



## ANNEX

### Executive Secretary of the CBD: Summary from high level events, April – May 2019

- **Nature Champions Summit (24-25 April 2019, Montreal, Canada)**

The Government of Canada convened from 24-25 April, Montreal, Canada the “**Nature Champions Summit**”. Stressing the importance of *ambition, integration and partnerships*, the Summit created a diverse multi-partner coalition to drive worldwide actions for responsible stewardship of nature. In this effort, the Summit brought environment ministers and government officials from around the world together with representatives of UN agencies and civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as business leaders and philanthropists.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s participation at the Summit marked strong political attachment to the commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, while also recognizing the interconnections among nature, a stable climate, human wellbeing and sustainable development for all. He underscored close links between climate and biodiversity, as well as the solutions that nature provides for both agendas. With massive flooding occurring in the broader Montreal region, he made the issues relevant to people by also noting that “climate change is threatening nature, our houses and our ways of life. When we destroy our natural ecosystems, this speeds up the process.” The Prime Minister’s message was broadcasted live in Canada.

At the invitation of the Canadian Government, the CBD Executive Secretary was invited to address the Summit and participate in various sessions, highlighting the role the Champion’s Summit plays in relation to the intergovernmental policy process under the Convention. The shared press conference with Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honorable Catherine McKenna, provided a timely opportunity to the Executive Secretary to further emphasize the importance of nature and biodiversity as the fundamental infrastructure supporting life on Earth and human development, but also to call on media’s support to help the UN Biodiversity Convention further disseminate awareness of biodiversity loss and its implications, as the Convention builds the momentum towards COP 15 in China. She expressed appreciation to Canada as the host country of the CBD Secretariat for its active engagement in championing this agenda forward and bridging biodiversity with the climate change and the ocean agendas, inspiring further integrated actions for global nature protection.

The Summit concluded with the Nature Champions “Call to Action”, an appeal to raise ambition, with regard the negotiations and adoption of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, to be adopted at CBD COP 15 in China in 2020. From a strategic standpoint, this offers the Convention an opportunity to engage, empower and connect with broader networks of actors to champion actions into the Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming Action Agenda for Nature and People in support of the three objectives of the Convention. Canada’s Nature Champions Summit can be viewed as an important marker in a series of high-profile events leading up to COP 15 in 2020.

- **7<sup>th</sup> Plenary of the IPBES (5 May 2019, Paris, France)**

Just a week later from Canada's Nature Champions Summit, the launching of the landmark **IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services** on 5 May in Paris received extraordinary media coverage. The report revealed the alarming decline in nature and its vital contributions to people, underscoring the loss of biodiversity as a critical security risk for the 21st century. Up to one million species currently face the threat of extinction, more than at any other time in human history. While the news from science is very worrying, the report concluded with a positive tone and indicated that solutions are still within reach, but it will require deep transformative change to tackle biodiversity, climate, oceans, health, economy, and other related sustainable development goals together.

Recognized as the most comprehensive analysis of the state of biodiversity and ecosystems since the 2005 Millennium Ecosystems Assessment, the report stressed viable pathways to sustainability, underlining among these *"the evolution of global financial and economic systems to build a global sustainable economy, steering away from the current limited paradigm of economic growth."* The report confirmed that transformative approaches and systems transitions are emerging across the world and are needed to reverse the alarming trends and pressures on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Several course of action to bring about the transformative changes needed are identified in the report, including, for example, stronger international cooperation, correcting perverse incentive structures, applying a more holistic approach to decision-making and strengthening implementation of environmental laws and policies. Opportunities to address broader societal changes through several nature-based solutions are also noted.

The report provides the intergovernmental process under the UN Biodiversity Convention (CBD) the scientific basis to help shape a new global framework for biodiversity, building forward from the current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. While also serving as a key input for the CBD's fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, scheduled for release next year, the IPBES report equips decision makers with sound data and analysis on which to base policy choices for nature, considering economic, social, political and technological factors, also relevant to advance on the existing Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The CBD Executive Secretary was invited to address the 7<sup>th</sup> Plenary of IPBES. In her remarks, she congratulated the authors, the co-chairs, and the IPBES Executive Secretary for their excellent work, and has further emphasized the critical importance of this scientific input for the design of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that CBD Parties are undertaking in the lead up to COP 15 in China in 2020. The Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has received massive front-page media coverage in France, and through other important news outlets around the world. Moreover, President Macron's press conference on the Assessment, in the presence of the report authors, has further raised the political importance of biodiversity.

- **The G7 Environment Minister's meeting (5-6 May 2019, Metz, France)**

The Secretariat's diplomatic engagement with France over the last year has contributed to positioning biodiversity on the agenda of the **G7 Environment Minister's meeting** hosted by France in 2019. President Macron's determined leadership to profile biodiversity and its linkage with climate and oceans in the context of G7 is to be highly commended, as it signaled the political direction to work towards greater integration and innovative solutions to address these interconnected issues. The G7 Environment Minister's meeting with the theme "Fighting Inequality by Protecting Biodiversity and Climate", was hosted and presided by French Minister for Ecological and Inclusive Transition, François de Rugy, and the two State Secretaries, Brune Poirson and Emmanuelle Wargon. G7 members were represented at

Ministerial/State Secretary level, with the participation of Ministers and representatives from non G7 countries, as observers (Indonesia, India, Fiji, Gabon, Egypt, Mexico, Chile, Niger and Norway).

Building on the G7's focus on protecting biodiversity, G7 Environment Minister's adopted an omnibus Communiqué, along with the "Metz Charter on Biodiversity", the political declaration emphasizing the need to accelerate and intensify efforts to halt biodiversity loss, to encourage engagement of other actors and stakeholders, and to support the development and implementation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Coupled to this were three Declarations, namely on the "International Leaders for Biodiversity" Initiative, "Halting deforestation including through sustainable supply chains for agricultural commodities" and an "Intention of Support for Gender Responsive Environmental Action and Training" (GREAT).

As Co-chair of the biodiversity track of President Macron's G7 One Planet Lab Initiative, the CBD Executive Secretary was invited to address the G7 Ministerial meeting under the session "Scientists' warnings and international mobilisation around climate change and biodiversity". Her remarks ensured that the UN Biodiversity Convention's priorities and goals for CBD COP 15 were recognized as a fundamental milestone, in the context of broader development priorities critical for our wellbeing and our future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. CBD's representation at this high-level engagement, emphasized the importance of biodiversity, in view of our overall security, building on the social movements to tackle runaway climate change and ecological crises around the world. As a political, economic and societal priority we must continue to leverage biodiversity a part of the political discourse and solutions for the future we want.

- **Launching of OECD and WWF France-AXA reports, 6 May 2019, Metz, France**

In the context of the French Presidency of G7, OECD's Secretary General Angel Gurría launched the report "Biodiversity: Finance and the Economic and Business Case for Action". This report complements very well the messages coming from science and political dimensions and provides evidence that the "cost of inaction" on biodiversity is very high, estimated at USD 4-20 trillion per year in ecosystems services from 1997 to 2011, owing to land-cover change and an estimated USD 6-11 trillion per year from land degradation. On the other hand, the report estimates considerable economic and business benefits by investing in nature preservation and sustainable use. For example, USD 235 billion to USD 577 billion is estimated to be the annual market value of crops dependent on animal pollination.

Another key deliverable on the economic and business side was WWF France and AXA's report "Into the Wild – Integrating Nature into Investment Strategies". Among its conclusions it noted that "nature in investment decision-making processes is an urgent need, for human societies as well as for financial institutions themselves. The integration of environmental concerns is a recent enterprise for financial institutions".

The Secretariat of the UN Biodiversity Convention welcome the launch of these economic, finance and investment reports as these activities were part of the strategic engagement work carried out by the Executive Secretary last year with OECD and WWF France, as well as with the World Economic Forum, to raise attention on the necessity to have credible reports articulating the cost of inaction on biodiversity loss, while outlining the importance of a paradigm shift in the economic thinking vis-à-vis nature.