



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Summary of deliberations

Addendum

Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery

I. Overview

1. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), at its meeting held on 14 May 2020, underscored the need for a stronger focus on nature across the entire United Nations system and tasked its High-level Committee on Programmes¹ with developing a common approach to integrating biodiversity² and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery. Through the present Common Approach, the United Nations system expresses a shared recognition of the urgency of acting and a commitment to mainstreaming biodiversity and nature-based solutions through collective action.

2. The interrelated consequences of environmental degradation, including biodiversity and habitat loss, climate change, air, land and water pollution, illegal exploitation, increasing disaster risk and the rise of zoonotic diseases, demonstrate the need for a reimagining of the human relationship to nature as a symbiotic one.³ The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic underscored the extraordinary interconnectedness between human, animal and environmental health and how it underpins the stability of social, economic and financial systems, global peace and stability. It provided the world with an opportunity to reflect on cooperation and the choices needed to tackle global systemic risks and challenges, and how societies can be reshaped as part of the sustainable and resilient recovery from the crisis.

3. The Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning

¹ Through a time-bound task team on biodiversity under the leadership of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

² See annex I for a glossary of terms.

³ See annex II.



and Delivery is structured around three impact areas and 15 medium-term objectives that contribute to the realization of the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity,⁴ under which biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people (see fig. I). It also proposes a set of outcomes that can be achieved by the United Nations system through increased collaboration, as well as an accountability framework for coherent and collective outputs on biodiversity.

Figure I

Impact areas and medium-term objectives of the Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery



4. As countries face the COVID-19 pandemic and act to recover, they are turning to the United Nations system for better coordinated and scaled solutions.⁵ The United Nations needs to demonstrate concerted action, through its convening power and leveraging of expertise across the United Nations system, and the development of stronger, more coherent knowledge-based resources in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

5. Through the Common Approach, the United Nations system expresses a shared recognition of the urgency of acting and a commitment to mainstreaming biodiversity through better coordinated efforts that will connect and build upon the strategies and programmes of work of United Nations system entities and facilitate the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Collective action on nature furthermore supports the implementation of the Secretary-General's vision on prevention⁶ and contributes to outcomes across the three pillars of the United Nations system: (a) peace and security; (b) human rights; and (c) development.

6. Given the scope of the task at hand, the Common Approach is structured to achieve impact over the next decade in three areas: (a) human rights, peaceful societies and planetary stability; (b) a green and inclusive economic recovery; and

⁴ See UNEP, document CBD/POST2020/PREP/2/1.

⁵ See annex III for the context of the Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery.

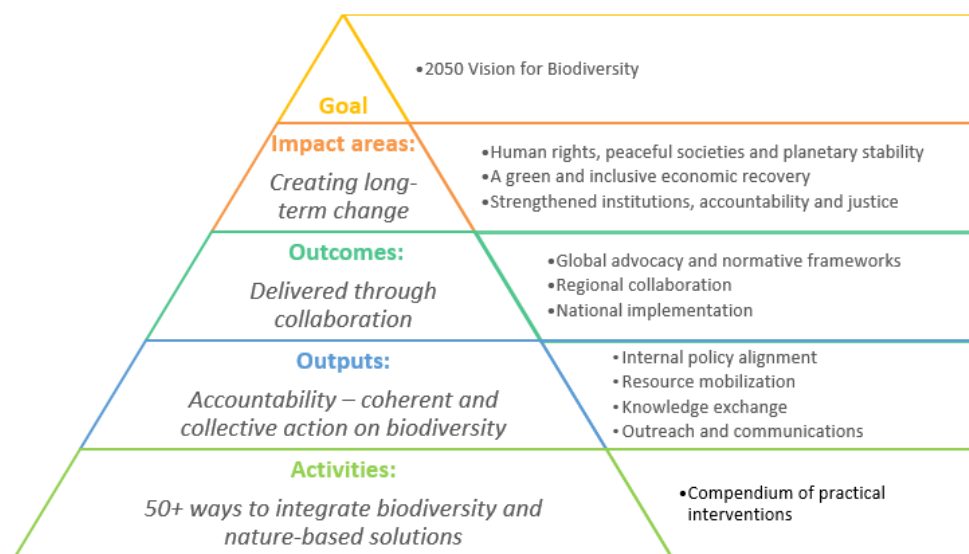
⁶ United Nations, "Priorities: prevention". Available at www.un.org/sg/en/priorities/prevention.shtml.

(c) strengthened institutions, accountability and justice. To accelerate transformational change in those three areas, it is focused on creating opportunities for collective action and joint delivery of initiatives at the global, regional and country levels, while pursuing alignment within the respective entities.

7. The Common Approach provides a structure to organize collective action and joint delivery to mainstream biodiversity and nature-based solutions (see fig. II). It is based on 15 medium-term objectives or expected accomplishments that contribute to the realization of the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. These are the longer-term transitions beyond the Common Approach's direct outcomes and should be pursued in partnership with Government, business and civil society. They set the overall strategic intent of the Common Approach, and each contributes to at least one of the impact areas, which are required to live in harmony with nature.

Figure II

Structure of the Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery



II. Impact areas of the Common Approach: creating long-term change

A. Human rights, peaceful societies and planetary stability

8. **Objective 1: human rights, including the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, are protected and can be exercised.**⁷ The substantive elements of this right include a stable climate,⁸ safe water and sanitation, clean air, soils and water, healthy, nutritious and sustainably produced food, healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and participation, access to information and access to justice in environmental matters. The fulfilment of the rights of individuals and peoples in vulnerable situations is essential for designing fair and effective actions to use, conserve and restore nature. It includes protecting and promoting the rights enshrined

⁷ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment ([A/HRC/43/53](#)).

⁸ Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), addressing gender differences in vulnerability and roles and gender inequalities in resource access and rights and capacity for decision-making and ensuring the rights of children, youth and future generations to enjoy a healthy natural world. Protecting environmental human rights defenders and activists contributes to fulfilling the right to a healthy environment. Under the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, businesses also have a responsibility to respect human rights.

9. Objective 2: persons, groups and people in vulnerable situations, particularly those who rely on natural resources for subsistence and cultural identity and those who are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation,⁹ are prioritized.¹⁰ The areas projected to experience significant negative effects from global environmental change are often home to indigenous peoples, local communities and persons living in poverty. Indigenous peoples,¹¹ for instance, are already facing several socioeconomic and environmental challenges because of historical inequities and discrimination and are nearly three times more likely to be in extreme poverty compared with their non-indigenous counterparts.^{12,13} Weakened coping mechanisms and resilience are linked to conflict and migration (and vice versa) in the face of environmental change.¹⁴

10. Objective 3: a One Health approach is implemented, and the interconnections among people, animals and ecosystems are recognized. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic reinforce the need for scaling up investments that focus on the root causes of zoonotic infectious disease emergence and spread, including wildlife trafficking and the introduction of illegally sourced species into legal value chains, while preventing possible future outbreaks.^{15,16} Effectively managing major health risks that affect people and animals (livestock and wildlife) requires a systems perspective on the human-animal-ecosystem interface and the addressing of disease dynamics in the broader context of systemic risk. These dynamics are affected by consumption of and trade in species, natural resources management and other socioeconomic and cultural factors such as agriculture, tourism and urban expansion. Sustainable urban and regional planning can lower the rates of interspecies conflict at the frontiers of cities – and thus the transmission of zoonotic diseases – while reducing emissions, lowering air pollution levels and improving human health overall.

⁹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (Bonn, Germany, 2019).

¹⁰ This is consistent with the universal values of the 2030 Agenda, specifically the principle of leaving no one behind.

¹¹ See also United Nations, CEB, “Building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with indigenous peoples: a call to action” (November 2020).

¹² Indigenous peoples might be forced to migrate away from their traditional lands owing to environmental impacts, and may face double discrimination in their host communities, as migrants and as indigenous people. See also ILO, *Implementing the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No. 169: Towards an Inclusive, Sustainable and Just Future* (Geneva, 2019).

¹³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Indigenous Peoples, “Climate change”.

¹⁴ United Nations, “Climate change ‘biggest threat modern humans have ever faced’, world-renowned naturalist tells Security Council, calls for greater global cooperation”, press release SC/14445, 23 February 2021.

¹⁵ UNEP and International Livestock Research Institute, *Preventing the Next Pandemic: Zoonotic Diseases and How to Break the Chain of Transmission* (Nairobi, 2020).

¹⁶ An integrated approach such as the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) initiative of the International Atomic Energy Agency is important for strengthening preparedness and capabilities that prevent the origin and spread of pandemics.

11. **Objective 4: nature is conserved and restored, while nature-based solutions for disaster risk reduction¹⁷ and climate action¹⁸ are accelerated.** Nature conservation and ecosystem restoration provide a range of direct benefits for communities, local authorities and the private sector, including creating jobs and reducing exposure by bolstering livelihood options and reducing vulnerability. It is critical to ensure that those benefits can be realized by all, with fair and equitable access, in addition to those benefits derived from genetic resources. Indigenous peoples and local communities are rights holders and indispensable leaders and participants, providing knowledge and tools to promote proactive management, sustainable use, conservation and the restoration of natural ecosystem services and biodiversity. Integrating nature-based solutions as instruments of city planning and community resilience offer multiple co-benefits, including reduced spatial inequality and unequal exposure to extreme weather events and sea level rise among vulnerable local populations.

12. **Objective 5: the links between biological and cultural diversity are recognized and the protection of sites of international importance for biological and cultural diversity is enhanced.** The diverse values of nature and the relationship between biological and human cultural diversity are better understood and reflected in policy and action, including those aimed at building solidarity and collective action between different stakeholder groups. Enhancing lifelong learning, education and skills on environmental issues and stewardship is the best long-term route to transforming how people interact with nature, while ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth.

B. A green and inclusive economic recovery

13. **Objective 6: public and private finance and investments, especially those mobilized to respond to the crisis induced by COVID-19, accelerate green, just and inclusive socioeconomic transitions, including from the informal to the formal economy.** Public investment, including repurposing harmful subsidies, along with tax policies, regulations and incentives can increase private investment in green and blue economic strategies, creating decent job opportunities while strengthening planetary stability.¹⁹ The United Nations can shape the discourse of how current financial flows – whether in the form of public expenditure such as subsidies, capital investments or line budgets or in the form of private sector finance, such as private investment, banking, loans or insurance – can prevent or account for the negative impacts on nature, and at the same time increase the flow of finance for nature-positive investments.²⁰

14. **Objective 7: sustainable consumption, including sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods,²¹ is promoted, inequalities are eliminated and biodiversity loss is halted.** Global consumption patterns, characterized by short-term interests,

¹⁷ See United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, *Ecosystem-Based Disaster Risk Reduction: Implementing Nature-based Solutions for Resilience* (Bangkok, 2020); and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, *Words Into Action: Nature-based Solutions for Disaster Risk Reduction* (Geneva, 2021).

¹⁸ Valerie Kapos and others, *The Role of the Natural Environment in Adaptation*, Background Paper (Rotterdam, Netherlands, and Washington, D.C., Global Commission on Adaptation, 2019).

¹⁹ See International Recovery Platform, *Practical Lessons for Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic: Principles for Recovery* (Kobe, Japan, 2020).

²⁰ For example, although nature provides up to 38 per cent of climate-mitigation solutions, nature-based climate solutions receive only 3 per cent of global climate finance. Global climate finance from the public and private sectors in the period 2017–2018 hit \$579 billion, while global biodiversity finance currently averages between \$78 billion and \$91 billion a year.

²¹ See, for example, the Sustainable Lifestyles and Education Programme of the One Planet network.

insufficient transparency of supply chains and a lack of consumer awareness, are manifestations of the indirect drivers²² of the continued loss of biodiversity and are unsustainable. Consumption patterns drive trade in materials and goods, through which environmental and health impacts from the consuming high-income countries are displaced to middle- and low-income countries. However, sustainable and legal trade can provide income opportunities and incentives for conservation. Per capita impacts caused by consumption in high-income countries are between three and six times larger than those of low-income countries.²³ To make consumption sustainable, the loops of materials and reuse, redesign and recycle need to be closed. Effective urban waste management can prevent ocean pollution (including plastic) and lower the level of organic matter in landfills, thus significantly reducing methane emissions.

15. Objective 8: material-intensive socioeconomic production systems²⁴ are transformed to create better outcomes for people and nature, while meeting increased demand for resources and materials. Governments, businesses, workers and consumers can encourage and influence markets' transition to sustainable production patterns by requesting improvements in how they source and regenerate, process, transport, trade and use natural resources, and how the resulting waste is minimized, recycled or disposed of. These production systems are both predetermined by and create spatial patterns for transportation routes, infrastructure and urban areas. To reduce the extraction of new resources, circular economy approaches provide the tools for a system redesign, starting with planning for a long life of materials. Technical solutions exist, but they require cultural and behavioural changes to be applied at scale.

16. Objective 9: sustainable and secure food systems are ensured through urgent action by all actors. Food systems are associated with many of the direct drivers of biodiversity loss, through land-use change, large-scale monoculture of a handful of major food crops at the expense of large numbers of underutilized crops, overexploitation of fisheries, impacts of excess nutrients, use of chemicals, food waste and loss, and generation of greenhouse gases. The social and economic disruption caused by the pandemic has also affected food systems.²⁵ With 3 billion people directly dependent on agriculture, forests and fisheries for food, jobs and livelihoods, diversity in production systems is important for resilience, health, nutrition and the associated biodiversity providing the ecosystem services that support agricultural production. There is an urgent need to mainstream biodiversity across food policies and practices at all levels and to develop long-term strategies addressing the sustainability challenges faced by actors across food systems.

17. Objective 10: markets and economic and financial practices are fundamentally reformed and use metrics for Governments, the private sector and society to measure progress towards sustainable development, supported by strengthened regulations to conserve and restore natural capital.²⁶ In the

²² Categorized as demographic and sociocultural, economic and technological, institutions and governance, and conflicts and epidemics in the *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services).

²³ International Resource Panel, *Global Resources Outlook 2019: Natural Resources for the Future We Want* (Nairobi. UNEP, 2019).

²⁴ Food, land and ocean use; energy and extractives; and infrastructure and the built environment (World Economic Forum, *The Future of Nature and Business*, New Nature Economy Report II (Geneva, 2020).

²⁵ ILO, "Impact of COVID-19 on people's livelihoods, their health and our food systems", joint statement by ILO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Health Organization, 13 October 2020.

²⁶ United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, HM Treasury, *The Dasgupta Review: Independent Review on the Economics of Biodiversity – Interim Report* (London, April 2020).

post-2020 global biodiversity framework, Governments are called upon to make the ecological foundation of economies central to development and fiscal planning. In the *Human Development Report 2020*,²⁷ it is argued that, as people and planet enter an entirely new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, or the age of humans, it is time for all countries to redesign their paths to progress by fully accounting for the dangerous pressures that humans put on the planet and working towards human activities generating a net positive effect on nature.

C. Strengthened institutions, accountability and justice

18. Objective 11: institutional capacity is supported to plan and pursue integrated solutions to reverse biodiversity loss and accelerate progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Sectoral policies and measures often fail to account for indirect, distant and cumulative biodiversity impacts in a globalized world, which can have adverse effects, including the exacerbation of inequalities.²⁸ Institutional capacity and social dialogue are needed to pursue integrated solutions to complex issues such as food security, land and water use, health and migration. They require integrated and holistic policies and strategies on climate change, disaster risk reduction and biodiversity for decent jobs, social resilience, sustainable economic development and trade, peace and conflict prevention. Many of the Sustainable Development Goals, even those that do not mention the environment explicitly, will be achieved only if there is substantial progress on environmental management, rule of law and governance.

19. Objective 12: safeguards on biodiversity and the integrity of all ecosystems are implemented, sectoral and national accountability is clarified, and monitoring of and reporting on environmental obligations are fulfilled. National institutions are supported to operationalize strengthened systems within and across all productive and consumptive sectors (including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, tourism, infrastructure and the built environment), with the aim of halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity, creating sustainable economic models and reducing the risk of emerging zoonotic diseases.

20. Objective 13: environmental rule of law²⁹ and procedural rights on access to information and justice are promoted, and meaningful participation in environmental decision-making is enabled. Environmental rule of law is a cornerstone of human health and welfare and serves to create an expectation of compliance with environmental law coordinated between Government, the private sector and civil society. It ensures adherence to the standards, procedures and approaches set forth in these laws to ensure a safe and stable climate and a healthy environment within and among countries.

21. Objective 14: criminal justice and anti-corruption measures in relation to environment-related crimes are strengthened as an essential part of the integrated solutions to protecting biodiversity. Strengthening justice system measures can address a variety of trafficking and economic crimes, contribute to reversing negative trends in biodiversity loss and mainstream preventive approaches into national and international biodiversity management. Justice and accountability measures can protect environmental human rights defenders from threats related to their efforts to preserve their lands and communities.

²⁷ UNDP, *The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene* (New York, 2020).

²⁸ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*.

²⁹ UNEP, *Environmental Rule of Law: First Global Report* (Nairobi, 2019).

22. **Objective 15: advanced digital information and communications technologies (ICTs) are deployed to ensure open access to and equitable coverage of data and repositories.** Working in partnership with public and private actors, open access policies for biodiversity data are promoted, bringing innovation in monitoring environmental change and protecting biodiversity. This would provide data, information and tools for decision makers and citizens while increasing accountability and transparency. International standards can be leveraged to ensure that ICTs are deployed in a safe, sustainable and environmentally sound manner, without affecting biodiversity itself.³⁰ ICTs also support educational programmes and citizen-science activities on nature and sustainability, building capacity to analyse and interpret environmental data.

III. Outcomes of the Common Approach: delivered through collaboration

23. Coherent action by United Nations system entities can drive solutions towards the impact areas of the Common Approach (human rights, peaceful societies and planetary stability; a green and inclusive economic recovery; and strengthened institutions, accountability and justice). Together with Member States, business and social partners, academia and civil society, the United Nations can build on existing initiatives with major groups and forge new collaborations to address broader sustainable development-related risks and opportunities by taking on board the connections between nature, society and the economy.³¹

24. United Nations system entities have identified existing actions and potential opportunities for greater collaboration and practical interventions that can be pursued jointly as part of the Common Approach. The living compendium entitled “50+ ways to integrate biodiversity and nature-based solutions” is the United Nations system commitment to collective action for people and planet (available at <https://unsceb.org/un-common-approach-biodiversity>). The compendium maps some of the practical interventions that can be designed with key partners and stakeholders and tailored to regional and national contexts to bring about change. The sum of these actions will help deliver the outcomes set out below at the global, regional and national levels and will contribute to achieve the medium-term objectives of the Common Approach.

A. Global advocacy and normative frameworks

25. **Outcome 1: United Nations system entities demonstrate leadership on biodiversity and promote strong commitments for nature.** In the run-up to and adoption and subsequent implementation phase of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, United Nations system entities individually and collectively align with the strategic intent of the Common Approach. By harnessing the power of United Nations-convened coalitions³² or multi-stakeholder advocacy platforms,³³ the United Nations system can advocate for whole-of-society and whole-of-Government

³⁰ See the recommendations developed by study group 5 of the International Telecommunication Union (available from www.itu.int/ITU-T/recommendations/index_sg.aspx?sg=5).

³¹ This is in line with Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development).

³² Such as the Coalition for Nature led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNEP.

³³ Such as the Sharm el-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People, the Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments, the Sustainable Development Goals action zone and the Global Climate Action portal.

approaches to take urgent action to avert, mitigate and address climate- and nature-related risks and promote nature-based solutions for sustainability.

26. **Outcome 2: the United Nations system delivers unified communications campaigns to mobilize demand for global action for nature.** Collective action can reach a wide variety of audiences and beneficiaries among Governments, businesses and civil society to promote awareness about biodiversity and nature, and drive public demand to shift national and sectoral policies, as well as business and consumer practices. Global communication and mobilization initiatives – for example, the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Family Farming and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development – can integrate climate action and biodiversity messaging to drive the social, economic and governance transformations outlined in section II above.

27. **Outcome 3: through initiatives such as the common agenda, the United Nations system convenes dialogues on systemic challenges that can be addressed only through multilateral action.** These initiatives could include advancing norms and standards for international systems of environmental and financial accounting and transparency for public and private sector performance and metrics for measuring human and planetary well-being. They could focus on creating critical mass in governance and market instruments that redirect unsustainable production and consumption subsidies for fossil fuels, as well as agriculture, fisheries and the food sector, towards procurement, investment, banking and insurance policies that help to transform the climate and nature-related footprint of business-as-usual practices.

28. **Outcome 4: “The highest aspiration: a call to action for human rights” is implemented to support action on biodiversity.** The call to action demands United Nations system support to, inter alia, promote the human right to a healthy environment, ensure the protection of environmental human rights defenders, increase education, lifelong learning and capacity-building related to the environment, improve regulatory frameworks and economic policies for sustainable businesses, ensure the meaningful and informed participation of all stakeholders, including women, girls and youth, in environmental decision-making, and support access to justice and effective remedies for environmental harms.

29. **Outcome 5: United Nations system entities collaborate with partners to provide data for insight, impact and integrity, aligned with the Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere.** The ambition is to improve the integration of biodiversity analytics into the data infrastructure of the United Nations system, multilateral environmental agreements and wider global digital ecosystems for the planet, ensuring that key data, tools and other digital public goods become more solution-driven and easily usable by key decision makers. This will help amplify the use of biodiversity data for decision-making within United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery, as well as by a range of decision makers in the public and private sectors.

B. Regional collaboration

30. **Outcome 6: the United Nations regional mechanisms foster collaboration within and between regions to address biodiversity-related challenges that transcend borders.** Collective, issue-based actions and knowledge-management platforms at the regional level can pool global knowledge and expertise that are relevant to the specific regional context, broker cross-sectoral and multi-country and multi-regional solutions and enable progress on nexus issues that cannot be addressed on a country-by-country basis.

31. **Outcome 7: Member States are supported to position regional and national priorities in biodiversity-related multilateral negotiations and processes.** The United Nations regional collaborative platforms, issue-based coalitions and other regional mechanisms and forums, especially the regional forums for sustainable development and regional forums of ministers (of environment and other sectors) all provide opportunities to discuss action on biodiversity loss. These mechanisms and forums can serve as a platform for the design of, follow-up to and monitoring of regional plans and priorities and the implementation of global agreements. The regional level is a vital bridge to both the global level and the national level and provides a platform to engage on the management of the global environmental commons, its linkages to transboundary or multi-country challenges, regional human rights mechanisms and relevant regional law.³⁴

32. **Outcome 8: regional development banks are engaged to integrate biodiversity conservation and nature-based solutions into economic models and design incentives and policies for investment in ecological and social sustainability.** Scenario analysis and futures and foresight thinking and approaches could be used to engage clients and explore alternative pathways for, for example, infrastructure development, taking into consideration climate change scenarios, disaster risk considerations, social impacts, environmental degradation and the restoration of ecological infrastructure for adaptation. Financial institutions could develop blended public-private approaches that share the costs and benefits of investing in sustainable infrastructure.

C. National implementation³⁵

33. **Outcome 9: resident coordinators and United Nations country teams support Member States to implement multilateral environmental agreement decisions³⁶ through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and COVID-19 socioeconomic response plans.³⁷** A mainstreaming approach is needed that promotes a shift away from minimizing the harm of activities that deplete biodiversity towards proactive support for green economy decent jobs, ecosystem resilience³⁸ and the reduction of disaster risks, including those related to pandemics. The decisions of the conferences of the parties to the biodiversity-related conventions and members of other biodiversity-related agreements require robust systems for planning,³⁹ convening multi-stakeholder processes and brokering cross-sectoral and multi-institutional cooperation and partnerships, creating policy

³⁴ For example, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement) and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

³⁵ Including advocacy, coordination, policy and programming support at the national level, in line with the three impact areas of the Common Approach.

³⁶ Including relevant global goals and targets, such as the global forest goals of the United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017–2030.

³⁷ This includes recommendations from the human rights treaty bodies, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the universal periodic review.

³⁸ For more information, see Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *The IPBES Guide on the Production of Assessments* (Bonn, Germany, 2018).

³⁹ Guidance and tools similar to the United Nations Common Approach to Resilience (available at <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/un-common-guidance-resilience>) could be developed to support United Nations country teams.

instruments and legislation and developing capacities for monitoring and reporting systems.⁴⁰

34. Outcome 10: resident coordinators and United Nations country teams support the inclusion of biodiversity and nature-based solutions in integrated national financing frameworks. United Nations entities can support country access to resources to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the nature-dependent elements of the Sustainable Development Goals, including through existing multilateral mechanisms⁴¹ and joint programmes. Mobilizing public and private, domestic and international resources can create blended finance options to mitigate the negative distribution effects in the early years of a longer-term transformation of the economy.⁴²

35. Outcome 11: United Nations country teams promote environmental and intergenerational justice as an integral part of United Nations advocacy on human rights, rule of law and governance. Cross-sectoral approaches are needed that support dialogue among resource-related ministries, gender and human rights institutions, the criminal justice system, anti-corruption authorities and fiscal authorities. Cooperation across disciplines highlights that all have a role to play and requires coherent policies, tools and capacity to respond to the biodiversity and climate agendas. Recognition and protection of the individual and collective rights to lands, resources, knowledge and territories of those most affected by environmental harms can have positive effects for both people and planet.

36. Outcome 12: United Nations country teams facilitate inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships and promote networking to resolve development conflicts, nexus issues and landscape- and seascape-level challenges in a transparent and equitable manner. There is an urgent need to better protect the individual and collective rights of all persons and groups in ways that allow them to more equitably benefit from nature and ecosystem services and sustainable economies. United Nations country teams should take measures to empower and protect people, particularly environmental human rights defenders, to meaningfully participate in development matters and access justice for environmental harms without fear of reprisal. Effective approaches are needed to recognize stewardship, address the role of criminal organizations and corruption, harmonize policies across sectors and coordinate action across jurisdictions, and thus account for ecological and social differences across landscapes.

⁴⁰ For example, the section on leaving no one behind of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework would identify the groups and ecosystems most vulnerable to the loss of biodiversity; the economic transformation section would include impact and dependency analysis of economic sectors and ecosystem services; the human rights section would look at environmental rights and environmental human rights defenders; ecosystem state and trends might feature in the risk analysis, transboundary analysis or cross-pillar analysis sections; and green and sustainable financing options might be included in the Sustainable Development Goals financing analysis section.

⁴¹ Existing mechanisms include the Global Mechanism established under article 21 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, to assist countries in the mobilization of financial resources to implement the Convention and address desertification, land degradation and drought. Moreover, the United Nations Forum on Forests carries out its forest financing activities through the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network.

⁴² International Resource Panel, *Global Resources Outlook 2019*.

IV. Accountability: coherent and collective action on biodiversity

37. The Common Approach and actions for nature will be implemented by the collaborative efforts of relevant United Nations entities at the global, regional and national levels, taking into consideration the strengths and mandate of each entity on the basis of the impact areas, together with relevant inter-agency mechanisms and partnerships, including those that are operationally oriented or mandated. Coherent and collective action, grounded in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, will have a strong foundation in evidence and knowledge, providing an effective science-policy-practice continuum for United Nations programming on biodiversity at all levels.

A. Internal policy alignment and coherence

38. **Output 1: the United Nations system can prove its commitment to biodiversity and nature-based solutions through its corporate behaviour.** Phase I (environmental sustainability in the area of management) of the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030⁴³ commits United Nations entities to a set of corporate environmental objectives, including the mainstreaming and disclosure of performance on biodiversity-related measures for its facilities and operational portfolio. Following the mitigation hierarchy, United Nations entities need to assess the potential impact of their corporate choices on biodiversity and offset unavoidable and complex adverse impacts. Where possible and with reasonable resources, this should be complemented by on-site and off-site ecological enhancement, including through seeking nature-based solutions to improve the Organization’s overall footprint.

39. Taking advantage of existing and relevant interagency networks, United Nations entities could jointly develop targeted biodiversity guidance for specific management functions, training and capacity-building, as well as a best practices exchange system. In the context of the reforms, and with the goal of showing the leadership of the United Nations on the ground, resident coordinators can promote biodiversity, and other environmental considerations can be integrated into the business operations strategy and enterprise risk management to support the work of United Nations country teams.

40. **Output 2: the United Nations system needs to lead by example in its policy, programme planning and implementation.** In implementing the Common Approach, United Nations entities can build on the model approach to environmental and social standards in United Nations programming and on phase II of the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030, which is currently under development and will expand environmental and social sustainability requirements to United Nations programme planning and implementation.

B. Align current resources and mobilize additional joint financing

41. **Output 3: United Nations entities can review their current programming and resources to ensure that operations integrate biodiversity and nature-based solutions, prevent or account for negative impacts and do not exacerbate and accelerate biodiversity loss.** United Nations entities can also help to drive biodiversity-friendly investment and avoid silo approaches by redirecting their financial flows towards more environment- and people-friendly outcomes.

⁴³ CEB/2019/1/Add.1.

42. **Output 4: collaborative efforts can support the creation and capitalization of new pooled funding mechanisms for joint programming needed to restore the relationship to biodiversity and ecosystem services at scale.** For instance, a multi-partner trust fund could be created and/or new windows could be embedded in existing funds. This would highlight biodiversity's underpinning value for sustainable development and harness the potential of United Nations collective action. The appropriate standards aligned with the model approach to environmental and social standards are to apply to all funding.

C. Exchange knowledge needed to identify, prioritize, scale up and accelerate action

43. **Output 5: working together, United Nations system data, knowledge and expertise can be leveraged at all levels to provide capacity-building in support of the implementation of Member States' obligations and commitments, post-pandemic recovery plans and the biodiversity-dependent elements of the Sustainable Development Goals.** For example, a series of thematic webinars and training seminars could be supported by the United Nations Environment Management Group and other entities to raise awareness of biodiversity linkages to the key areas of work of the United Nations development system.

44. **Output 6: knowledge-sharing through the United Nations regional mechanisms, notably regional collaborative platforms, regional issue-based coalitions and regional peer support groups.** This can strengthen intraregional advocacy, engagement and technical work on issues such as environmental degradation, climate resilience and migration. Increased collaboration within and among the United Nations regional mechanisms can increase the visibility of biodiversity and nature-based solutions for the resident coordinator offices and United Nations country teams, while also drawing on and informing global-level United Nations collaboration.

45. **Output 7: greater engagement with and visibility of biodiversity in existing global coordination mechanisms.** Mechanisms such as the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism on All Freshwater Related Issues, Including Sanitation (UN-Water), the inter-agency coordination mechanism on oceans and coastal issues (UN-Oceans), UN-Energy, UN-Nutrition, the United Nations Environment Management Group, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, as well as specialized data platforms such as integrated biodiversity assessment tools,⁴⁴ the United Nations Biodiversity Lab, the System of Environmental Economic Accounting Ecosystem Accounting, the Sustainable Development Goal 6 Global Acceleration Framework and the Adaptation Knowledge Portal, can support interdisciplinary knowledge development and information exchange to identify and document best practices and accelerate cross-sectoral and cross-country solutions.

D. Coordinate outreach and communications efforts

46. **Output 8: United Nations entities can contribute to and use coherent narratives during the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Family Farming and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for**

⁴⁴ For example, the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool and the Biodiversity Integrated Assessment and Computation Tool.

Sustainable Development. Common narratives can articulate the science-policy-practice linkages to inspire nature-positive actions. Joint advocacy should inform post-COVID-19 recovery agendas, provide evidence of how biodiversity underpins the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals and focus on the material and non-material benefits that taking action have on the economy and trade. Combined efforts are needed to engage institutions from public, private and civil society sectors beyond the environment and conservation sectors.

47. **Output 9: United Nations entities can coordinate efforts to capitalize on the political leadership, key outcomes and messages of the summit on biodiversity held in September 2020.** Outputs could include broadening political support for the climate action and biodiversity agendas across the constituencies of United Nations entities, securing the ambitious policies and targets, and creating momentum and capacity for implementation. The United Nations system can convene high-level dialogues on the nexus of biodiversity, climate change and justice system agendas to develop inclusive and multi-governance approaches.

V. Reporting

48. It is recognized that United Nations system entities have individual reporting obligations on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and, where relevant, their contribution to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. These measures of support and progress are also collated and reported on collectively, as well as in the context of other United Nations system-wide strategies and action plans.

49. Providing evidence of the implementation of the Common Approach can draw on existing reporting and include a limited number of measurable targets and associated indicators, while helping United Nations entities to accomplish their strategies, programmes of work and corporate environmental sustainability. To this end, existing United Nations system reporting mechanisms should increasingly take into consideration biodiversity-related targets and indicators.

50. In its resolution [75/233](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue working towards the development of a common approach to integrating biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery. Tracking United Nations system support to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda can be done through the UN-Info system at the country level and the regional collaborative platforms at the regional level.

51. To monitor the progress achieved in creating coherent and collective actions on biodiversity and nature-based solutions in the United Nations system, it is proposed that the United Nations Environment Management Group identifies a limited number of measurable targets and related indicators on the basis of existing reporting mechanisms and compiles a midterm and final report on the implementation of the Common Approach at the global level. This information will contribute to the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/233](#).

52. Taking advantage of existing and relevant interagency networks (such as the Task Team on Common Premises and the Procurement Network of the High-level Committee on Management), United Nations entities could jointly develop targeted biodiversity guidance for specific management functions, training and capacity-building, a best practices exchange system and a common set of reporting indicators to track progress against the objectives of the Common Approach and the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030.

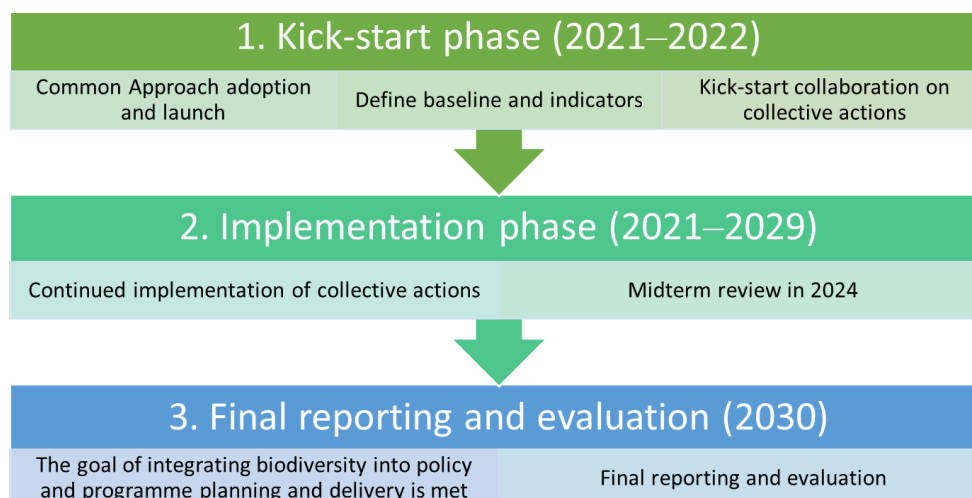
53. Reporting on the integration of biodiversity into corporate management could be launched as part of the Greening the Blue reporting exercise that highlights United Nations progress against its corporate environmental sustainability requirements. Through the Sustainable United Nations facility, United Nations entities could develop a common set of reporting indicators to track progress against the joint objectives of the Common Approach and the Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System, 2020–2030.

VI. Timeline

54. The Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery is aligned with the United Nations decades and the intended timeline of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, with launch and implementation foreseen for the period 2021–2030. Milestones for 2021 include adoption by CEB, the development of indicators and the public launch of the Common Approach at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international forums. A midterm review is proposed for 2024 (see fig. III).

Figure III

Proposed timeline for the Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery



VII. Conclusion

55. The United Nations system has an extraordinary reach to engage national Governments and stakeholders and enormous potential to orchestrate collective action with impact for people, planet and prosperity. Through more strategic collaboration, it can draw on the expertise of individual funds, programmes and agencies, and leverage the collective efforts of the United Nations system to provide further impetus to the COVID-19 response. While shifting away from activities that deplete biodiversity and towards those supporting ecosystem resilience and providing opportunities for nature-positive development pathways, the United Nations system could also help to bring awareness of the system risks involved with nature loss and promote measures to reduce the risks of future pandemics.

56. The Common Approach will enable United Nations system entities to align their efforts on the multitude of practical activities that contribute to sustainably using, restoring and safeguarding biodiversity, and which are required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. By doing so, it will ensure integrated policy advice and more coherent support to Member States in their efforts to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the 2030 Agenda.

Annex I

Glossary

- biodiversity:** the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (Convention on Biological Diversity, art. 2).
- circular economy:** an economy closing the loop between different life cycles through design and corporate actions and practices that enable recycling and reuse in order to use raw materials, goods and waste in a more efficient way. The circular economy concept distinguishes between technical and biological cycles and is a continuous, positive development cycle. It preserves and enhances natural capital, optimizes resource yields and minimizes system risks by managing finite stocks and renewable flows, while reducing waste streams (International Telecommunication Union, recommendation ITU-T L.1023).
- nature:** the natural world, with an emphasis on biodiversity. Within the context of science, it includes categories such as biodiversity, ecosystems, ecosystem functioning, evolution, the biosphere, humankind’s shared evolutionary heritage, and biocultural diversity. Within the context of other knowledge systems, it includes categories such as Mother Earth and systems of life. Nature contributes to societies through the provision of contributions to people (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (Bonn, Germany, 2019)).
- natural capital:** another term for the stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources on Earth (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils and minerals) that combine to yield a flow of benefits or “services” to people. These flows can be ecosystem services or abiotic services, which provide value to business and to society. Ecosystem services are the benefits to people from ecosystems, such as timber, fibre, pollination, water regulation, climate regulation, recreation and mental health. Abiotic services are benefits to people that do not depend on ecological processes but arise from fundamental geological processes and include the supply of minerals, metals, and oil and gas, as well as geothermal heat, wind, tides and the annual seasons. Biodiversity is critical to the health and stability of natural capital as it provides resilience to shocks like floods and droughts and supports fundamental processes such as the carbon and water cycles, as well as soil formation. Therefore, biodiversity is a part of natural capital and also underpins ecosystem services (Natural Capital Coalition, *Natural Capital Protocol* (2016)).
- nature-based solutions:** there is no internationally agreed definition of nature-based solutions. The following definition has been developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources: actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits (World Conservation Congress resolution WCC-2016-Res-069).

- One Health:** an approach to designing and implementing programmes, policies, legislation and research in which multiple sectors communicate and work together to achieve better public health outcomes. Many of the same microbes infect animals and humans, as they share the ecosystems they live in. Efforts by just one sector cannot prevent or eliminate the problem. The areas of work in which a One Health approach is particularly relevant include food safety, the control of zoonosis (diseases that can spread between animals and humans, such as flu, rabies and Rift Valley Fever), and combating antibiotic resistance (when bacteria change after being exposed to antibiotics and become more difficult to treat) (World Health Organization, “One Health” (21 September 2017)).
- pandemics:** pandemics have their origins in diverse microbes carried by animal reservoirs, but their emergence is driven entirely by human activities. The underlying causes of pandemics are the same global environmental changes that drive biodiversity loss and climate change. These include land use change, agricultural expansion and intensification, and wildlife trade and consumption. These drivers of change bring wildlife, livestock and people into closer contact, allowing animal microbes to move into people and lead to infections, sometimes outbreaks, and more rarely into true pandemics that spread through road networks, urban centres, global travel and trade routes. The recent exponential rise in consumption and trade, driven by demand in developed countries and emerging economies, as well as by demographic pressure, has led to a series of emerging diseases that originate mainly in biodiverse developing countries, driven by global consumption patterns (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Workshop on Biodiversity and Pandemics: Workshop Report* (Bonn, Germany, 2020)).

Annex II

Current status of and trends in biodiversity: it is time to restore the relationship with nature

1. Biodiversity underpins the lives and well-being of humans. It provides multiple essential benefits, including food security, clean water, prevention and cure of diseases, resilience in the face of climate change and changing societal demands and protection from extreme events and disasters, for all people. It ensures sustainable livelihoods and supports 1.2 billion jobs directly and many more indirectly,¹ with half of the world's global economy being moderately to highly dependent on functioning ecosystems.² It is also intrinsically linked with cultural diversity and spiritual, physical and psychological well-being.

2. From a scientific standpoint, it has been confirmed that countries have failed to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which suggests a lack of progress toward sustainability. Global ambition to address the three pillars of sustainable development is limited by siloed approaches, where the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services are largely unaccounted and disconnected from socioeconomic priorities.³ Biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation jeopardize the effective enjoyment of human rights and progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. The world is facing a complex crisis related to biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution. Biodiversity is in alarming decline around the world, with 1 million species at risk of extinction, 2 billion hectares of land degraded, two thirds of the ocean adversely affected by human disturbance⁴ and an estimated 420 million hectares of forests lost worldwide through deforestation since 1990.⁵ Human activities associated with unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and biodiversity loss. The latest global scientific assessment identifies land- and sea-use change, caused particularly by agricultural expansion and rapid urbanization, as the key driver of biodiversity loss, together with direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species.⁶

4. Environmental degradation affects individuals and groups in differentiated ways⁷ and typically places a disproportionate burden on women and girls, with more severe impacts felt by those in marginalized and vulnerable populations or locations. Unequal exposure occurs not only between, but also within, countries and at more granular scales such as among neighbourhoods in urban areas. Climate change and natural disasters can exacerbate threats that force people to flee within their countries or across international borders. The interplay between climate, conflict, hunger,

¹ International Labour Organization (ILO), *Greening with Jobs: World Economic and Social Outlook 2018* (Geneva, 2018).

² World Economic Forum, "Nature risk rising: why the crisis engulfing nature matters for business and the economy", *New Nature Economy Series* (Geneva, 2020).

³ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, "Global biodiversity outlook 5: summary for policy-makers" (Montreal, 2020).

⁴ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* (Bonn, Germany, 2019).

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Global Forest Resources Assessment* (Rome, 2020).

⁶ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*.

⁷ See also ILO, "Persons with disabilities in a just transition to a low-carbon economy", Policy Brief (Geneva, 2019); and ILO, "Gender, labour and a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all" (Geneva, 2017).

poverty and persecution creates increasingly complex emergencies. For example, food insecurity may become a major driver of conflicts and displacement.⁸

5. The realization of human rights, including the human right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, support for sustainable development and protection of the environment go together. Efforts to reduce poverty, increase resilience and reduce displacement should leave no one behind, including those located in semi-arid and arid lands, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries. It is anticipated that failing to act now on long-term environmental risks will increase societal inequality and fragmentation and bring about dramatic consequences.

6. It is not too late to halt and reverse the decline of biodiversity and ecosystems. During the summit on biodiversity held in 2020, global leaders reiterated their commitments to develop an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in 2021. Bold leadership and urgent actions across the whole of government and society, together with an inclusive and networked multigovernance approach, are needed. Such actions can address the direct and underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystems, while shifting the course towards a nature-positive future.

7. Our economic recovery path must lead to a transformation of society's relationship with nature. The protection and sustainable use of biodiversity must be integrated into policies that will guide post-pandemic economic and development recovery and building-forward plans. The tools, instruments and knowledge are at hand, but will require clear and commensurate investments in nature. This means shifting investments and practices in all sectors to reflect and account for their impacts and dependencies on biodiversity and ecosystem services and prioritizing systemic transitions that work with and not against nature, and leave no one behind. An investment in the health of the planet is an essential investment in everyone's future.

8. The social consequences of the losses described above could be turned into opportunities to create decent jobs that enhance ecological integrity, economic prosperity and social well-being. The required economic transformation must include changing societal perceptions towards valuing and conserving biodiversity through public outreach and education, as societies cannot transform if what and how people learn remain the same. In the world of work, through which most people continue their learning and make their contribution to society, skills for a greener future remain a priority. This ranges from accelerating the transformation of the energy and other extractive sectors to creating resilience through natural resource management and ecosystem restoration.

9. The coming decade represents the last chance to take the measures needed to ensure a healthy and prosperous future for people and planet.⁹

⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2019* (Copenhagen, 2020).

⁹ Key message from the biodiversity summit.

Annex III

Context of the Common Approach to Integrating Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Development into United Nations Policy and Programme Planning and Delivery

1. In March 2020, the Secretary-General called upon the United Nations system to mainstream and integrate biodiversity into key areas, engage in cross-agency collaboration and enhance United Nations communications and advocacy.¹ At its meeting on 14 May 2020, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination underscored the need for a stronger focus on nature across the United Nations system and tasked its High-level Committee on Programmes with developing a common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions² for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery.

2. The United Nations system supports parties to multilateral environmental agreements, such as the biodiversity-related conventions and agreements, as well as other relevant multilateral frameworks, and the United Nations goals and targets, which provide a critical component of international cooperation and governance. The widespread adoption, funding and implementation of these multilateral frameworks provide a pathway to address global challenges and promote fairness, human rights protection, navigating common obstacles and compensating for unequal burdens, responsibilities and capabilities.

3. The decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, will engage the global community to accelerate the delivery of agreed international goals and achieve progress towards inclusive sustainable development. The United Nations decades provide opportunities across the United Nations system for coordinated planning, implementation and monitoring, joint advocacy, scaling up financing and innovative sources of funding, generation and exchange of knowledge and resources, and inclusive, multi-stakeholder dialogues, partnerships and networks.

4. Furthermore, in the context of the reform of the United Nations development system, the General Assembly, in its resolution [75/233](#), on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, called upon the entities of the United Nations development system to continue to provide evidence-based and integrated policy advice and programmatic support to help countries in the implementation of, follow-up to and reporting on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Emphasis was placed on mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans, including by promoting sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection, and ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

5. Also in its resolution [75/233](#), the General Assembly called upon the entities of the United Nations development system to: (a) adopt and mainstream a more climate- and environment-responsive approach into their programmes and strategic plans, where appropriate, as well as in cooperation frameworks; (b) advance the

¹ Executive Committee decision 2020/21.

² There is no internationally agreed definition of nature-based solutions. The definition developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources is used in the present text.

development of a system-wide approach, implement measures and report regularly to their respective governing bodies, through existing reporting and mandates, on their efforts to reduce their climate and environmental footprint, ensure consistency of their operations and programmes with low emissions and climate-resilient development pathways, stress the urgency of climate action and contribute to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and (c) fulfil their pledges made at the 2019 Climate Action Summit and follow-up on the 2020 summit on biodiversity.

6. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure full and effective implementation of the United Nations System Strategic Approach on Climate Change Action as well as of the United Nations System-Wide Framework of Strategies on the Environment, and of their future revisions, and continue working towards the development of a common approach to integrating biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery, with a view to its swift and effective implementation across the United Nations system in accordance with national development policies, plans, priorities and needs.
