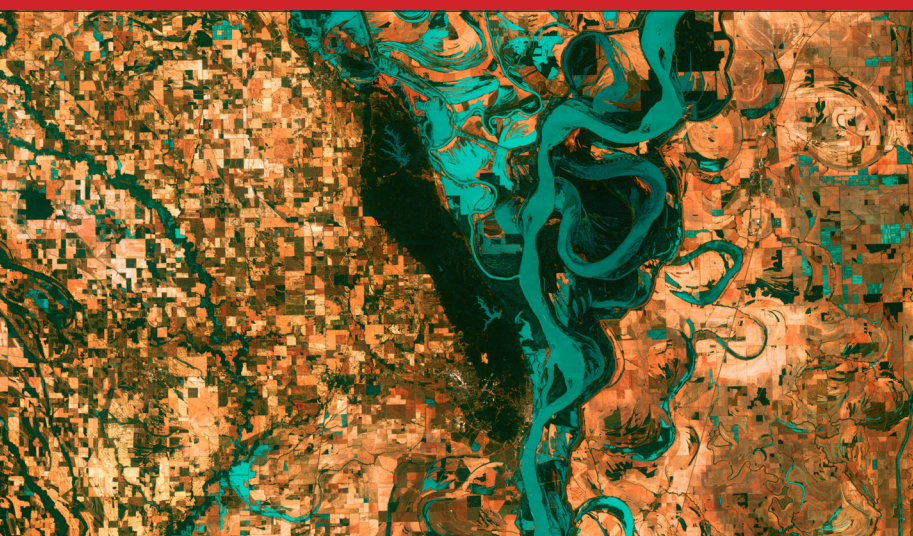




# TOWARDS POST-2020 EXPERTISE ON #31

## SPATIAL PLANNING: THE NEED FOR BETTER BIODIVERSITY- INCLUSIVE APPROACHES



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**“ENSURE THAT ALL LAND AND SEA AREAS GLOBALLY ARE UNDER INTEGRATED BIODIVERSITY-INCLUSIVE SPATIAL PLANNING ADDRESSING LAND- AND SEA-USE CHANGE, RETAINING EXISTING INTACT AND WILDERNESS AREAS.”**

Action Target 1 in the First Draft of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Caption photo  
Mississippi River, USA © USGS

**Spatial planning is key to addressing land-use and sea-use changes, the main drivers of biodiversity loss. In the run-up to CBD COP 15, we should identify options to strengthen these approaches and embed them within the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and its implementation.**

Draft 1 of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF), being discussed in the perspective of COP15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) includes, as its first Action Target, a clear mention to “integrated and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning” as a way to tackle land-use and sea-use changes. Spatial planning includes a variety of approaches and initiatives, tools and instruments, from which lessons may be learnt for biodiversity governance.

IDDRI and Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework - EU support organized an online workshop between CBD negotiators and experts on 21-22 April 2021. The workshop explored how to reinforce the position of spatial planning in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and ensure its effective implementation.

# 1. SHEDDING LIGHT ON A MULTI-LEVEL CHALLENGE

Several spatial planning approaches<sup>1</sup> are being used or studied by researchers, decision-makers, and implementers. Among these, landscape and ecosystem approaches<sup>2</sup> state that the conservation and mainstreaming of biodiversity should be better incorporated in spatial plans. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment<sup>3</sup> emphasizes the necessity for spatial planning to address ecological concerns as it represents both an opportunity to integrate biodiversity in all activities, and a threat if not addressed, as land and sea-use changes represent the first driver of biodiversity loss. Spatial planning generally consists in projecting long-term goals on geographical areas, thus inherently addressing all aspects of development (agriculture and food production, infrastructures, economic development, transport, conservation, public services, etc). It aims to comprehensively tackle interdependent issues and is embedded in multiple governance challenges. All processes, policies, and plans theoretically must be unified but at the same time adapted to specific and changing spatial contexts while respecting long-term objectives.

Throughout the workshop, participants recognized that spatial planning mobilizes the local, subnational<sup>4</sup>, national, regional, and international scales. It requires institutions and stakeholders to work together and enhance coherence across levels of governance. This also poses a significant challenge as the role and mandate of each should be defined, while allowing flexibility:

- + Subnational and local governments are on the frontline to collect data, to establish and implement spatial plans adapted to specific territories<sup>5</sup>.
- + National governments provide standards, guidance, and coherence between sectoral plans, although there is no “one size fits all” process.
- + Regional and international cooperation should be enhanced to protect transboundary ecosystems and resources<sup>6</sup>, and to share lessons and practices.
- + Non-state stakeholders should be part of the process to foster inclusion and coordination over the development and implementation of spatial plans. They are best placed to increase synergies and minimize trade-offs<sup>7</sup>, being in most cases in charge of planning, infrastructures, and resources.

Participants discussed how to build upon previous efforts and initiatives to reinforce spatial planning for biodiversity and ecosystems in the CBD. Examples include:

- + At CBD COP10, the Japanese COP presidency launched the Satoyama Initiative<sup>8</sup> to promote landscape approaches.
- + Various CBD COPs identified the importance of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP): COP10 requested a study<sup>9</sup> to inform further implementation<sup>10</sup>

and COP13 recognized MSP as a tool to achieve biodiversity targets<sup>11</sup>.

- + Discussions also referred to the increasing role of subnational governments within the CBD. Subnational and local governments, as well as stakeholders involved in existing initiatives, could better contribute to the dialogue on spatial planning.

The challenge is now to enhance existing initiatives and projects on spatial planning for biodiversity, and to coordinate those various actors into a coherent approach to managing landscapes for biodiversity and sustainability.

# 2. OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPERIENCES TO INTEGRATE BIODIVERSITY IN SPATIAL PLANNING AND MULTI-LEVEL POLICY-LEARNING

## LESSONS FROM THE NATIONAL LEVEL: PROVIDING A GUIDANCE FRAMEWORK AND SAFEGUARDING MULTI-SECTORAL INTEGRATION

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) comes in as an example of an action plan for integrated spatial planning. SANBI established a “CBA map” integrating Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and Ecological Support Areas (ESAs), to protect natural and semi-natural landscapes. The maps work as “boundary objects” on biodiversity priorities. Science-based, these “objects” help start discussions with other sectors, making them a key tool to enhance dialogue on biodiversity mainstreaming.

Lessons learnt from SANBI’s experience include:

- + Maps are essential to assess and determine priority areas for biodiversity and healthy ecosystems as well as potential threats but are only one part of the efforts.
- + Focusing on a positive framing of spatial planning efforts is important to show what progress and benefits can be made, instead of focusing on risks.
- + Linking biodiversity efforts to national development priorities is key, through a focus on ecological infrastructure and its co-benefits.
- + Adapting to the language used by other sectors to promote biodiversity mainstreaming.

The Chinese approach to spatial planning for biodiversity offers another perspective, especially via the establishment of Ecological Conservation Redlines (ECRs)<sup>12</sup> for strategic ecological areas, as part of the “three zones, three lines” policy. ECRs foster coordination, management, and connectivity, while achieving targets related to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. China aims to use this approach to protect 25% of its territory, delimitating ECRs within ecological areas and defining two other



Beyond the borders of Virunga National Park. © Baron Reznik

<sup>1</sup> Spatial planning, territorial planning, land-use planning, or approaches such as the landscape or the ecosystem approaches.

<sup>2</sup> Read Expertise on #13, [Landscape Approaches in a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

<sup>3</sup> IPBES (2019). Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Diaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany.

<sup>4</sup> Read Mobilization of #18, [The Edinburgh Process](#).

<sup>5</sup> Read Mobilization of #6, [Local and Subnational Actors](#).

<sup>6</sup> Read Expertise on #22, [Rethinking Ecological Connectivity](#).

<sup>7</sup> Read: [Reinforcing the key role of subnational governments to maximise synergies and minimise trade-offs between climate change and biodiversity](#).

<sup>8</sup> The Satoyama initiative is supported by an international multi-stakeholder partnership aiming at promoting production landscapes and seascapes. See: <https://satoyama-initiative.org>

<sup>9</sup> CBD COP Decision X/29

<sup>10</sup> Marine Spatial Planning in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Secretariat of the CBD, CBD Technical Series No.68





Manhattan, New York City, USA © NASA

<sup>11</sup> CBD COP Decision XIII/9

<sup>12</sup> Landry & Rankovic (2021). The place of spatial planning in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs): state-of-play and perspectives to strengthen the implementation of the post-2020 GBF, IDDR1

<sup>13</sup> Read: [Workshop on "Reinforcing integrated spatial planning policies and tools for biodiversity: lessons and perspectives for COP 15 & the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework"](#).

<sup>14</sup> Read Mobilization of #6, Local and Subnational Actors and Mobilization of #18, The Edinburgh Process.

<sup>15</sup> Such programmes include [Arco Verde](#) in Madrid, or the [Green Blue Municipality Programme](#) and [Agro Legal](#) in Sao Paulo.

<sup>16</sup> [São Paulo and Madrid sign a letter of intent on Behalf of Biodiversity.](#)

<sup>17</sup> [Mapping Biodiversity Priorities.](#)

<sup>18</sup> For instance identified by the [Key Biodiversity Areas \(KBA\)](#).

<sup>19</sup> An example of language suggestion made during the workshop: "By 2030, 100% of land and sea areas are under integrated spatial planning that takes biodiversity priorities into account, including Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and other systematically identified priority areas, allowing for connectivity and where necessary for restoration of degraded freshwater, terrestrial and marine ecosystems".

types of redlines as part of its national land use plans: a redline of urban development boundaries and another of permanent basic farmland protection<sup>13</sup>. Management and land-use change measures include an enhanced monitoring system and platform with regular assessments, an "environmental access list" with standards and thresholds and restoration measures. A top-down and bottom-up mechanism facilitates the participation and consultation of subnational and local governments (cities, counties, and provinces), while national authorities provide guidelines, management, and supervision measures.

#### THE LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEVEL: FIELD PLAYERS PURSUING ACTION TAILORED TO THEIR TERRITORY

Subnational and Local governments (SNLGs)<sup>14</sup> face specific challenges, demands and conflicts on their territories. However, through their territorial mandate and programmes<sup>15</sup>, SNLGs can often take the initiative to develop cooperative and participative projects.

During the dialogue, the Community of Madrid and the State of Sao Paulo recalled that, even with different contexts, both governments faced the challenge of protecting natural areas, enhancing connectivity, restoring ecosystems while achieving social and economic goals and sustainability. Their converging integrated spatial planning projects showed great promises in solving those issues and enhancing international SNLGs cooperation. Sao Paulo and Madrid signed a letter of intent in 2020<sup>16</sup> to join efforts, aligning their actions with the three objectives of the CBD, more specifically through the promotion of bioeconomy and protected area management. Their cooperation demonstrates that SNLGs may lead the way and achieve on-the-ground success. Developing a toolbox of instruments (such as remote-sensing data or the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting) would support SNLGs to reach sustainability at subnational and local scales.

#### A COOPERATION PERSPECTIVE: MAXIMIZING BENEFITS AND CO-LEARNING

The European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships displayed examples of cooperative projects on integrated landscape management with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kenya. These presented important successes and lessons on multi-scale spatial planning for biodiversity. More specifically, the projects at the Virunga National Park in DRC and within the Northern Rangelands Trust in Kenya showed how conservation programmes, using the landscape approach, address many challenges (sustainable energy, security, agriculture & fisheries...) and ensure stability while protecting nature. Mapping Biodiversity Priorities<sup>17</sup> is another regional partnership example. Four Southern African countries are joining efforts and exchanging over best practices on maps and spatial assessment of biodiversity and ecosystems. Another phase will support biodiversity mainstreaming and planning.

## 3. REINFORCING SPATIAL PLANNING IN THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK: A THREE-TIER APPROACH TOWARDS COP15

### REFINING THE LANGUAGE OF POST-2020 ACTION TARGET 1

Draft 1 of the post-2020 GBF addresses, in Action Target 1, the need to cover the whole planet with integrated and biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning. The workshop identified priorities to be reflected in the GBF language to this end:

- + The target should keep emphasizing that spatial planning must take biodiversity into account – and not regress to a general reference as in earlier versions. Spatial plans are already developed for a good share of the planet but are insufficiently integrating biodiversity.
- + As biodiversity priority areas<sup>18</sup> are also located in already modified areas (for instance urban and agricultural lands), it is crucial to include the need to cover biodiversity priority areas within highly converted landscapes<sup>19</sup>.

### INCLUDING A GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF COHERENCE AND SYNERGY BETWEEN TARGETS

Another important point raised during the workshop was the need to reinforce the connections between targets, the first Action Target being strongly linked with the others. For spatial planning to be indeed useful for biodiversity, all conservation and sustainable use measures addressed by the remaining Action Targets will have to be implemented as well. Spatial planning holds the opportunity to enhance biodiversity mainstreaming in all sectors<sup>20</sup>, engage stakeholders, or build capacity. It is thus strongly connected with current Target 14 of the First Draft). To avoid overloading the GBF text with spatial planning language in all targets, a general principle of coherence and synergy between Targets could be added in the introductory sections of the framework to support its comprehensive implementation. Targets should not be approached separately and individually, but together.

### IDENTIFYING OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION

Other documents, CBD processes and decisions aim to support the implementation of the GBF. All mainstreaming-related processes (including those linked to landscapes and connectivity) cannot be individually added to the global framework but would benefit from being part of complementary documents. Spatial planning could also be supported in the implementation through the Long-Term Strategic Approach to Mainstreaming<sup>21</sup>, the Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People<sup>22</sup>, or the Edinburgh Process<sup>23</sup>.



North Frisian Islands.  
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## 4. BEYOND POST-2020: STRENGTHENING POLICY LEARNING ON SPATIAL PLANNING TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2020 GBF

### IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UPDATE OF NBSAPS

The update of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) will be key to support the implementation of the GBF. How can spatial planning be better integrated into NBSAPs? How can Parties improve monitoring and reporting on spatial planning?

IDDDRI analysed existing NBSAPs to identify the extent to which they integrate spatial planning. Five categories emerged, with different levels of integration and maturity:

- (1) no mention
- (2) a simple mention
- (3) an elaborated mention
- (4) specific target(s)
- (5) both an elaborated mention and specific target(s).

For each category, there is room for improvement on integrated spatial planning and different ways to support a better integration of spatial planning into future NBSAPs. NBSAPs with no mention or simple mentions to spatial planning or associated approaches and concepts could learn from the other categories, and Parties could adapt the Action Target 1 to their specific context and provide contextual information on the elaboration of spatial planning policies. Parties from categories (3) and (4) should be more explicit, while Parties from the category (5) can stimulate policy learning dialogues on how far they managed to implement these parts of their NBSAP.

### USING THE POST-2020 TRANSPARENCY MECHANISM <sup>24</sup>

The post-2020 transparency mechanism should provide Parties, SNLGs and other stakeholders an important policy learning space to support the implementation of the targets and the various updated NBSAPs <sup>25</sup>. This workshop showed that a space for experience and good practice-sharing was missing. It highlighted the usefulness of regular

discussions on lessons learnt from integrated spatial planning, including ways to address the challenges it poses, and paths to better monitor and report.

Individual and collective reviews, as well as a global stocktake, may become significant tools for this dialogue to occur. These could for instance allocate a dedicated time to examine measured analysis and diagnosis, best practices, successes, and failures.

### ENHANCING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

Spatial planning, from the elaboration phase to its implementation, should involve all stakeholders.

To increase this dialogue and the engagement of all, plans should:

- + Learn from previous experience, e.g., the Satoyama Initiative, working as a global platform and promoting collaboration and knowledge-sharing on landscape approaches.
- + Identify key stakeholders and their contributions. SNLGs and Non-State Actors (NSAs) have a key role and potential to act alongside national governments and authorities.
- + Provide better guidance and a framework to accompany SNLGs in developing their own territorial strategies.
- + Use the full potential of initiatives such as the Edinburgh Process and the Action Agenda. The Edinburgh Process and the Action Agenda could support the engagement of non-State stakeholders and the development of biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning practices and examples.

Developing and implementing biodiversity-inclusive and integrated spatial planning represents a great challenge, given its complexity and the multitude of actors which are or should be involved. However, there is already a growing number of initiatives and examples of good practice, which could be maximized to jointly advance implementation of post-2020 biodiversity targets and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**“(…) TO ACCOMMODATE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION WHERE LAND IS AN INCREASINGLY LIMITED RESOURCE, EXTENSIVE AND PROACTIVE PARTICIPATORY LANDSCAPE-SCALE SPATIAL PLANNING IS KEY”** IPBES Global Assessment, Chapter 5. Pathways towards a Sustainable Future, p.6

<sup>20</sup> Read Expertise on #29, [Mainstreaming in Food Systems](#).

<sup>21</sup> Informal advisory group on mainstreaming biodiversity: progress report and elements for the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the post- 2020 global biodiversity framework.

<sup>22</sup> [CDB Action Agenda](#).

<sup>23</sup> Read: [Report on the Edinburgh Process for subnational and local governments on the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#).  
Read Mobilization of #18, [The Edinburgh Process](#).

<sup>24</sup> Read Expertise on #19, [Building Transparency and Accountability](#).

<sup>25</sup> Read Dialogue with #25, [A Responsibility and Transparency Mechanism](#).

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