BES) in the further work of designing SDGs from the basis provided in the Focus Areas document, and submit specific targets which we consider essential in order to fully anchor nature-based solutions in the SDGs framework.
4. At the outset, we welcome the inclusion of Focus Area 17 on **Ecosystems and Biodiversity** in the list of areas presented in the document and the mention made of potential interlinkages to other focus areas. It will be important to capture adequately these linkages when targets will be developed for the various focus areas/goals so as to better articulate the contribution of biodiversity and ecosystem services in supporting human wellbeing in the context of sustainable development. We take this opportunity to reiterate IUCN's proposal for the formulation of a BES-related SDG as follows: ***Enhance the benefits for all from biodiversity and ecosystem services in a just world that values and conserves nature.***
5. IUCN has on several occasions shared its approach on nature based solutions as an indispensable and cost-effective complement of measures to take society to a sustainable future. We therefore welcome the fact that nature as a solution to development challenges is introduced in various focus areas such as Focus Area 6 on **Water and sanitation** in which the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in enabling supply and access to water is acknowledged.

6. The concept of nature-based solutions could also be more strongly reflected in other focus areas as follows:
 - Focus area 3 on **Health and population dynamics**: ecosystems contribute to clean air and clean water as implicitly established in the document, and biodiversity provides for medicine - 60 percent of the world population relies almost entirely on plant medicine for primary health care.
 - Focus area 4 on **Education**: education is the foundation on which the coming generations can be made aware of the imperative to ensure a sustainable future. This focus area should therefore have interlinkages to all other focus areas, including the essential role of BES for human wellbeing and sustainable development.
 - Focus area 7 on **Energy**: while the world is moving towards a higher percentage of renewable energy, it is important to understand and track the role of BES in renewable energy. Energy security in a sustainable development framework is the reliable supply of affordable, renewable and clean energy. Such a system is built on reliability and resilience towards environmental degradation and climate change. Efforts to build resilience in energy systems must be based on healthy and well functioning ecosystems, and as such, this focus area should have clear interlinkages to BES.
 - Focus area 13 on **Sustainable cities and human settlements**: the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services is crucial for cities to maintain clean air and water as well as to reduce vulnerability to disasters, among other.
 - Focus area 19 on **Peaceful and non-violent societies, capable institutions**: good governance of natural resources contributes to peaceful and non-violent societies. Conversely, the establishment of effective and transparent institutions; the abatement of corruption; the appropriate access to information; the strengthening of civil society; the enhancement of the rule of law; the strengthening of local governments, among other, all contribute to good governance of natural resources and sustainable development. These interlinkages should therefore be captured.

7. IUCN would also like to express views on a few other issues in the document in which the role of BES and nature-based solutions is essential:
 - We consider **climate change** (Focus area 15) to be a cross-cutting issue and both a symptom and a consequence of the way economic development has taken place since the industrial revolution to date mostly powered by fossil fuel energy. In this regard, achieving key goals/targets such as those related to increasing the share of renewable energy in the energy resources mix, conserving and restoring ecosystems, bringing consumption and production to sustainable levels, etc. would contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and hopefully result in stabilising the Earth's climate.
 - The issue of **disaster risk reduction** and the role of ecosystem services to reduce vulnerability could also be strengthened. While this issue is appropriately mentioned within the focus areas related to water (Focus area 6) and sustainable cities and human settlements (Focus area 13), it deserves more attention as it is also essential for adaptation to climate change and sustainable development. Investing in protecting and/or restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services is investing in disaster risk reduction. As the timeframe of the post 2015 development agenda coincides with discussions on the second phase of the **Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015: building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters** (which is also to

be adopted in 2015), it would be good to ensure policy coherence between the two processes.

II. Targets that IUCN considers essential to integrate the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the SDGs framework

8. In order to contribute to the next phase of the discussions of the OWG which will from now on focus on identifying SDGs and accompanying targets, IUCN presents in this submission a non-exhaustive list of targets considered essential to ensure that BES are effectively and meaningfully incorporated in the SDGs framework. The targets suggested in the table below are a combination of qualitative and quantitative examples, depending on the nature of the issue covered. They were selected according to the following criteria and each of the suggested targets fulfils all the criteria taken together:

- 1- The target directly relates to maintaining BES as the natural infrastructure supplying the services needed to achieve sustainable development, or indirectly contributes to enhancing the role of BES as the natural infrastructure supplying the services needed to achieve sustainable development.
- 2- The target provides for multiple benefits: achieving this target contributes to the accomplishment of more than one goal.
- 3- The target is based on suggestions that have already been put forward through published reports (such as: the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent People; the report of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network; etc.) and/or builds on existing government commitments (such as those in multilateral environmental agreements).

Key targets essential to adequately capture BES in sustainable development	Link to Focus areas / possible SDGs	Mentioned in reports/existing commitments
<i>“By 2020¹, 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”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Disaster risk reduction • Food security • Poverty eradication • Gender equality • Health • Livelihoods • Water 	<p>CBD Strategic Plan (Aichi Target 14)</p> <p>Similar target by SDSN</p>
<i>“Improve by (x%) the sustainable use and development of water resources in all countries.”²</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Food Security • Health • Water 	<p>UN Water</p>
<i>All countries to achieve “land degradation neutrality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and 	<p>Based on Rio+20</p>

¹ The relationship between the timeframes of both processes (CBD Aichi Targets and SDGs) requires further analysis.

² IUCN understands this target as specified by UN Water as including bringing freshwater withdrawals into line with sustainably available water resources and restoring and maintaining ecosystems to provide water-related services.

<p>by 2030.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystems • Disaster risk reduction • Energy • Food security • Health • Livelihoods • Poverty eradication • Water security 	<p>The Future we want</p> <p>TST Brief on Land Degradation</p>
<p>“Restoring 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded lands by 2020”³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Climate Change • Disaster risk reduction • Food Security • Health 	<p>The Bonn Challenge</p>
<p>“By 2020⁴, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Climate change • Disaster risk reduction • Health • Marine 	<p>CBD Strategic Plan (Aichi Target 11)</p>
<p>All countries have established a predictable system that secure right to land, property and resources tenure by communities, women and men by 2030.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Climate change • Disaster risk reduction • Food Security 	<p>Based on Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons</p>
<p>“Build resilience and reduce deaths from natural disasters by x%”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Disaster Risk Reduction • Sustainable cities and human settlements 	<p>Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons</p> <p>UNISDR</p>

³ The relationship between the timeframes of both processes (the Bonn Challenge and SDGs) requires further analysis.

⁴ The relationship between the timeframes of both processes (CBD Aichi Targets and SDGs) requires further analysis.

<p><i>By 2020⁵, all incentives harmful to biodiversity are eliminated and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are applied, and biodiversity values have been integrated into all national and local decision-making, and are incorporated in national and private sector accounting.⁶</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Climate Change • Energy • Food security • Marine 	<p>Based on CBD Strategic Plan (Aichi Target 3)</p> <p>Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons</p>
<p><i>“By 2020⁷, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Food security • Health • Marine • Water 	<p>CBD Strategic Plan (Aichi Target 13)</p>
<p><i>“Adopt sustainable agricultural, ocean and freshwater fishery practices and rebuild designated fish stocks to sustainable levels.”⁸</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Food Security • Marine 	<p>Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons</p>
<p><i>Prevent the extinction of all known threatened species and maintain or increase the abundance of wild species in their natural habitats.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Ecosystems • Food Security • Health • Human Well Being • Oceans • Water 	<p>Based on CBD Strategic Plan (Aichi Target 12)</p>

⁵ The relationship between the timeframes of both processes (CBD Aichi Targets and SDGs) requires further analysis.

⁶ IUCN understands this target as including both the elimination of agricultural subsidies and phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies (as contain in the Focus Areas on Food Security, Energy and Marine resources).

⁷ The relationship between the timeframes of both processes (CBD Aichi Targets and SDGs) requires further analysis.

⁸ Further elaboration needed to ensure it is formulated as a target.