

Submission regarding the post 2020 framework under CBD and UNEA-5

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to Norway's position in the upcoming negotiations for a post 2020 framework under CBD and Norway's priorities for UNEA 5.

Input to Norway's position for the post 2020 framework under CBD

A framework enabling transformative change and holistic science-based policies

IPCC and IPBES have identified land fragmentation and intensified land use, as well as climate change as key global causes for the loss of biodiversity, habitats, and ecosystem services. Aquatic resources are already under pressure, both in Norway and internationally. NIVA believes that there is **an urgent need for the protection and restoration of freshwater and coastal ecosystems through holistic and ecosystem-based management approaches**. The post 2020 framework must enable transformative changes and integrated policy decisions at national level.

A framework supporting the SDGs and their interlinkages

At NIVA, our vision is "research for a sustainable future". We strongly support Norway's position that the SDGs should form the basis for the post 2020 framework. We emphasize that the framework must recognize the interlinkages between the biodiversity SDGs (14 and 15) and other SDGs such as i.a. 6 on clean water (in particular 6.5 on Integrated Water Resources Management and 6.6 on protection and restoration of water-related ecosystems such as rivers and wetlands, etc.), 12 on responsible production and use of resources, 13 on climate change and 17 on strengthening the means of implementation. The framework should support science-based integrated and transformative policy decisions. In order to provide relevant science, the framework should encourage interdisciplinary science involving users. At a global level, we encourage cooperation between IPCC, IPBES and IPR to provide a common knowledge platform. At a national level, we welcome recent efforts to balance climate and biodiversity issues, but encourage broader discussions. For example, surface water remains an overlooked factor in the forestry climate debate (<https://www.niva.no/en/projectweb/surfer>).

The Paris model and stock takes call for new knowledge

We support Norway's suggestions to include an implementation mechanism similar to that of the Paris Agreement. We are supportive of "SMARTER" targets and indicators enabling the measurement of progress. It should, however, be recognized that new indicators and several of the suggested targets, require new knowledge, also in developed countries such as Norway. For example, suggested target no 1 calls for more ecosystem-based knowledge and synthesis than is currently done. National research calls must support the new framework. Also, Norway lacks statistics for the eco-system related indicators for SDG 6.6, 14 and 15, and existing indicators may not be appropriate. For example, the indicators for the EU Water Framework Directive are based on biological quality elements, which do not directly translate to biodiversity status. Future monitoring should be sensitive in capturing trends in biodiversity. Furthermore, large parts of the diversity of connected transitional ecosystems, i.e. riparian zones, floodplains, wetlands and brackish water, are currently not assessed and should be incorporated into future monitoring programmes.

In order to facilitate integrated decisions, we would also suggest to align the Global Stock takes under the UNFCCC with the suggested Global Biodiversity Stock take under CBD so that national considerations for updated ambitions may be done in parallel for climate and biodiversity. Similarly, the underlying reports from the IPCC and IPBES should be aligned to the greatest extent possible.

Important issues for aquatic ecosystems

To ensure holistic management of aquatic ecosystems, the framework must recognize:

- The importance of land-sea interactions in transitional and coastal waters
- That river networks host an exceptional high biodiversity linked to the interface with terrestrial ecosystems related to floodplains and riparian zones
- That barriers in river networks, such as dams, pose a threat to riverine biodiversity

- That coastal biodiversity is under threat from eutrophication, habitat alterations, toxic pollution, invasive species and climate change in addition to fishing pressure
- That catchment land-use influence biodiversity of freshwater and coastal ecosystems negatively, including intensified forestry
- Integrating biohazards into the assessment of the importance of aquatic biodiversity and quantifying the risk posed by the loss of species and ecosystem functions

Rapid upscaling of restoration required

Sustainable use of our natural resources is pivotal. However, according to IPBES, seventy-five per cent of the land surface is significantly altered, 66 per cent of the ocean area is experiencing increasing cumulative impacts, and over 85 per cent of wetlands (area) has been lost. One million species are threatened, and half of them rely on habitat restoration for their survival. We therefore encourage quantified restoration goals. Also, efforts to restore freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, as well as terrestrial ecosystems, need to be rapidly upscaled, both globally and nationally, in order to achieve the suggested 2050 vision. Restoration to safeguard aquatic biodiversity, will need to focus on large scale linkages at landscape level. Restoration must i.a. be prioritized at catchment scale and restoring connectivity from land to sea. Such restoration efforts are hampered by knowledge gaps and financial constraints. The post 2020 framework should encourage research and capacity building in all countries, as well as provide financial support for developing countries. Capacity building in developing countries could be supported via the IPCC Scholarship Programme, IPBES Fellowship Programme and other IPBES capacity building mechanisms, as well as the inclusion of research and capacity building activities in bilateral cooperation.

Highlighting coastal ecosystems

The updated zero draft makes no reference to coastal ecosystems, only to freshwater, marine and terrestrial ecosystems. As coastal ecosystems, such as blue forests, provide invaluable ecosystem services, face different threats than other marine ecosystems and many of them are sensitive to climate change, they should be explicitly mentioned as was done in for example Aichi target 11. We suggest that the framework is consistent with the language of the CBD marine and coastal programme, as well as Aichi target 11.

Input to Norway's priorities for UNEA-5

The topic for the meeting, "Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals", is of great importance and should set the Agenda for the CBD negotiations that will follow. Hence, the issues described for CBD above are also relevant for UNEA-5. In addition, we would like to highlight the following three issues for UNEA-5:

Restoration must be a key priority: In a letter to the countries, dated April 24, 2020, Norway has expressed that the Ministerial "should address the critical and transformative changes that will need to take place to stop the loss of and protect biodiversity and ecosystem services". We welcome this, but strongly encourage Norway to work towards also including an explicit statement on restoration in the Ministerial declaration (see above), and at the same time move to the forefront internationally in terms of national restoration activities. Both NIVA and NINA have gathered expertise on restoration through strategic institute initiatives that can support action plans for restoring nature.

Marine pollution and microplastics: We urge Norway to continue its efforts towards a global framework for marine pollution and microplastics. In order to ensure accountability and tracking of progress towards any future common goals, there is a need for standard methodology. NIVA is leading an H2020 project aiming at harmonising European procedures for plastics pollution monitoring and assessments, which could provide useful knowledge for such standardization work.

Engaging corporations: At NIVA, we believe that corporations play a critical role in safeguarding biodiversity. However, the biodiversity SDGs rank at the bottom of SDGs targeted by corporations¹. UNEA should urge countries to engage corporations at a national level, through i.a. support for national UNGCs solution platforms and user-involvement in research in order to target corporate knowledge gaps.

¹ Communication of Progress, 2019, UN Global Compact