

## Policy Brief: Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework and the Youth

### Background: What is Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework?

Being the United Nations' custodian organisation for biodiversity, the United Nations Convention for Biological Diversity developed the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2030) through activities at the national level, with supporting actions at the subnational, regional, and global levels. The Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework is the new strategic plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that will be adopted on the 15<sup>th</sup> CBD Conference of the Parties (COP15). The post-2020 global biodiversity framework builds on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and sets out an ambitious plan to implement broad-based action to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity and to ensure that, by 2050, the shared vision of humanity living in harmony with nature is fulfilled. The framework is designed to galvanize urgent and transformative action by Governments among other stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society, and businesses, to achieve the outcomes the framework sets out in its vision, mission, goals and targets.

### Introduction

The alarming rate of nature degradation due to unsustainable approaches to anthropogenic activities including the production and consumption results in a catastrophic loss of species and exacerbate climate change. This result from the relative neglect of the environment in development thinking, policy and practice globally which has pushed the planet to its bearing capacity and limits. The dramatic increase in the number of endangered species and the rate of ecosystem degradation over the past two decades have increased dramatically across all regions have resulted in approximately 1 million plants and animal species are now at risk of extinction.

Climate change have also exacerbated losses of biodiversity which undermines and threatens the viability of crucial ecosystems in many regions of the world. This constitute a major barrier to social, and economic development given that the ecosystem is a fundamental support mechanism for anthropogenic and development activities.

The rampant loss of biodiversity and nature degradation are causing significant, and in some cases irreversible, harm to fundamental and essential life-support systems; such as air for respiration, water for drinking, among others which altogether negatively impact human health. The nature linkages with the emergence and multidimensional impact of COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in over 4.3million deaths globally according to the World Health Organisation. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has projected to have over [USD 4 trillion](#) loss to the Tourism sector for years 2020 and 2021 due the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Bank also report would from tourism sector alone. The World Bank has also committed over [USD 125 Billion](#) to combat the impact of the health, economic and social impact of the pandemic. This leaves the world not only with a message but a resounding alarm to care for nature. This follows the health and economic losses due to other zoonotic diseases such as EBOLA, Bird Flu which emerged from human interference with nature. The World Bank also report that West African countries loses [USD 3.8 Billion](#) annually to erosion, flooding and pollution, yet the trio are linked to Nature and biodiversity loss. The inherent and associated losses that accrue to nature losses are indeed undermining the increasing investment for sustainable development in the run-up to 2030.

Therefore, the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) need to acknowledge the urgency to stop and reverse the nature and biodiversity losses if the aspirations of the United Nations 2030 Agenda must be achieved.

Despite constituting the highest share of the global population with more than [40%](#) of African population, there has been a minimal contribution and focus on the youth in policy formulation and decisions-making process on nature conservation and protection of biodiversity over the years. This is partly due to gross inadequacy of quality and meaningful climate and environmental education in primary and secondary students in many countries of the world. This has limited the capacity of the youth to acquire knowledge and skills they require for active and effective participation and contribution to policies and decision-making process at the international, national, and sub-national levels. This undermines the rights of the youth, who represent the share of the African populace with the most active, enthusiasm, resilience, and exploratory spirit to take action to protect themselves, their children, and the health of the planet, hence hampering the progress towards a nature positive planet.

It is against this backdrop that initiatives and efforts have been developed to inspire more young people to take initiative, despite limited resources, and be engaged on biodiversity policies ( World Wide Fund, 2020). This has been through raising awareness among the youths on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), as well as collating their views and perspectives on essential topics, and brainstorming with them on appropriate programmes and initiatives to be included in strategic and action plans among others. For instance, the youth were very active at the Rio +20 Conference where they brought up key aspirations such as green jobs, ensuring sustainability and quality of life, and proposed the creation of a High Commissioner/ Ombudsman for future generations. Indeed, there has been improvement in the participation of youth in policy formulation and decision-making in the recent years, yet there is more to be done (Bobo & Schwarzer, 2019). Conversely, youths were disappointed with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which they were not included through a dedicated target.

A question in the heart of the youth is if and to what extent the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework embrace youth participation and empowerment as a key priority in its formulation, implementation, and impact. **If the policy frameworks, strategic and action plans are about the future, then, the youth should be at the core its formulation, implementation, and impact.**

Therefore, this brief presents an overview on Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework, its implication on youth efforts in Biodiversity Conservation and the youths contribution the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework as well as ISNAD-Africa position and recommendations for the framework. The Policy Brief is developed within the **EcoKnowledge Derivatives, an initiative of ISNAD-Africa being implemented with support from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).**

### **Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the Youths**

The Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) will be implemented with active participation and contributions of diverse stakeholders at the global, national, and local levels. this is to leverage ways to build a momentum for success. The theory of change of

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the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) recognizes the need for inclusivity, thus, the implementation of the framework will leverage the active participation and contributions of diverse stakeholders at the global, national, and local levels.

Therefore, the [framework implementation, will take a rights-based approach, recognizing the principle of intergenerational equity](#). In this regard, this approach will ensure the effective participation of youths, indigenous peoples, and women in policy development and decision-making processes for the protection of biodiversity. This is in recognition of the fact that intergenerational equity recognizes that all generations share a common but differentiated responsibility in ensuring a healthy planet for future generations. The approach also advocates for the accountability of policymakers for their choices and to acknowledge, respect, hear and give space for youth to be included in decision-making processes at all levels, in all fairness for current and future human population.

- **Capacity building and awareness creation**

The [first draft](#) of the Framework, 2030 Action Targets particularly Target 20: “**By 2030, ensure that quality information, including traditional knowledge, is available to decision makers and public for the effective management of biodiversity through promoting awareness, education and research**” promotes access of information to the public. However, the framework does not specify how access of information among the youths will be achieved given the hindrance of youth’s participation in the protection of biodiversity due to inadequate information. Therefore, consideration should be made on the Global Biodiversity Youth Network (GBYN) [proposal](#) particularly “**By 2030, environmental information is made available and youth-friendly, and capacity building schemes for younger generations are developed in partnership with them as well as youth-led organizations to ensure their informed and aware participation**”. A significant improvement in knowledge acquisition and capacity development will result in a huge impact on youth participation towards putting humanity in harmony with nature.

- **Access to Resources**

Effective youth participation in influencing, the development and implementation of policy is about creating an enabling environment. Therefore, this is need to provide resources to enable youth support in the implementation of the GBF. The International Union for Conservation of Nature acknowledge that the youth often have the knowledge about nature-based solutions for climate change as well as biodiversity protection. Therefore, resource mobilization strategies should be apply the principle of Intergenerational Equity as well as ensuring adequate resources allocated towards capacity-building and empowerment of youth and youth-led organizations. This will might lead to the achievement of Target 11 of the first draft of GBF that is “**By 2030, Maintain and enhance nature’s contributions to regulation of air quality, quality and quantity of water, and protection from hazards and extreme events for all people**.”

### **ISNAD-Africa Position on the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework**

The International Support Network for African Development (ISNAD-Africa) is a UNEP-accredited and a youth-led non-governmental organisation that is committed to raising global and multi-stakeholder support for greener and climate-resilient Africa through various programmes and initiatives. The organisation operates a multidisciplinary network of about 1,500 professionals, researchers, students, and youth from 140 countries across the globe who are committed to green

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growth in Africa. Headquartered in Ibadan, Nigeria; ISNAD-Africa has team members in 10 countries across five continents of the world.

ISNAD-Africa strongly supports the harmony of the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. While the post 2020 GBF would contribute to the implementation and realisation of the 2030 Agenda, the implementation of the post 2020 GBF will also leverage on the progress made towards the achievement Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, the harmony of the post 2020 GBF with the SDGs would promote policy coherence that breaks silos and fosters synergies, thus reducing the duplication of effort which result in coherent and complementary actions towards green growth.

The GBF will be a major milestone in global agreements on the protection of biodiversity that will set the international ambition for the new decade. The Framework intends to promote and strengthen equity considerations by upholding the rights-based approach. This would ensure that the rights of marginalised groups, women, men, and youth among other share of the global demography are protected. The framework will protect human right to a clean, safe, and healthy environment is recognized, and that decision makers are transparent and accountable for their responsibilities.

GBF requires a participatory and inclusive implementation and this is for it to be in line with other international and regional agreements, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, the framework has considered a whole-of-society approach, as an enabler for its achievement; however, it has not outlined the strategies or the roadmap towards leveraging the benefits this approach. Therefore, the Framework might consider strategic pillars to mainstream biodiversity considerations into all relevant decisions across government, and from a national to local level. This can be through setting clear targets and objectives, as well as providing a roadmap for governments to integrate biodiversity conservation priorities across relevant ministries, sectors, and budgets, and to mobilize wider society around transformative climate action.

### **Key Recommendations**

In order to ensure the empowerment of youth in the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), ISNAD-Africa suggests that the framework should integrate and/or set the pace for:

- Effective youth engagements in the implementation of the framework, beyond awareness creation.
- Strategies for resource mobilisation should be conceptualized and operated based on intergenerational equity as well as ensure adequate resources allocated towards capacity-building and empowerment of youth and youth-led organisations.
- Improvement in the availability, accessibility, and dissemination of information resources with special attention on the youth at all levels.
- Initiatives on intergenerational knowledge, language learning and transmission, especially by indigenous peoples and local communities, are institutionalised and supported through government policy and funding, among other instrument.

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## Conclusion

The rates of biodiversity loss and nature degradation of nature are alarming due to unsustainable production and consumption by human beings. The catastrophic loss of species, not only negatively impact biodiversity but also exacerbate climate change. Hence, Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) should provide and set the pace clear pathways for mitigating as well as reversing the biodiversity losses towards the realisation of a nature positive planet. The framework presents an opportunity for youth empowerment and participation in the protection of biodiversity based on its promotion of intergeneration equity. In addition, the focusing of right-based implementation approach supports which ensures the rights of marginalized groups, women, and youth are addressed.

ISNAD-Africa strongly supports the relationship of the framework with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development. This effort is important in ensuring a duplication of efforts is reduced as well as ensuring coherent and supportive action. In addition, as much as result-based approach fosters the protection of human right, a whole-of -society approach should be considered. This is to bring the GBF in line with other international and regional agreements, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sustainable Development Goals.

## About EcoKnowledge Derivatives

The reconciliation of economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development for green growth represents a new paradigm in development thinking, concept, policy, and practice. Thus, there has been an increasing publication of new knowledge products including reports, tools, and frameworks to define, facilitate, and catalyse the path to green growth. However, the low level of awareness, lengthy and technical nature of the knowledge products limit their readership and uptake for policy, practice, and advocacy.

EcoKnowledge Derivative (EKD) is a strategic mechanism that employs active and non-conventional strategies for effective dissemination of green growth knowledge using policy briefs and social media platforms to catalyse the use, uptake, and implementation of green growth knowledge as well as promote the effort of stakeholders who are generating knowledge for green growth. EKD analyses, harmonises, synthesises and condenses knowledge products into policy briefs and enhanced social media contents (knowledge derivatives) in simple, reader-friendly, and non-technical formats that can be easily understood by specialist and non-specialist stakeholders. The knowledge derivatives are disseminated using conventional media organisations, relevant global mailing digests and social media platforms using a multimedia approach that leverage the unique and comparative advantages.

With support from the World Wide Fund for Nature, EKD builds on ISNAD-Africa's [Africa4Nature Health Initiative \(A4NHI\)](#), a public awareness and policy advocacy initiative for a new deal with nature and people that was implemented in response to nexus of COVID-19 and nature. A4NHI, which was implemented for 19 weeks, reached about 6.2 million people in Africa while the policy recommendations it proffered were reported in [twenty \(24\) news stories](#) in leading newspapers within and outside Africa.

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