



CBD-COP 10 Report to Birds Australia, The Boobook Declaration Signatories & Australian Environment Network Partners.

COP 10 Decisions: Analysis of outcomes

The official meeting had a heavy agenda consisting of 41 items. However 3 items stood out as the most significant. These were the development of a new strategic plan of the CBD including new biodiversity targets (successor to the 2010 Target), the revision of the Convention's strategy for financial resources mobilisation, and negotiating a new legal regime on access and benefit sharing. These hot-button issues dominated the attention and energies of the negotiators. These weighty and difficult issues made COP-10 the most important CBD meeting since the Convention came into force. Headline global UN targets and the Millennium Development Goals have proved useful in generating political will and catalysing action on the ground to date, and when they are well-crafted and accompanied by firm financial commitments they have the potential to be clear game-changers. However, developing countries had made it expressly clear that they would not agree to ambitious and binding biodiversity targets unless a final agreement was reached to establish a new protocol on fair access to, and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Strategic Plan 2011-2020 ("Aichi Targets")

The Strategic Plan, including a mission (the new overarching 2020 target) and 20 sub-targets, is a good plan, if not quite as ambitious as it could have been. The ambitions were mainly lowered by developing countries and China – and only concrete financial commitments from the developed countries could have changed their position. Nonetheless, full implementation of the plan would go a long way towards saving biodiversity and ecosystems.

The adopted **mission for 2020** has become very difficult to read after many rounds of negotiations, and it is not outspoken enough on halting biodiversity loss by 2020, so it does not fully meet the conservation communities expectations (although ecosystem resilience by 2020 is very ambitious). It reads as follows:

"Take effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services, thereby securing the planet's variety of life, and contributing to human well-being, and poverty eradication;

To ensure this, pressures on biodiversity are reduced, ecosystems are restored, biological resources are sustainably used and benefits arising out of utilization of genetic resources are shared in a fair and equitable manner; adequate financial resources are provided, capacities are enhanced, biodiversity issues and values mainstreamed, appropriate policies are effectively implemented, and decision-making is based on sound science and the precautionary approach."

As this mission is more action-oriented than result-oriented, the sub-targets and indicators will be very important. The **20 sub-targets (“Aichi targets”)** adopted in Nagoya are grouped in five strategic goals:

Strategic goal A. Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

- **Target 1:** *By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably.*
- **Target 2:** *By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems.*

COMMENT: Incorporation of biodiversity values into national accounting is key if biodiversity is to be mainstreamed in decision-making. ‘Are being’ incorporated by 2020 (rather than ‘have been’) is somewhat unambitious, (Something I lobbied hard for) while ‘as appropriate’ is an escape clause, reflecting the unease that some Parties felt on this point. The results of TEEB show clearly how important this incorporation is, as well as providing examples of how it can be done.

- **Target 3:** *By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio-economic conditions.*
- **Target 4:** *By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.*

Strategic goal B. Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

- **Target 5:** *By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced.*

COMMENT: “brought to zero”, was advocated by the conservation sector but this was rejected by countries like Brazil; there was a long dispute on whether forests should be mentioned specifically. Framing the target around ‘rate of loss’ brings a number of problems – overall loss could still be very high, if loss rates diminish only towards the end of the decade, and rate of loss will tend to diminish once most natural habitat has been cleared! New Zealand also argued that without baseline data on the rate of loss the use of the term in the target was meaningless. Overall, it remains a stretching and important target, but we would have wanted more.

- **Target 6:** *By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.*
- **Target 7:** *By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity.*
- **Target 8:** *By 2020, pollution, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity.*
- **Target 9:** *By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are*

controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.

- **Target 10:** By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning.

Strategic goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

- **Target 11:** By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascapes.

COMMENT: Conservation NGOs lobbied for **at least 20% each** for land and marine, but much more importantly there is stress ('especially') on areas of particular importance for biodiversity.

- **Target 12:** By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained.

COMMENT: Good that it goes beyond preventing the extinction of threatened species to address improving the status of declining species.

- **Target 13:** By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

Strategic goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services.

- **Target 14:** By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

COMMENT: The reference to water (much debated) provides a helpful 'hook' for the Ramsar Convention on wetlands – as this Strategic Plan will now be used by all the biodiversity-related conventions to guide their work.

- **Target 15:** By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification.

COMMENT: An important target for linking biodiversity into climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the UNFCCC.

- **Target 16:** By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation.

Strategic goal E. Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

- **Target 17:** *By 2015 each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan.*
- **Target 18:** *By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.*
- **Target 19:** *By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied.*
- **Target 20:** *By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 from all sources and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resources needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties.*

COMMENT: We would have wished to see a concrete number here, or a specific factor of increase, but it was clear from the outset that this would be almost impossible to achieve.

Mobilisation of Financial Resources

The starting point was almost unsolvable, with the industrialized countries, notably the EU, coming to Nagoya with a clear position that no fresh money would be put on the table for developing countries. This position was based on the argument that data on existing spending and on needs were too scarce to make any decisions. Other industrialized countries were hiding behind the EU. Instead, the EU proposed a process of closing the data gaps by 2014, so that then funding targets could be developed.

The developing countries stated that without financial commitments at COP-10 they would not subscribe to any (ambitious) Strategic Plan (e.g. Brazil asked for a commitment of developed countries to mobilize 200 billion US\$/year until 2020).

“Helped” by several NGO activities, demonstrating the availability of baselines and needs in a number of spending areas and stressing the urgency of (public) money to be transferred to developing countries, a compromise was found, which now consists of a process to define baselines and needs by 2012, in order to adopt clear financing targets at COP-11. Unilateral commitments made by Japan (and to a smaller degree by some others), as well as the success on ABS, probably made it easier for the developing countries to accept this (at the last minute). Fortunately the redirection of harmful subsidies towards biodiversity funding has become an indicator specifically mentioned in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization. This set of indicators includes many other measures (albeit without quantitative targets yet) that are likely to prove valuable in the future.

Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS)

After 18 years of negotiations, it is certainly the main success of COP-10 that a binding Protocol was adopted. A number of NGOs following the issue closely say that it is a reasonable compromise, given the heavy pressure from industry (especially Pharmaceutical) and from non-environment Ministries (e.g. in Germany) it is a pleasant surprise that the scope of the Protocol is quite wide (including derivatives of genetic resources), and that solutions could be found on the issue of access to pathogens in cases of epidemic outbreaks and on the issue of bio-piracy that occurred in the past. To address the latter, a multilateral fund will be established to compensate at least partly for biopiracy that occurred in the past. For each use of genetic resources companies, researchers or countries will have to get the “informed prior consent” of the countries and local communities of origin, and then they have to agree bilateral agreements on the access and on the benefit sharing. It remains to be seen how fair these deals will be.

Marine and Coastal Biodiversity

Parties agreed to improved positions on ocean fertilization and on ocean acidification and associated human impacts on coastal seas, particularly in the tropics. However, after COP-9 made significant progress by adopting criteria (for Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas – EBSAs) for identification of potential MPAs, COP-10 was disappointing on the issue of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). Apart from the MPA target now being 10% (instead of the 20% hoped for), there was a very strong move, led by Mexico and Brazil, but supported by Australia, Canada, Indonesia, New Zealand, Norway etc., to confine CBD activity to national jurisdictions (EEZs) (despite the fact that no UN body has a mandate to develop a process for designation of High Seas MPAs).

Climate Change and Biodiversity

CBD/UNFCCC Synergies: It was hoped that the CBD would send a strong message to UNFCCC that responses to climate change should be implemented in an environmentally sound manner respecting biodiversity. CBD Executive Secretary is to convey a proposal to UNFCCC to develop joint activities (the most obvious opportunities being Ecosystem-based approaches to mitigation and adaptation). However a proposed Joint Work Programme was felt to prejudice the decisions from UNFCCC and the independent legal status and mandates of the conventions so was decided against.

Protected Areas – climate change section: In contrast, the Protected Areas (PAs) decision has strong synergies in text. It reminds UNFCCC to pay attention to the role of PAs in adaptation and mitigation, and that such activities should receive financial and technical support through climate-related finance. It further invites UNFCCC to consider ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation, and requests consideration of PAs in Rio Conventions’ Joint Activities discussions.

REDD+: The CBD Executive Secretary is requested to provide advice to make sure REDD+ is consistent with CBD, including consideration of ‘safeguards’ for biodiversity – language not yet used by UNFCCC, but implied – was very controversial.

Biofuels: It was hoped that COP-10 would pass a clear warning of the impacts of biofuel production and an insistence on applying the precautionary approach. This was partly done. Parties, and NGOs, are invited to develop national inventories to identify areas of high biodiversity value and critical ecosystems to assist policy-makers in assessing and identifying areas that could be exempted from the production of biofuels.

Geo-engineering: the moratorium on ocean fertilization that was adopted at COP-9 has been extended to all geo-engineering activities (with very few exceptions for research) – some NGOs see this as the main success of COP-10.

Other issues

Other COP agenda items of interest included biodiversity for development (includes poverty reduction), indicators and the Inter-governmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). By and large, there was strong support for decisions promoting participation, equity and poverty reduction agendas. The newly adopted Aichi Biodiversity Target has the link between biodiversity and human well-being and poverty eradication at its centre. Mainstreaming biodiversity into development (and poverty reduction) strategies is one of the strategic goals of the new 2011-2020 strategic plan. At an operational level, the COP also decided to establish an expert group that will map out the various linkages between biodiversity and poverty reduction as well as identify the most effective approach towards a framework on capacity development for mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services for sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Indicators were also a widely acknowledged cross-cutting theme at the COP and they featured prominently in the discussions on the strategic plan, financial resources mobilisation strategy and national reporting. An experts group will be established to undertake further development of indicators for the new strategic plan. The COP also supported the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and encouraged its scientific advisory body (SBSTTA) to determine ways of working closely with the platform.

COP 11.

The eleventh Conference of the Parties will take place in India in 2012

Report by Samantha Vine (Birds Australia), based on information and knowledge collected by the BirdLife Delegation at CBD COP 10