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**WCS Recommendations: In-person SBSTTA-24 and SBI-3**

Recommendations for CBD Parties

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# **Introduction to WCS**

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) that has been working across the globe for more than 120 years to save wildlife and wild places. We have programs on the ground in more than 60 countries across Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Central and South America, and North America that work in partnership with governments, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, other conservation organizations, the private sector, and other stakeholders on science-based conservation efforts.

To learn more about WCS, please visit [www.wcs.org](http://www.wcs.org), or for more on our engagement with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), please visit [**www.wcs.org/cbd**](http://www.wcs.org/cbd)**.** Please contact Dr. Susan Lieberman (slieberman@wcs.org) and Alfred DeGemmis (adegemmis@wcs.org) with any questions about the content of this document.

Our small team that plans to attend the March resumed meetings of SBSTTA-24 would be pleased to meet with Party delegations in Geneva, or to set up a call any time in February.

***Please note:*** *This document builds on our initial recommendations for the virtual sessions of SBSTTA-24 and SBI-3 (published April 2021 and available* [*here*](https://c532f75abb9c1c021b8c-e46e473f8aadb72cf2a8ea564b4e6a76.ssl.cf5.rackcdn.com/2021/04/16/7tjmaudp06_WCS_Position_Statement_CBD_SBSTTA_24_and_SBI_3_16_April_2021_1_.pdf)*). This document contains annexes in which we propose specific amendments to the draft decisions for CoP15. We recognize that the SBSTTA/SBI documents are in various stages of finalization; however, we also note that these draft decisions will be negotiated through CoP15.*

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# **24th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24)**

## **SBSTTA-24 Agenda Item 3: “Post-2020 global biodiversity framework”**

[CBD/SBSTTA/24/L3](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/9849/459f/b9fe0e74c9e1f25dd90dee23/sbstta-24-l-03-en.pdf)

*Note: WCS comments on specific indicators in the draft monitoring framework for the Global Biodiversity Framework are included in our position statement on Draft 1, which is available at* [*www.wcs.org/cbd*](http://www.wcs.org/cbd)*.*

WCS makes the following comments regarding L.3, on the post-2020 GBF, and recommends [**amendments in Annex 1**](#_Annex_1:_Redline) in line with these comments.

* *OP1, on adopting the monitoring framework:* WCS strongly supports the adoption of a full monitoring framework by Parties at CoP15. This would include those indicators described at present as headline, component, and complementary indicators. Adoption of a monitoring framework would not preclude further consideration of indicators or indicator gaps after CoP15, and some agreement on indicators is essential to facilitate monitoring and review, as well as enhance accountability. We would therefore support the retention of this language in the SBSTTA-recommended decision.
* *OP2, on baselines:* WCS generally supported the original draft decision’s intent to use “2020, or the period from 2016 to 2020, or the closest year(s) for which data is available” as the reference period for monitoring implementation of the GBF*.* This does not preclude the use of alternate baselines where Parties are relying on national data or other tools; however, it is critical to agree to a broad baseline for global analyses and stock-taking processes. The indicators we recommend for adoption will have baselines within this window.
* *OP11, on the ad hoc technical expert group:*WCS generally supports the proposed terms of reference for an ad hoc Technical Expert Group (TEG) and looks forward to working with Parties through CoP16 to refine indicators for the post-2020 GBF. One of the most important functions of the TEG will be to identify gaps, including where Parties decided on a placeholder but acknowledge that further work is necessary (as is the case for some headline indicators in the draft monitoring framework). Furthermore, we would recommend broad (virtual) consultation with Party and Observer experts far beyond the Technical Expert Group to bring together expertise and proactively address key topics and areas of divergence *prior* to CoP16. WCS has many technical experts who would be well-placed to provide advice during these discussions.

Again, it is essential for a complete monitoring framework to be adopted at CBD CoP15. Recognizing that many critical biodiversity indicators, including species- or ecosystem-specific indicators (e.g., for forests or coral reefs) are not at the ‘headline’ level, it is essential that component and complementary indicators be viewed as part of the comprehensive package, and that the CoP15 decision recognize the role that many of them already play in national reporting. Refinements, or adjustments, should be possible.

# **SBSTTA-24 Agenda Item 6: “Marine and coastal biodiversity”**

[CBD/SBSTTA/24/CRP2](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/3f4a/10ad/23305ccd9ff7d17c9bb173bd/sbstta-24-crp-02-en.pdf)

WCS makes the following comments regarding CRP.2, on marine and coastal biodiversity, and recommends [**amendments in Annex 2**](#_Annex_2:_Redline) in line with these comments.

* *OP4, on global and regional organizations:* It is not clear why only certain treaties or fora are named explicitly here, when there should be explicit cooperation with biodiversity and ecosystem-related intergovernmental agreements, fora, or partnerships that will actively contribute to delivery of the GBF and the objectives of the CBD. We therefore propose references to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI).
* *On guidance for implementation of the GBF:* WCS is a member of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), along with [over 40 CBD Party governments](https://www.icriforum.org/members/), which has developed a consensus recommendation to CBD Parties on how to ensure the GBF properly reflects the urgency and practicalities of coral reef conservation (see [coralpost2020.org](file:///%5C%5Cwcs.local%5CHomeFolders%5Cjray%5CDownloads%5Ccoralpost2020.org)). Given the generalized goals and targets of the GBF, some form of guidance is necessary for applying the different goals and targets to different ecosystem types. We urge Parties to add an additional operative paragraph (see 6bis.) to ensure the Secretariat works with relevant organizations to produce such guidance.
* *On underwater anthropogenic noise:* While some topics (spatial planning, litter) receive instructions for further work by the CBD Secretariat, underwater anthropogenic noise is inexplicably excluded. We therefore propose an additional operative paragraph (see 9bis) calling for continued technical review and collaboration on this important threat to biodiversity. Such work could inform indicators for the GBF targets on harmful pollution. [Chou et al. (2021)](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0964569120303343) is an excellent review of international policies and actions related to anthropogenic underwater noise.
* *OP10, on mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries:* WCS generally supports mainstreaming biodiversity into the fisheries sector – including potentially by identifying candidate OECMs in areas of the ocean subject to fisheries that deliver ecosystem-wide biodiversity benefits. However, we stress that *all* stakeholders with technical expertise should be engaged -- including IUCN Commissions, technically qualified NGOs, etc. -- as there are different interpretations and guidance on implementation and no one meeting or set of guidance should be singled out as a priority. We therefore propose an amendment to OP10 that would widen the scope of collaboration.

# **SBSTTA-24 Agenda Item 9: “Biodiversity and health”**

[Non-paper on Item 9](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/bc8c/4c00/21af4e66ff6b5b5eef46bfb1/sbstta-24-item-09-non-paper-en.pdf)

WCS makes the following comments regarding the non-paper on Biodiversity and Health, and we recommend the [**amendments in Annex 3**](#_Annex_3._Non-Paper) in line with these comments.

WCS welcomes the attention of CBD Parties and the Secretariat to national and international efforts at the nexus of biodiversity and health, and we thank the Secretariat for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft Global Action Plan for Biodiversity and Health.[[1]](#footnote-1) The [WCS Health Program](https://oneworldonehealth.wcs.org/) is one of the oldest zoological veterinary programs in the world and a global thought leader in One Health approaches ([Gruetzmacher et al. 2020](https://www-sciencedirect-com.wcslibrary.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S0048969720364494)).

WCS strongly supports continued engagement by CBD Parties at the nexus of biodiversity and health, including the careful development of a truly trans-sectoral action plan that is shared by multilateral fora and results in concrete changes to policy and practice that, among other outcomes, helps prevent zoonotic pathogen spillover and the next pandemic of zoonotic origin. It would be unacceptable for us to continue with business as usual while suffering and death continue around the world due to COVID-19.

Such changes to policy and practice must include the closure commercial markets and trade for live and fresh wildlife, particularly birds and mammals, for human consumption ([WCS 2021](https://c532f75abb9c1c021b8c-e46e473f8aadb72cf2a8ea564b4e6a76.ssl.cf5.rackcdn.com/2021/06/09/5cq7svg1f4_Summary_of_WCS_policy_on_wild_meat_markets_wildlife_trade_and_zoonotic_2021_05_21_Final.pdf); [Xiao et al. 2021](https://www.cell.com/current-biology/fulltext/S0960-9822%2820%2931888-1)). However, this is not the only action needed. There is a large body of evidence tying the loss of integrity in natural ecosystems (particularly forests) to emerging infectious diseases, including zoonoses, and to other negative impacts on human health ([Evans et al. 2020](https://www.wcs.org/get-involved/updates/wcs-issues-report-on-links-between-ecological-integrity-and-human-health); [Morand and Lajaunie 2021](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.661063/full); [Gibb et al. 2020](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32759999/)). There is therefore an urgent need to take actions from planning and impact assessment through to exploitation, trade, and use of biodiversity, to change our relationship with the natural world.

With respect to the draft Global Action Plan in Annex 1, all efforts must be made to ensure that this Global Action Plan is not only “cross-sectoral,” which can mean that its underlying concepts or proposed activities are implemented by different sectors, but “trans-sectoral” – meaning that it avoids silo-ing of approaches and activities by different sectors ([de la Rocque and Formenty 2014](https://doc.oie.int/dyn/portal/index.seam?page=alo&aloId=31865); [Hadorn et al. 2008](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/978-1-4020-6699-3.pdf)). COVID-19 and other pandemics of zoonotic origin arise in part due to societal decisions that are beyond the power of any one sector (e.g., environment, or health) to control.

We note that CBD Decision 14/4 invited the WHO to *“consider establishing a regular reporting mechanism for the progress of activities on biodiversity and health under the joint work programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Health Organization”* (operative paragraph 11(b)). It is not clear from this document how this CBD Global Action Plan will be aligned with, or otherwise mutually reinforce, those activities mentioned throughout that involve national health plans or multilateral governance under e.g., the WHO or OIE. The Global Action Plan should strive for greater collaborative design among these multilateral organizations, and the different sectors they convene, to ensure coherent and mutually supportive implementation. To this point, the World Health Assembly (WHA) agreed in December 2021 to launch a process to draft and negotiate a global convention, agreement or other

international instrument under the Constitution of the WHO to strengthen pandemic prevention,

preparedness and response. The Global Action Plan must be seen in context of these negotiations.

**WCS therefore recommends that the non-paper with draft decision be significantly revised to note the current draft of the Global Action Plan, and to request that it be refined via intersessional consultation and prepared for endorsement or adoption at CBD CoP16.** We do not recommend its adoption at CoP15, as much more work and input is needed. Such consultation should include intergovernmental organizations, both within and outside of the Tripartite+ coalition, as well as technically qualified representatives from the conservation, health, agriculture, and other sectors (including the One Health High Level Expert Panel). With additional expert review and sufficient buy-in, this Global Action Plan can become central to our efforts to address the biodiversity and health nexus.

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# **3rd Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI-3)**

## **SBI-3 Agenda Item 6: “Resource Mobilization and the Financial Mechanism”**

[CBD/SBI/3/CRP15](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/1820/ff81/77fb9bcb605c1de2938666f3/sbi-03-crp-15-en.pdf)

[CBD/SBI/3/L3](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/342d/2c6a/84d6657e294bf35fb3ad3252/sbi-03-l-03-en.pdf)

WCS makes the following comments regarding CRP.15, on resource mobilization, and L.3 on the financial mechanism.

Resource Mobilization

WCS generally supports the conclusions of the Resource Mobilization Expert Panel that three critical steps needed post-2020 are to: (a) reduce or redirect resources causing harm to biodiversity; (b) generate additional resources from all sources; (c) enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of resource use. We therefore believe it is vital for relevant goals and targets in the GBF to align with, and operationalize, these broad objectives.

In developing the goal and targets of the GBF, Parties should again commit to *significantly* increasing international flows to developing countries. Lenzen et al. ([2012](https://www.nature.com/articles/nature11145)) provides a robust scientific justification for ensuring that a much greater proportion of global biodiversity finance is directed to mitigate the impacts of a globalized economy on biodiversity in developing countries.

With respect to CRP.15, we believe that Option B is preferable – in other words, we believe the focus at CoP15 should be on the political aspirations set out in the goals and targets of the GBF. With these secured, Parties can work between CoP15 and CoP16 on a more specific resource mobilization strategy and subsidiary targets to help Parties and stakeholders achieve it.

The financial mechanism (the GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) continues to effectively mobilize and deliver resources to implement the CBD, including conservation of biodiversity. WCS believes it is important to strengthen the GEF by mobilizing additional resources to meet the ambitious goals of the GBF, streamlining and increasing access to funds, and better aligning its interventions and monitoring programs with the GBF and its monitoring framework to enable stocktaking and evaluation processes at multiple scales.

We acknowledge comments from Parties that implementation of the post-2020 GBF, and particularly reporting against indicators included in the draft monitoring framework, will require additional capacity and resources. Building this capacity at the national and sub-national level is essential to effectively undertake reviews of progress. We had welcomed operative paragraph 17 of the draft decision in [SBI/3/11](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/3572/0ba5/0c4173a13cf0e7b040f7e6e2/sbi-03-11-en.pdf), which is no longer part of a simplified draft decision. We therefore urge this to be reflected in the guidance from CoP15 to the financial mechanism.

Furthermore, as noted above, the generalization of goals and targets will remove specific references to ecosystem types such as forests, coral reefs, grasslands, etc. It is important for the GEF to urgently prioritize those ecosystems that are uniquely important for both conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and which are urgently threatened by anthropogenic threats such as climate change and over-exploitation.

Coral reefs, for example, will need to be monitored and conserved in order to safeguard them from the ongoing threat posed by climate change and are not explicitly prioritized in the current draft program framework for GEF-8. We therefore urge Parties to draw attention to these highly vulnerable, biodiverse ecosystems that underpin the food and economic security of millions.

# **Annexes with “Redline” Versions**

## **Annex 1: Redline version of SBSTTA/24/L.3**

**POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE REVIEW OF THE UPDATED GOALS AND TARGETS, AND RELATED INDICATORS AND BASELINES**

**Draft recommendation submitted by the Chair**

*The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice*

*Recommends* that the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting adopt a decision that includes the following elements, taking into account also the conclusions of the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:

*The Conference of the Parties*

1.~~[~~*Adopts* the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework annexed to the present decision;[[2]](#footnote-2)~~]~~

*COMMENT: WCS strongly supports the adoption of the monitoring framework in its entirety at CBD CoP15, even if refinements or adjustments may need to be made subsequently. If there is to be a tiering or categorization system, it must be seen as a holistic package rather than leaving aside key indicators currently underpinning global biodiversity assessments.*

2. *Decides* to use 2020, or the period from [2011-2020], where data is available, as the reference period, unless otherwise indicated, for reporting and monitoring progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, [while *noting*][and *recognizes*] that baselines, conditions and periods used to express [different responsibilities,] desirable states or levels of ambition in goals and targets should, where relevant, take into account [historical trends,][ historic loss,] current status, and future scenarios of biodiversity [, including available information on the pre-industrial period];

*COMMENT: WCS initially supported the original draft decision’s intent to use “2020, or the period from 2016 to 2020, or the closest year(s) for which data is available” as the reference period for monitoring implementation of the GBF. This does not preclude the use of alternate baselines where Parties are relying on national data or other tools; however, it is critical to agree to a broad baseline for global analyses and stock-taking processes. The indicators we recommend for adoption will have baselines within this window. However, some flexibility may be appropriate.*

3. *Also decides* to consider a review of the monitoring framework in order to ~~finish its development~~ identify and address gaps or issues in operationalization at its sixteenth meeting, and thereafter keep the monitoring framework under review, as appropriate;

*COMMENT: WCS agrees with many Parties that the framework should not need to be substantially revised; however, some gaps - to be identified by the ad hoc technical expert group - may need to be remedied.*

4. [*Further decides* that the headline indicators will be used in [global assessments] to monitor progress towards the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, complemented, as appropriate, by the component and complementary indicators;]

5*.* [*Also decides* that the headline indicators [should] [will] be used by [all] Parties in their national reports for reporting on their implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, where technically feasible and as [appropriate][applicable][and in accordance with Article 20][and *encourages* the establishment of mechanisms to build capacity in developing countries to support filling monitoring and reporting gaps];]

*COMMENT: WCS strongly supports the establishment of mechanisms to build capacity for biodiversity monitoring in developing countries.*

6.[*Encourages* all Parties to use the ~~headline indicators~~ monitoring framework in national planning processes, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans [or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity] and other national planning processes [as appropriate and according to their national priorities and circumstances;]]

*COMMENT: WCS believes that many of the indicators currently at the component and complementary levels provide essential information to support the development of national plans. Many ecosystem-specific indicators will be necessary to formulate such plans. We therefore propose the amendment to broaden this operative paragraph.*

7*.* [*Invites* Parties to ~~[adapt and]~~ use the list of component and complementary indicators in their national planning processes [as appropriate and according to their national priorities and circumstances] and in their national reports for reporting on their progress in implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in line with Article 26 of the Convention, [as appropriate and according to their national priorities and circumstances;]]

*COMMENT: Text highlighted in grey above would be redundant IF amendments are made to OP6 above. We are not clear on the value of “adapting” component and complementary indicators.*

8.[*Recognizes* the value of aligning][*Further invites* Parties to align] national monitoring with the United Nations System of Environmental-Economic Accounting statistical standard in order to mainstream biodiversity in national statistical systems and to strengthen national monitoring systems and reporting [as appropriate and according to their national priorities and circumstances;];

9*.* [*Encourages*][*urges*] Parties [, pursuant to article 20,] and *invites* other Governments, the Global Environment Facility, the Biodiversity Indicator Partnership, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and other relevant organizations [and those invited to be part of the technical expert group on indicators] to support national, regional and global biodiversity monitoring systems;

10*. Invites* the United Nations Statistical Commission, the Global Earth Observations – Biodiversity Observation Network, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and other relevant organizations to support the operationalization of the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

11. *Decides* to establish an ad hoc technical expert group, with a time-bound mandate until the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to advise the further operationalization of the monitoring framework, including the identification of key gaps, for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the annex to the present decision;

12. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to review outcomes of the ad hoc technical expert group and complete the scientific and technical review of the monitoring framework and report their findings for subsequent consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

13. *Decides* to consider the requirements for further work to fully implement and review the effectiveness of the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

14. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the ad hoc technical expert group, and subject to the availability resources, to convene moderated online discussions on the monitoring framework;

15. [*Requests* the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions to continue the development of and operationalization of indicators related to traditional knowledge and indigenous peoples and local communities and report on this work to the Parties and for the Secretariat to make information available on progress and outcomes to the ad hoc technical expert group [and other relevant working groups];]

16. *Requests* the Executive Secretary [subject to the availability of resources], in collaboration with relevant partners:

* 1. To [make available] [facilitate the development of] guidance on capacity [development][building] to support Parties to implement the monitoring framework, taking into account the special needs, circumstances and priorities of developing countries, [in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition], in compiling and using the headline indicators, and component and complementary indicators when relevant, including in their national reports, national biodiversity strategies and action plans and other national planning processes;
	2. To facilitate the use of relevant tools, including the Data Reporting Tool (DaRT), to facilitate national reporting and the sharing of information between multilateral environment agreements.

*[Annex*

**Terms of reference for aN Ad HOC technical expert group on indicators for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**

1. The Group will work:
2. To identify detailed metadata [and information] including [as appropriate, reference periods and] global baselines, prioritizing first headline indicators (according to the criteria identified in the annex of document CBD/-)[then component and complementary indicators] of the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, taking into account existing methodologies and standards which have been developed, including the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting developed under the auspices of the United Nations Statistical Commission;
3. To provide technical advice and develop guidance on addressing gaps in the monitoring framework, prioritizing headline indicators, and in the implementation of indicators for the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including advice on the use of harmonized and agreed indicator definitions and methodologies, best practices for monitoring and national data sharing, and scientific and technical advice on the improvement of indicators or the addition of new indicators in the monitoring framework of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including indicators relevant to stakeholders;

*COMMENT: More important than the definition is the precise methodology to be used. This is where the greatest challenges in understanding and reporting on the indicators is needed.*

1. To provide technical advice on remaining and unresolved issues relating to the post-2020 monitoring framework, as outlined by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting, and to prioritize work on the following elements leading up to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties:
	* 1. Conduct a full assessment of headline, component and complementary indicators;
		2. Explore methods for the implementation of indicators in national planning and reporting;
		3. (list to be determined based on progress achieved by the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties);
2. To provide guidance to Parties on ways to fill temporal and spatial data gaps, including through the use of big data, including citizen science, community-based monitoring and information systems, remote sensing, modelling and statistical analysis, and other forms of data and other knowledge systems, recognizing the specific challenges faced by developing country Parties to develop and access information tools;
3. To provide advice on the existing capacity, gaps and needs in terms of capacity development, technology transfer and financing needs related to the monitoring of the global biodiversity framework in consultation with the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation.
4. The group will take into account:
	1. Previous work and experience under the Convention and other relevant programmes of work concerning indicators and monitoring;
	2. Statistical standards and development under the intergovernmental forum of the United Nations Statistical Commission;
	3. Previous work and experience with other relevant global, regional and national monitoring frameworks, multilateral environment agreements, and knowledge systems;
	4. Recent developments and information on issues related to the indicators, their metadata and baselines.
5. The group will be composed of 30 technical experts nominated by Parties, including statistics experts and experts in relevant social and natural sciences, and up to 15 representatives nominated by observer organizations and other relevant organizations. The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, will select experts from the nominations submitted by Parties and organizations with due regard to representation of different areas of technical expertise, while recognizing the need for expert knowledge of biodiversity, and ensuring expertise on freshwater, marine and coastal ecosystems and also taking into account geographical representation, and the representation of indigenous peoples and local communities, major stakeholders and rights holders’ groups, gender balance and the special conditions of developing countries, archipelagic States, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition.
6. The Group will nominate two co-chairs from among the selected experts.
7. The Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will be invited to participate in the group ex officio.
8. The Group may also invite other experts, as appropriate, from national Governments, [subnational and local governments,] the United Nations and other international organizations, civil society, youth, women’s groups, indigenous peoples and local communities, including representatives from the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, academia and the private sector to contribute their expertise and experiences on specific issues related to the terms of reference of the Group.
9. The Group will primarily conduct its work electronically and [subject to the availability of resources,] will also meet physically, if possible, meeting at least twice during the intersessional period.
10. The ad hoc technical expert group should be established and start its work immediately after approval by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting and report on its work to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at meetings held prior to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

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## **Annex 2: Redline version of SBSTTA/24/CRP.2**

**CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY**

**Draft recommendation submitted by the Chair**

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt a decision along the following lines:

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recalling* its decisions IX/20, X/29, XI/18, XII/23, XIII/9, XIII/11, XIII/12 and 14/30 with respect to cooperation and collaboration with relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives,

*Recognizing* the need to strengthen collaboration and cooperation with other competent intergovernmental organizations with a mandate in areas beyond national jurisdiction in support of the application of the ecosystem approach and the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity,

*Recognizing also* the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity as a cross-cutting element of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and critical to achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Thematic Workshop on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework,[[3]](#footnote-3) and *requests* the Executive Secretary to conduct a strategic review and analysis of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and to prepare a draft update to the programme of work on the basis of this analysis, also considering the outcomes of the above-referenced workshop, as appropriate, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to develop a strategic review and analysis of the programme of work on island biodiversity in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in collaboration with the Global Islands Partnership and building on other relevant efforts to review progress towards global commitments and goals for island biodiversity, and to prepare a draft update to the programme of work on the basis of this analysis for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;

3. *Urges* Parties and *invites* other Governments to take into account the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity in efforts to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including through enhancing the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems, addressing threats and pressures, such as marine plastic litter and unsustainable fishing, and conserving and sustainably using marine genetic resources as well as supporting appropriate access to marine genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their utilization, within the jurisdictional scope of the Convention and its protocols;

4. *Invites* relevant global and regional organizations, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the International Maritime Organization, the International Seabed Authority, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Coral Reef Initiative, regional fishery bodies, and regional seas conventions and action plans, to support the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to marine and coastal biodiversity, and to contribute to monitoring and reporting with respect to the implementation of the framework;

*COMMENT: It is not clear why only certain treaties or fora are named explicitly here, when there is arguably a better argument for explicit cooperation with biodiversity and ecosystem-related fora that will actively contribute to delivery of the GBF and the objectives of the CBD.*

5. *Welcomes* the work of the Executive Secretary on the compilation and synthesis of information on:

(a) Impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity and means to minimize and mitigate these impacts;

(b) Impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats and means to minimize and mitigate these impacts;

(c) Experiences with the application of marine spatial planning;

(d) Efforts to implement the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems;

(e) Efforts to implement the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas within the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention;

6. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments and relevant organizations to use the information referred to in paragraph 7 above in their efforts to conserve and sustainably use marine and coastal biodiversity, according to national priorities and circumstances, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the compilation, synthesis and sharing of information on efforts to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to various thematic issues related to marine and coastal biodiversity, in line with decisions of the Conference of the Parties;

6bis. Requests the Executive Secretary, and invites Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, to facilitate or support the development of guidance for Parties on implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to key thematic issues, including the application of goals and targets to coral reefs and other vulnerable and important ecosystems;

*COMMENT: With generalized goals and targets, and a vast, complex monitoring framework, it will be essential for practical guidance to be developed with the support of the CBD Secretariat for implementation of the GBF in different geographies or ecosystem types that are uniquely important and have existing constituencies.*

7. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments to support the development of a global agreement to reduce marine plastic litter under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Assembly;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to support the implementation of marine spatial planning, including through capacity-building and partnership activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, in collaboration with Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations;

9. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments to minimize and mitigate the impacts of deep-sea mining on marine and coastal biodiversity as well as its impacts on other uses of the marine environment;

9bis. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments to minimize and mitigate the impacts of underwater anthropogenic noise on marine biodiversity in line with existing commitments and voluntary initiatives, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue its cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations and relevant stakeholders on this issue, including through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

*COMMENT: It is not clear why some topics (e.g. marine spatial planning, litter, etc.) have continued support from this decision, but not underwater anthropogenic noise. It should receive similar attention.*

10. *Welcomes* the cooperationbetween the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Executive Secretary to support efforts to mainstream the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in fisheries, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue this cooperation in an open and transparent manner , including with all [relevant] [qualified] stakeholders, ~~and building on the results of the Expert Meeting on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures in the Marine Capture Fishery Sector,~~ including for the development of voluntary guidance on identifying and applying other effective area-based conservation measures in fisheries;

*COMMENT: The full suite of stakeholders with technical expertise should be engaged, as there are different interpretations and guidance on implementation for key topics like OECMs, and no one meeting or set of guidance should be singled out as a priority.*

11. *Welcomes* the capacity-building and partnership activities being facilitated by the Executive Secretary, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, at the national, regional and global levels in collaboration with Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, *expresses its gratitude* to donor countries and many other partners for providing financial and technical support for the implementation of activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to facilitate capacity-building activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative in order to facilitate implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to marine, coastal and island biodiversity;

12. *Also welcomes* the collaborative efforts among the Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Maritime Organization, the International Seabed Authority, the regional seas conventions and action plans, regional fishery bodies, large marine ecosystem projects/programmes and other relevant regional initiatives to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation at the regional scale in order to accelerate progress to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue this collaboration in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

13. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to enhance cooperation and synergies with other global and regional organizations in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[[4]](#footnote-4) and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

14. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to build synergies with other relevant global and regional organizations to support the implementation of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea[[5]](#footnote-5) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, upon its adoption;

15. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to enhance cooperation and synergies with global and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[[6]](#footnote-6) with respect to matters related to marine and coastal biodiversity and climate change.

## **Annex 3. Non-Paper on SBSTTA-24 Non-paper on agenda item 9**

**NON-PAPER**

**BIODIVERSITY AND HEALTH**

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting adopt a decision along the following lines:

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recognizing* that human health and well-being are not possible without biodiversity and the ecosystem functions and services that biodiversity underpins, that the loss of biodiversity can impact health negatively, and that health-related activities can have potential impacts on biodiversity which may threaten the provision of ecosystem functions and services,

*Recalling* decisions XII/21, XIII/6 and 14/4 on biodiversity and health and decision XIII/3 on the mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity within and across sectors, and acknowledging the guidance on integrating biodiversity considerations into One Health approaches, among other holistic approaches,

*Recognizing* that the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of the relationship between people and biodiversity, the urgency of addressing the biodiversity crisis alongside the climate crisis, the need for a sustainable and inclusive recovery within the “build back better” agenda, and that a biodiversity-inclusive trans-sectoral One Health approach ~~among other holistic approaches~~ would help to prevent and reduce the risk of future diseases of zoonotic origin and other infectious diseases,

*Comment: WCS supports a “trans-sectoral” approach – meaning that it avoids silo-ing of approaches and activities by different sectors.*

*Stressing* that mainstreaming biodiversity in the health sector and strengthening cooperation as recognized in the long-term approach to mainstreaming biodiversity (CBD/COP/DEC/15/--) and cooperation with other conventions and organizations (CBD/COP/DEC/15/--), and leveraging biodiversity and health co-benefits are very important for halting the loss of biodiversity and for the achievement of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Emphasizing* the essential role of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization for health-related technological developments, andthe need to achieve the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources and to foster scientific and technological research in the field of healthcare and other health-related activities,

*Recognizing* the importance of the sustainable use of biodiversity to support food security and to provide co-benefits for human health, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Recognizing* the long-standing collaboration between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Health Organization, which contributes to a strengthened understanding of biodiversity-health linkages and to raising the importance of One Health approaches,

*Taking note* of the report on the WorkshoponBiodiversity andPandemics[[7]](#footnote-7)convened by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services,

*Welcoming* the World Health Organization’s report launched on 20 May 2021[[8]](#footnote-8) on *Nature, Biodiversity and Health: an overview of interconnections*, presenting ways nature and ecosystems can support and protect health and well-being, and describing how nature degradation and the loss of biodiversity can threaten human health,

*Welcoming* “The World Together,” the Decision of the World Health Assembly’s Special Session in December 2021, which establishes an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response,

*Comment: A note should be made about this landmark Decision to better frame the need for further consideration of the Global Action Plan as these negotiations progress..*

1. *Welcomes* the strengthened collaboration on the One Health approach by the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the United Nations Environment Programme, including the recent establishment of the One Health High-level Expert Panel;

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders to consider opportunities for a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, also through short-term stimulus measures[[9]](#footnote-9) and longer-term approaches that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and benefit-sharing, and thereby contribute to minimizing the risk of future diseases of zoonotic origin, taking into account a biodiversity-inclusive trans-sectoral One Health approach among other relevant approaches and making use, as appropriate and in accordance with national circumstances and priorities, of the information provided in the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and the note prepared by the Executive Secretary for the special virtual sessions of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation on Biodiversity, One Health, and the response to COVID-19 and pandemics, convened in December 2020;[[10]](#footnote-10)

3. *~~Endorses~~ Notes with appreciation* the draft global action plan for biodiversity and health annexed to the present decision, and *~~encourages~~ invites* Parties, ~~and~~ *~~invites~~* other Governments and relevant stakeholders, to consider this draft global action plan when ~~developing implement this plan, including through the~~ mainstreaming ~~of~~ biodiversity and health linkages into existing and future policies, plans and strategies, as appropriate and in accordance with national priorities and circumstances~~, and the reinforcement of collaboration among ministries and agencies responsible for all the sectors identified in the global action plan for biodiversity and health, with a view to enhancing implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and older persons~~;

*Comment: Parties should not be asked to endorse the draft at CoP15, but rather at CoP16 following further consultation (see position statement, and below).*

3.*bis*. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders to consider opportunities for raising awareness on linkages between biodiversity and health, recognizing the need to address the common drivers of biodiversity loss and climate change, and thereby promoting better health and well-being outcomes;

4. *Invites* the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme, to continue collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity through the recently established One Health High-Level Expert Panel, other relevant expert groups and multilateral initiatives, among others:

(a *ante*) To promote a biodiversity-inclusive and whole-of-society One Health approach;

~~(a) To support the implementation of the global action plan for biodiversity and health in cooperation with indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and older persons, and relevant partners;~~

(b) To further support the development and implementation of measures, guidance and tools for promoting and supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity and health linkages;

(c) To support reporting on health-related indicators for the monitoring of the global action plan for biodiversity and health;

4*bis*. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility (GEF), donors and other organizations, to provide Parties, and in particular developing countries, small island developing states as well as countries with economies in transition, with technical and financial support for the effective implementation of the global action plan for biodiversity and health;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, and in collaboration with the World Health Organization and other partners and indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and older persons, and relevant partners:

(a) To ~~facilitate the implementation of~~ further refine the draft global action plan for biodiversity and health for consideration by the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties~~, and promote a biodiversity-inclusive One Health approach~~;

(b) To continue collaboration with relevant intergovernmental organizations, including the World Health Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme, including through, as appropriate, the One Health High-level Expert Panel, to refine the draft global action plan for biodiversity and health, and promote a biodiversity-inclusive trans-sectoral One Health approach;

(c) To report on progress to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

1. Our original comments on the draft Global Action Plan are available [here](https://c532f75abb9c1c021b8c-e46e473f8aadb72cf2a8ea564b4e6a76.ssl.cf5.rackcdn.com/2021/04/05/2el090flge_WCS_peer_review_comments_on_draft_Global_Action_Plan_for_Biodiversity_and_Health_FINAL.pdf) at wcs.org/cbd. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The annex will be developed in the light of further discussions, including negotiations in the third meeting of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and finalized by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. CBD/POST2020/WS/2019/10/2. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. General Assembly resolution 70/1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1833, No. 31363. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid., vol. 1771, No. I-30822. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <https://www.ipbes.net/pandemics> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [www.euro.who.int/en/nature-biodiv-health](http://www.euro.who.int/en/nature-biodiv-health) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Appendix 2 presents options to integrate biodiversity considerations into COVID-19 stimulus and recovery measures. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [CBD/SBSTTA-SBI-SS/2/2](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/44f2/38b3/cf38b99f5527f600c19e3c09/sbstta-sbi-ss-02-02-en.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)