



Environment and Climate Change Committee

Oral evidence: COP15: the international biodiversity conference

Tuesday 29 June 2021

11.15 am

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Members present: Baroness Parminter (The Chair); Baroness Boycott; Lord Browne of Ladyton; Lord Cameron of Dillington; Baroness Chalker; Lord Colgrain; Lord Lilley; Baroness Northover; The Lord Bishop of Oxford; Lord Puttnam; Lord Whitty; Baroness Young of Old Scone.

Evidence Session No. 5

Virtual Proceeding

Questions 46 - 53

Witnesses

I: David Cooper, Deputy Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat; Bernadette Fischler Hooper, Head of International Advocacy, WWF UK; Dr Dilys Roe, Principal Researcher and Team Leader (Biodiversity) and Chair, IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group, International Institute for Environment and Development; Soledad Leal Campos, Lead, Sustainable Trade with the Economic Law and Policy Programme, International Institute for Sustainable Development.

Examination of witnesses

David Cooper, Bernadette Fischler Hooper, Dr Dilys Roe and Soledad Leal Campos.

Q46 **The Chair:** Good morning, and welcome to the second session of the day in our inquiry into the Convention on Biological Diversity. I welcome our four witnesses on the second panel. David Cooper is the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat. Welcome. Bernadette Fischler Hooper is Head of International Advocacy at WWF UK, and I think is in its building in Woking, which I have visited a number of times. Dr Dilys Roe is the Principal Researcher and Team Leader on Biodiversity and the Chair of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods specialist group, or SULi, at the International Institute for Environment and Development, the IIED. Fourthly, but no less welcome, is Soledad Leal Campos, the Lead for Sustainable Trade with the economic law and policy programme at the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the IISD. All of you are extremely welcome.

I particularly thank David for his attendance today. You are all welcome, but David is joining us from Montreal. I think he is five hours behind, so, thank you very much, David, for sparing us your time. You are very welcome.

I remind all attendees that a transcript will be taken, and you will have the chance to review it before it is published. The session is webcast live and will subsequently be made available on the parliamentary website. I remind Members that they need to state any relevant interests when they first ask a question.

Without further ado, I will ask the first question and pose it first to David, if that is okay. I will then ask all three other members of the panel to respond, if they would not mind. What are the main interfaces between biodiversity and, respectively, climate change, trade and development?

David Cooper: Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the important work of the committee.

The links between biodiversity and climate change are multifaceted. We can regard biodiversity loss and climate change essentially as two parts of a larger problem. They are inseparable, as the results of the recent IPCC-IPBES joint expert workshop concluded. First, climate change is a major driver of biodiversity loss. We are already seeing impacts on biodiversity and, if climate change is not mitigated, it will become the largest driver of biodiversity loss later this century, according to the IPBES global assessment and other assessments.

In this sense, every degree matters, and every fraction of a degree matters. Depending on the indicator and the measures, the loss at 2 degrees warming could already be twice as bad as the loss at 1.5 degrees warming. On some measures, it may be of an order of magnitude worse, particularly for coral reefs. The first thing is that we have to address climate change if we are to reduce biodiversity loss.

On the other hand, biodiversity and ecosystems can be a major part of the solution, in the sense that ecosystems can contribute around a third of the total mitigation efforts needed to meet the Paris Agreement, to get close to 1.5 degrees. This is primarily through the conservation of existing ecosystems—forests and other high-carbon ecosystems—but also through restoration, of course. We are now in the UN decade of ecosystem restoration, and we need strong restoration action. It is also in the way we manage landscapes, agricultural and other landscapes. Together, these could contribute around a third of the total efforts needed in net greenhouse gas reductions. There are a lot of caveats to how that should be done, and we can perhaps come to those.

We also need to factor in climate change because, whatever we do, we are still having climate change. We have to factor climate change into the conservation actions that we take; the siting of protected areas and the need for connectivity between protected areas, for instance.

Finally, we have to be careful that the way we take action to mitigate climate change does not have undue negative impacts on biodiversity, whether through the siting of wind farms or hydroelectric, and, above all, through biomass and bioenergy. Indeed, this was highlighted very strongly in the recent IPCC-IPBES report. Large-scale bioenergy would probably do more harm than good for both biodiversity and climate change, so the way we manage that is crucial.

Basically, those issues will succeed or fail together; we have to address them together. The good news is that, if we address them together, we can get to a virtuous cycle, where ecosystems are maintained and they can continue to provide mitigation. As I should have mentioned, they have an equally important role, of course, in adaptation, in allowing people and ecosystems themselves to adapt to climate change.

The relationship between biodiversity, trade and development is even more complex. Just looking at trade, we can say that, on the one hand, trade can improve the efficiency of natural resources by producing the right things in the right places, but you have to trade that off against the fact that you are separating the source of production and consumption, and therefore that the opportunity for the natural feedbacks that will occur, with overexploitation and things like that, is less. You get the so-called teleconnections, where consumers are oblivious to the impacts at the sites of production. Of course, through trade, you risk entrenching and getting the worst impacts of power imbalances and imbalances of wealth between one part of the world and the other. You also have emissions related to trade itself.

The second factor is that an increase in trade is associated with one of the key drivers of biodiversity loss in particular, which is the spread of invasive alien species that already costs us around \$100 billion a year. This impact is projected to double, and in fact has been doubling, every six years, and it is projected to do so if we do not address the problem.

There are of course opportunities in trade policy for reducing the impacts on biodiversity. Most pertinent right now are the ongoing negotiations under the WTO to eliminate harmful fisheries subsidies. It would make a huge impact if that could be done. In that sense, the work of the trade bodies could be very significant.

More broadly, there is a need for trade policy to take the externalities much more into account. That means that you have to distinguish between the product and the way it is produced. There is probably a long way to go there on trade policy. I am sure that Soledad will have much more to say about that.

The Chair: Thank you, David. Perhaps I could ask Soledad to comment before I move to Bernadette and Dilys.

Soledad Leal Campos: Thank you very much for the questions raised and for the invitation to join this session. I am very honoured to be here today.

To address the interfaces between biodiversity and trade, I would like to refer to the report prepared by the OECD for the United Kingdom G7 presidency, entitled *Biodiversity, Natural Capital and the Economy*. The report notes that biodiversity underpins all economic activities and human well-being. It further emphasises that all economic activities both depend on and affect nature.

Furthermore, a report published by the World Economic Forum early last year estimated that over half of the world's GDP is moderately or highly dependent on nature and its services. Trade, and more specifically international trade, connects producers with consumers in foreign markets. On the one hand, for consumers, trade can mean having access to goods and services that otherwise might not be available in the domestic marketplace. On the other hand, for producers, trade can mean new export market opportunities that can contribute to revenue generation, job creation, economic growth and development. These market opportunities include participation in global or regional supply chains.

In the impact of trade on biodiversity, nuances are very important. The OECD report indicates that while international trade is recognised in SDGs as an engine for sustainable development, it can have mixed implications for biodiversity. The report notes that impacts can vary in nature and in scale, depending on two very important factors: policy setting, and patterns of production and consumption, both domestically and globally. This connects to the point that David made, and perhaps we will elaborate on that later.

The report gives a couple of examples of positive impacts of international trade on biodiversity. The first is an increase in efficiency of production, in the sense that producers maximise the use of resources, which can reduce the demand for land and other natural resources. The second is

access to environmental goods, services and technologies that are not available in the local marketplace.

David has already referred to some of the negative impacts of trade on biodiversity. The report includes the exacerbation of the five key drivers of biodiversity loss, which are changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species, as David referred to.

The report points to three main channels through which exacerbation can occur. The first is shifts in production, which can exacerbate pressures on biodiversity—for instance, in countries with low environmental standards, or where negative externalities are higher. The second is the introduction of alien species, to which David referred—for instance, through the trade in plant and animal species that can cause damage to crops. Third is trade in environmentally sensitive goods. This includes not only timber and other forest commodities, but wildlife trade, which has caused severe depletion in wildlife populations. In this context, the report points to the factors surrounding illegal wildlife trade.

Perhaps in the next round I can talk about environmentally sensitive goods, but I would like to add something on global supply chains, which is connected to the point David raised. The report notes: “The impacts of international trade on biodiversity are context dependent and difficult to track”. This is explained, for instance, because in a supply chain the inputs are incorporated in an end product that may have crossed a number of borders several times before reaching the consumer market. In this context, the biodiversity impacts of trade stem mainly from the location and process of production. As David said, there is a long way to go in addressing how a product has been produced. Perhaps I can comment on that when we talk about the WTO and bilateral trade agreements.

I agree with David that the negative impacts of trade are further exacerbated by environmentally harmful government support that incentivises unsustainable agricultural and fisheries production, or the use of fossil fuels. As David said, we need to look for solutions, and I would like to refer very briefly to a positive link between trade and biodiversity, which perhaps we will elaborate on later: the BioTrade initiative conducted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development—UNCTAD—which defines biotrade as “the collection or production, transformation, and commercialization of goods and services derived from biodiversity”. According to UNCTAD’s numbers, over the past 25 years the initiative has created more than 5 million jobs, and biotrade sales topped \$5 billion in 2019.

The report of a virtual meeting organised under the initiative a month ago notes that trade must be part of the solution to biodiversity loss and that “if done legally and sustainably, trade—an engine of economic growth and provider of livelihood options—is one of the elements which can contribute to a successful post-2020 global biodiversity framework”,

which I understand we will be talking about later today. I think that is all I would like to say in this round. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Soledad. Could you ensure that we have sight of the last report that you mentioned, from a month ago? If you could send that to the secretariat, we would like to see it. For brief opening remarks, I will now turn to Bernadette before finishing with Dilys.

Bernadette Fischler Hooper: Thank you very much, and many thanks for having me.

I will focus mostly on the main interface between climate and biodiversity, because that is my area of expertise. As David has already outlined very eloquently, nature and climate are interdependent. The science is very clear that it is not possible to get to 1.5 degrees global warming without reducing emissions from land use and agriculture. If you want to say it a bit more sloppily, there is no 1.5 without nature, but there is not very much nature without 1.5.

The WWF very recently launched a report called *Feeling the Heat*. It explains what a big effect the difference between 1.5 and 2 degrees warming would have on the natural environment, on different species of plants and animals. Thus you can indeed say that there is no 1.5 without nature and that there is not much nature without 1.5.

An image that is often evoked when talking about climate and nature is that they are two sides of the same coin. Personally, I do not like that image, because the sides of a coin look in opposite directions and do not face each other. I had a long think about this. Bear with me. I think the relationship between nature and climate is more like lichen. It is two things, algae and bacteria, which look from the outside as if they are one, and they are dependent on each other to survive. I think nature and climate are more like lichen than two sides of the same coin.

However, when it comes to policy and politics, sometimes climate regimes or climate policies and biodiversity regimes or biodiversity policies indeed act as if they are two sides of the same coin. They look in opposite directions so they do not know what is happening behind their back on the other side. I have been involved for many years in the CBD process and in the UNFCCC process, and I have seen that quite often, especially in the UNFCCC process. There are uncounted times when I have tried to speak to climate negotiators about the importance of maximising the potential of nature for climate mitigation and adaptation, and they have said, "Can you just go and sort that out in CBD?" They say that not because they have so much respect for the CBD process, but because they just do not want to be bothered.

There is a certain relationship issue, let us say, between those two processes. It is not only at the UN process level; it is also at policy level. The IPCC-IPBES report, which David mentioned earlier, says very clearly that previous policies have largely tackled biodiversity loss and climate

change independently of each other and in silos, and says, at the same time, that it would be so much better to try to build on the synergies.

When it comes to the main interfaces between climate and biodiversity, the topic itself in the real world is very interlinked, like lichen, but when it comes to policy and politics it is like two sides of the same coin. I think the UK Government have a unique opportunity at the moment to change that. I know that we are talking here mostly about CBD, but the UK Government have the presidency for the COP26 in Glasgow, and for this image problem, or relationship building for a better acknowledgement of nature in the climate regime, there is a lot that they can do, and perhaps this committee might want to choose to recommend that they look into that. I think that is it for my initial remarks. Do you want me to talk about trade-offs as well?

The Chair: That is fine. We will come on to that in some depth. It was just some opening remarks. Dilys, do you have some brief opening remarks, too?

Dr Dilys Roe: I will keep this very brief, because my colleagues have covered a lot of it in detail. I guess I just want to leave us with a reminder that biodiversity loss, climate change and development are three very interlinked challenges, and, in fact, have been referred to as a triple emergency. A number of countries have declared climate emergencies and nature emergencies, but I think it is genuinely a triple emergency that we face. We might think that on the development side we have made huge progress in poverty alleviation over the decades, but global inequality is growing hugely, and COVID-19 has now knocked back huge advances that we have made in poverty alleviation and in development. My key point is that we face an interlinked triple challenge.

The key problem is that, all too frequently, the three challenges are handled separately, and handled in silos by separate ministries, championed by separate NGOs, and debated by separate journalists, in separate media. Recognising the interlinkage means that we really must pay greater attention to tackling these issues together. The Leaders' Pledge for Nature, agreed at the UN biodiversity summit last year, recognises the need for a non-siloed approach to the challenges, but we are not seeing that currently in other statements that come out, including in the G7 nature compact and in the emerging global biodiversity framework. That is what I would like to emphasise: let us think about these things together, not separately.

The Chair: Thank you, Dilys.

Q47 **Lord Cameron of Dillington:** I am so glad to hear Dilys say what she has just said about the triple challenge. That is so important in merging it all together. We are a very crowded world and it is getting more crowded with that terrible pest called humans. England, for instance, is now the most densely populated country in Europe.

I should have introduced myself at the beginning. My interests are as a

farmer and landowner. I also chair the research station called the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology. As a farmer, I am aware that in this very crowded land we have to try to get more uses from one particular piece of land, more output should I say, than just food or economy. It is a question of trying to merge together the biodiversity, climate and the social and economic outputs from land.

My question is to Bernadette first. What measures to integrate biodiversity, climate and other solutions are you hoping to see in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework? How can nature-based solutions be best designed to achieve climate, biodiversity and other goals?

Bernadette Fischler Hooper: Thank you for that question. At WWF, we are very much part of the group that is looking into the triple challenge. Our recent report, *Avoiding Triple Jeopardy*, talks about exactly how trade-offs can be managed between climate, nature and food systems, to turn any vicious cycles into virtuous cycles. The outcome is that it can just about be managed if we start acting very soon, but, no matter what happens, it will have a lot of negative impacts on countries in the global south, which also need to be addressed.

To your question about what it should look like in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and how climate should be best integrated there, for WWF the post-2020 global biodiversity framework—or GBF, as we call it—has to have the mission to reverse the loss of nature by 2030, or has to add up to reversing it. Nothing less will do to pull our planet back from the brink of mass extinction. To do that, it needs targets and goals that are both comprehensive and ambitious. Sometimes it is not possible to do both; it is a big task, and an important balance to maintain.

One of the very important things that the global biodiversity framework needs to do is to capture the imagination and the interests of both world leaders and the global public. That is why I started with the mission: because we think that an ambitious but clear mission, and a clear idea of how we can achieve the nature-positive world that we want to see—we want to reverse the loss of nature by 2030—can capture imagination and interest, and motivate Heads of State or Governments, Presidents and Prime Ministers, as well as the wider general public, perhaps similarly to the SDGs when they were agreed.

That is very important because of the image problem that I mentioned in my opening remarks. If things are seen as important, it is more likely that they will be implemented. I feel that the UK Government have done a great job already. I think there is an understanding that it is important to bring this high-level recognition, and the Leaders' Pledge for Nature, which was launched more than a year ago, did a really good job in trying to galvanise that, as well as the nature compact recently agreed at the G7 summit. But that is the starting point, and the momentum needs to keep growing. The job is not done. It needs to keep going. We need more ministerial engagement and high-level engagement going forward.

I appreciate that saying that we need more high-level engagement is not something that you can write into a goal of the framework. On the content, there are three concrete elements that I think need to be included, because it is clear that conservation efforts alone will not be able to reverse the loss of nature by 2030. We also need to tackle the root causes, and one of the root causes is climate change. As I said earlier, there is no 1.5 without nature and not much nature without 1.5. That needs to be well reflected.

The first key element will have to be a very strong commitment to protect and conserve precious ecosystems. The current version of the global biodiversity framework aims for 30% conservation of the planet by 2030, which is very welcome, and I think that is about the right level, as long as it makes sure that indigenous peoples and local communities form an integral part of the enterprise of implementing the start of it. That is good.

The second element that needs to be in the framework is the need to enable high-quality nature-based solutions that aim to address the triple challenge, providing solutions for nature, climate and development issues such as food systems. That means that it also needs to include a very specific target on reducing the footprint of the agriculture sector. Food systems are responsible for around 30% of greenhouse gases. They have a strong impact not only on biodiversity but on addressing climate change.

The third thing that definitely needs to be included in the global biodiversity framework is integrated implementation at the national level. The global biodiversity framework needs to call for biodiversity to be fully integrated in all national climate policies, just as climate is fully integrated in all national biodiversity policies. In other words, to throw some acronyms at you, the NDCs—nationally determined contributions—need to maximise the potential of nature for climate adaptation and mitigation, and the NBSAPs, the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, need to be integrated and to include considerations on how to ensure that actions also contribute to climate change mitigation. It could even be one and the same plan, but that would probably be too easy and too straightforward.

Those are the three parts that I think should definitely be integrated in the global biodiversity framework to ensure that there is good interlinked work across both climate and biodiversity.

Lord Cameron of Dillington: Thank you very much. That is very good. I do not think we will get this all in in an hour if you all give such long answers. I am not being critical, because that was a very good answer. David, from the point of view of the secretariat of the CBD, do you have any comments on that, or on the issue?

David Cooper: I very much agree with what Bernadette has just said. Certainly, we need an overall aim or mission leading to the longer-term 2050 vision that is already agreed and which provides the right

framework for integrated action. We need to take that down to national level. There has to be a whole of government/whole of society response to any of these issues, so leadership by Heads of State and Government, and by Chancellors and Treasury Ministers, is really important, beyond Environment Ministers. In the draft as it is, there is a draft target that looks at how biodiversity can contribute to the climate problem, as well as looking at how the impacts of climate change can be reduced. Similarly, there is a draft target for the role of biodiversity in supporting the productivity of agriculture.

You mentioned your own role as a farmer, and certainly the food and agriculture sector is key to both climate and biodiversity. Obviously, as regards climate, the energy sector is key. Nature-based solutions cannot replace reducing fossil fuels, but for biodiversity as a whole the sectors with the biggest impacts are the food and agriculture sectors. We have to address that alongside more targeted conservation action.

Lord Cameron of Dillington: You do not all have to answer all the questions, but as it is your subject, Dilys, do you have any short comments? Really fast, please.

Dr Dilys Roe: Thank you for asking me. I just want to make the point that nature-based solutions are the flavour of the month at the moment. They are evident in the climate change convention as well as appearing now in the global biodiversity framework. Everybody is talking about them.

I want to cast a word of warning that we must make sure that they are valued for their multiple benefits to people, climate and biodiversity, and not just for overly simple metrics such as numbers of trees that are planted or short-term carbon gains. If not, there is a real danger that the term will be hijacked and used to describe actions that offset activities that destroy nature—for example, planting trees to offset business-as-usual fossil fuel consumption and associated emissions.

We need to recognise that some nature-based solutions are actually nature-based problems. They can be bad for nature if they plant exotic trees or monocultures in places where trees should not be planted, or they can be bad for people if they exclude them from their land. It is really important that the current enthusiasm for nature-based solutions prioritises people as well as biodiversity and climate, and does not focus on offsetting.

Lord Cameron of Dillington: I am afraid, Soledad, that I have occupied too much time, so I will hand back to the Chair.

The Chair: Thank you. Lord Cameron is a very distinguished ex-Chair of many House of Lords committees and he has reminded us that we will run out of time if we ask all panellists to answer all questions. We will leave it to one person, and, if you have a particular point that you wish to make briefly, please raise your hand. I think that will be the best way to manage the remaining time, given your enthusiasm and detailed

knowledge.

Q48 **Baroness Boycott:** Thank you all very much for the contributions. I was particularly interested in Bernadette saying how we need to harness people's imaginations to make us move out of this. Are there successes of the Paris Agreement which the CBD could learn from? Some Governments are giving increasing priority to climate change issues. Again, how can we take lessons from that to mainstream biodiversity loss? I will come to you, Bernadette, and, if there is time, ask David for a comment, but I quite understand the point that we are slightly on speed dial now.

Bernadette Fischler Hooper: Thank you very much for the question. I will try to speed it up a bit.

There are definitely lessons from the success of the Paris Agreement that can be used to ensure great success on the global biodiversity framework when it has been agreed. There are some key ingredients that made Paris a success. I appreciate that the implementation of the Paris Agreement could go a bit better at this stage, but I still feel that it was a good success to have it in the first place.

I have identified five points. The first is high-level political mobilisation. I talked earlier about why that is important and how it can happen. There were more than 150 Heads of State and Government in Paris; no pressure on the Chinese presidency, but it is really important to get Ministers and Heads of Government to pay more attention to the CBD process. The UK has been leading by example, and, if the momentum keeps growing and does not stop, that can happen.

The second key ingredient would be a north star for the framework, or an overarching aim that inspires. Just like the aim of keeping global warming to 1.5 or 2 degrees in Paris, for the global biodiversity framework we think it could be reversing the loss of nature by 2030, or the nature-positive framing, which is also often used now and seems to be quite popular. Having an inspiring idea is important and helps in landing success all round.

Thirdly, like everything, agreements happen on paper, but implementation is what makes them a reality. The Paris Agreement brought us a new and interesting way to implement the idea that you can ratchet your ambition and your action at regular intervals; you do not have to wait 10 years until the next framework, for example, to make a new action plan. You can increase it as part of the implementation process. I would highly recommend considering that for the global biodiversity framework as well—having an implementation mechanism that allows countries to regularly increase their ambition and their action, to take stock, to see where we are, to look at the gap, and to see what we can do next to close the gap further. I think that kind of implementation can really work.

The fourth part is a clear lesson, and not only from the Paris Agreement, that finance will be what makes it stand or fall, sink or swim. There needs to be a good understanding of the end game on how to unlock resource mobilisation. Again, that is a problem for both climate and biodiversity. The one silver lining there is that, if finance is mobilised in a way that is beneficial for both climate and biodiversity, you can get a bit more bang for your buck. It has to come from all sources.

The fifth and last point is that what was really a game-changer in Paris was the strong mobilisation and participation of non-state actors from civil society and business. There have been initial attempts to do that, but especially in business the climate action agenda as a whole workstream by non-state actors can be part of the whole proceedings. That was definitely a game-changer as well. To see in the real economy, in the real world outside the negotiations, the belief that we can do this and we want you to do this, definitely helped the Paris Agreement to be a success as well.

You asked about mainstreaming, which is important. Every aspect of our lives has to do with nature. This is not a WWF position but my personal view: I want to be cautious about mainstreaming. There are a lot of things that need to be mainstreamed, from gender consideration to human rights, to everything. In my experience, sometimes mainstreaming is also a way to let things fall through the cracks and, rather than it being considered under every aspect, it is not considered under any aspect. While mainstreaming is important, having a focus is very important, too.

Baroness Boycott: Thank you very much. David, is there anything you quickly want to add? I was very interested in Bernadette's fifth point about the mobilisation of non-state actors being important in Paris. Do you see the same thing happening at Kunming?

David Cooper: We certainly hope so, and I agree that it is extremely important. In that sense, having in the framework targets or other elements that can be translated in a meaningful way for all those other sectors is important.

I completely underline two things that Bernadette mentioned. One is the importance of the continuous monitoring and transparency mechanism. The UK is pushing that very strongly in the negotiations. The other is finance. We will definitely need additional public international finance. There is also a lot that can be done in shifting financial institutions through sending the right signals, as has happened in climate change, and in the work Mark Carney has done on climate, for instance, that we need to see happening in biodiversity.

Baroness Boycott: Thank you.

Q49 **Baroness Northover:** My question picks up a number of themes that were addressed in your initial remarks. Obviously, the world agreed the millennium development goal to halve extreme poverty by 2015, and

achieved that, but, as you have already indicated, with a huge amount of inequality, which was what people sought to address in the sustainable development goals. They were to end extreme poverty and leave no one behind. That is obviously key here, given that the poorest are hit the first and the worst in these circumstances.

We already have 17 goals in the SDGs, 169 targets and suchlike. You are making the point that this needs to be integrated. How does the latest draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework address the links between biodiversity and the development agendas, and how effectively do you think that might be the case?

Dr Dilys Roe: Thank you very much for the question. I am really pleased that it is being asked. It is important to recognise that the CBD has always recognised that development priorities must be addressed, even in an environmental agreement. Its preamble notes that regardless of any biodiversity crisis, “economic and social development, and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries”.

The successive high-level targets and strategic plans which the CBD set in 2002 and 2010 also highlighted the need to reduce biodiversity loss as a contribution to reducing poverty. That part, that link with poverty, is quite often overlooked and we just focus on reducing biodiversity loss. The current draft global biodiversity framework is somewhat different in that, unlike its predecessors, it does not emphasise poverty reduction and development in its mission or vision statements, but obviously there is a clear expectation that it should make the link between biodiversity and development. The Leaders’ Pledge for Nature specifically makes the point that implementing an ambitious and transformational global biodiversity framework is essential for achieving the sustainable development goals.

Development issues are represented in parts of the GBF goals and targets. The framework is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on reducing threats to biodiversity. It has the kinds of targets that you might expect, focusing on protection, conservation and restoration of nature, but one of the targets is about the role of nature-based solutions in supporting climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Both of those are key development issues. Another target is aligned with the pandemic preparedness agenda. It emphasises that the use and trade of wild species has to be safe as well as legal and sustainable.

The second part of the framework is focused on meeting people’s needs. This includes targets that are very well aligned with the development agenda. One target is about the importance of managing wild species to contribute to food security, livelihoods, health and well-being. Another is about the role of biodiversity in agricultural systems, and another is about equitable benefit-sharing from the utilisation of genetic resources—for example, those used in the pharmaceutical industry that are derived from developing countries.

The third section of the framework focuses on the tools and approaches that are needed to achieve its goals. One of the targets there emphasises the need to integrate biodiversity management into poverty reduction strategies and other development processes. It makes the link between the biodiversity and development agendas, but development issues are not embedded systematically throughout the framework. This applies to the extent to which it recognises both the real potential of biodiversity for development and some of the risks of biodiversity conservation for development.

On the positive side, I think that much more could be made of the jobs, income and other core developmental benefits that biodiversity provides, way beyond the basic needs that are the main emphasis of the current draft. My organisation, the IIED, recently published an analysis of the development outcomes of hundreds of nature-based interventions in poor countries. It highlights a huge range of local benefits, from jobs and income to food security, climate resilience, empowerment and capacity development. Similarly, a recent report by the World Economic Forum found that nature-positive framing could create 395 million jobs in the next decade. I think that potential is severely underplayed in the current draft of the global biodiversity framework.

On the negative side, more attention is needed to the ways in which some efforts to protect biodiversity might adversely affect human development. It needs to think about the kinds of safeguards that are needed to ensure that there is no trade-off between biodiversity and development.

Finally, the draft needs to pay much greater attention to human rights and equity, and ensure that they are embedded across it, in both the targets and the implementation mechanisms. I am sure that no one can be unaware of the human rights abuses that have been carried out and continue to be carried out in the name of conservation. The global biodiversity framework has to be absolutely clear about that being unacceptable. It needs to be closely aligned with the human rights agenda as well as the development agenda.

I could go on to talk more about specific SDGs and how they might be aligned, but perhaps I should stop there in the first instance and follow up in more detail.

Baroness Northover: That is incredibly helpful. Thank you very much indeed. If you could send the links to those reports, it would be helpful. If you have comments on those SDGs, sending them through in writing would also be incredibly helpful. As I say, I am aware of the pressure of time. If others are content, I will hand back to the Chair, as I think you have comprehensively covered that in a very helpful way. Thank you.

The Chair: Can we now move to Lord Whitty?

Q50 **Lord Whitty:** Dr Roe has clearly covered the general issue of synergy and trade-offs between the SDGs and biodiversity, but it would be useful

to us if we could have a few specific examples of the conflict between biodiversity and development goals on the one hand, and, on the other, where there is a clear synergy. It would help us to pin it down a bit if you could give us specific examples.

Dr Dilys Roe: As regards synergies, one key opportunity is to make direct reference to and ensure alignment with the sustainable development goals. They are an existing framework of targets and indicators that have been agreed by the global community. To give a couple of examples, global biodiversity framework target No. 9 is about the productivity of managed ecosystems, agricultural systems in particular. That could draw directly on SDG target 2.3, which also talks about agricultural productivity but makes direct reference to the need to double agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous peoples and family farmers. It is much more specific than the kinds of targets and indicators in the global biodiversity framework at the moment.

Similarly, the GBF target on mainstreaming could be strengthened with language from the SDGs, which talk specifically about policy frameworks that need to be pro poor and gender sensitive, and those kinds of development strategies. There is a lot of detail in the SDGs that could be brought into the global biodiversity framework and would really enhance the linkages between them.

I touched on the issue of human rights, where there is a real opportunity to enhance synergies. For example, the global biodiversity framework currently does not pay attention to the need to strengthen land rights and resource rights for indigenous people and local communities. The IPBES global assessment published in 2019, which clearly recognises that biodiversity is declining globally, highlights that it is declining less quickly on land owned and managed by indigenous peoples and local communities compared with global declines, but quite often those people suffer from incredibly poor land rights, and are unable to defend their land and continue to manage the biodiversity on it. Strengthening those rights not only secures the developmental needs of indigenous people and local communities, but enables them to protect and defend their land and its biodiversity. That is a clear win-win, which I think is a missed opportunity.

As regards trade-offs, I mentioned the need for safeguards. It is absolutely vital that we have social safeguards embedded throughout the framework. There is a clear precedent for that in other UN agreements. In the UNFCCC, for example, in response to concerns about land and resource rights related to the rollout of interventions designed to reduce carbon emissions through forest management, COP 16 of the UNFCCC agreed a set of safeguards for REDD+ interventions. These include respect for indigenous people's knowledge and rights, and full and effective participation for all stakeholders.

We need similar kinds of things in the global biodiversity framework. Particular areas where we need that are in target 2, which advocates that

30% of the world's land surface be protected by 2030. That absolutely has to be done with the full involvement, co-operation and permission of the indigenous people on whose land much of that increased protected area coverage will be dependent. Targets 7 and 10 are about the use of nature-based solutions, which, as I have already mentioned, could result in people being displaced from their land.

Those are the particular areas: synergies with existing frameworks of the SDGs, and drawing on that language; drawing on processes that have already been agreed elsewhere; and the need for safeguards to reduce trade-offs, again drawing on precedents from other conventions and other legal precedents.

Lord Whitty: Thank you. That is very helpful. We can move on now.

Q51 **Lord Lilley:** Can you tell us what are the main trade-related elements in the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework? In doing so, could you explain to us why we do not rely on the people and Governments in each country to look after their biodiversity rather than seeking to do so through those who trade with them? Could I ask Soledad to answer that?

Soledad Leal Campos: Many thanks for the question, Lord Lilley. Some of the trade-related elements in the draft post-2020 GBF are included in target 4 on wildlife trade, target 5 on invasive alien species, target 17 on incentive measures, and target 13 on biodiversity mainstreaming.

The target on wildlife trade is, "By 2030, ensure that the harvesting, trade and use of wild species of flora and fauna is legal, at sustainable levels and safe". In this area, as mentioned in the OECD-G7 report that I referred to earlier today, concrete actions include fighting against illegal wildlife trade, closing legal loopholes, addressing corruption, improving the prosecution of environmental crimes, combating the associated financial flows, and fostering co-operation among law enforcement authorities locally and internationally, as well as working with key countries and expert bodies to design interventions that address the underlying issues of consumer demand for illegal wildlife trade products.

The target on invasive alien species is, by 2030, to manage, and where possible control, pathways to the introduction of invasive alien species. The draft now talks about "achieving a [50%] reduction in the rate of new introductions, and eradicate or control invasive alien species to eliminate or reduce their impacts ... in at least [50%] of priority sites".

On this front, there is a need to continue the long-standing co-operation between the WTO and the CBD secretariats. The WTO secretariat and the standard-setting bodies are members of the CBD liaison group on IAS. There is ongoing co-operation and that should be continued. Another concrete action would be to support implementation of COP14 decision 14.11 which, among other elements, provides supplementary voluntary guidance for avoiding unintentional introductions of invasive alien species associated with trade in live organisms, and encourages use of it by Governments and relevant sectors in organisations.

In the interests of time, perhaps I will skip the other elements of that target. However, I will refer to a very important one, which is incentive measures. This has already been mentioned by colleagues. The target is to, "By 2030, redirect, repurpose, reform or eliminate incentives which are harmful for biodiversity, including reduction in the most harmful subsidies, ensuring that incentives, including public and private economic and regulatory incentives, are either positive or neutral for biodiversity".

I think that the most urgent action would be to reform or remove environmentally harmful support to agriculture, fisheries and fossil fuels, to improve the sustainability of production and to reduce the negative impacts of trade on biodiversity by prioritising the elimination of the most market distorting and environmentally harmful types of support.

The last point is biodiversity mainstreaming. I take Bernadette's point about mainstreaming. Perhaps for the trade community, mainstreaming would be a helpful way to fully understand the need to protect biodiversity. In this sense, the target is: "By 2030, integrate biodiversity values into policies, regulations, planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts at all levels, ensuring that biodiversity values are mainstreamed across all sectors and integrated into assessments of environmental impacts".

An advisory group has developed a long-term approach to the biodiversity mainstreaming requested by COP14. I think there is a lot we can do in raising awareness among all relevant actors through capacity-building activities and through the development of trade-related indicators. I think this connects to your question, Lord Lilley, about not waiting for others to act. We can involve all levels: the individual level, the government level and the institutional level.

Lord Lilley: Thank you. In the interests of time, probably we need to go on to the next question.

The Chair: I think we probably do.

Q52 **Baroness Young of Old Scone:** I think our witnesses have already answered some of what my question was going to focus on. Beyond the conventions that we have, what can other trade channels, both at multilateral and bilateral level, contribute to reducing biodiversity loss, including things such as WTO and bilateral trade agreements, and voluntary partnerships and product-specific mechanisms? Is there a magic bullet that we can rely on if we cannot get the links right between the conventions? Perhaps Soledad could start, and then David might want to come in.

Soledad Leal Campos: I see various ways to contribute at different levels: for instance, through awareness-raising campaigns, information sharing, including on best practice, enhanced dialogue and co-operation, and agreement on the reduction and elimination of harmful subsidies. Perhaps there is no magic bullet, but I guess there is a lot that Governments and individuals can do. Concerning the reduction and

elimination of harmful subsidies, for instance, the most immediate action to contribute to reducing biodiversity loss would be to support the successful conclusion of the negotiations on fishery subsidies. As has been mentioned in a previous session of this committee, these negotiations are about reducing or eliminating subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. WTO Ministers are holding a virtual ministerial meeting on 15 July in an effort to reach an agreement that has been elusive for many years.

Another area of fundamental importance in the WTO context is agricultural subsidy reform, which unfortunately has stagnated. It is important to note that these types of agricultural support measures can be tackled only at WTO level, since very often agricultural trade is excluded from free trade agreements.

Another initiative that could have an impact on biodiversity is the negotiation by a group of WTO members on the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade and Sustainability—ACCTS—which, among other topics, aims at eliminating fossil fuel subsidies. Based on public records, I understand that there has been some debate over the UK position and potential participation in those negotiations.

There is ongoing and regular information exchange between WTO members and the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements, such as the CBD secretariat. Those exchanges are very helpful for trade negotiators to understand what is happening in their different areas.

If I may, I would like to mention three points that may be useful. One of them is a recent initiative launched at the WTO in November 2020 by a group of WTO members—the structured discussions on trade and environmental sustainability, known as TESSD, which the UK has co-sponsored. In that context, some members expressed interest in addressing biodiversity. No formal submissions have been made yet, but I understand that the UK has formed the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade—FACT—dialogue between consumer and producer countries, in the context of COP26.

Perhaps the United Kingdom might wish to consider connecting the FACT initiative to the TESSD and hosting an informal dialogue with other WTO members, as well as with stakeholders, including NGOs, on potential avenues to address linkages between trade and biodiversity, and on possible pathways to achieve the 2030 targets. This type of informal dialogue would provide participants with an opportunity to analyse and understand the functioning of value chains, which is a very important element of this conversation.

There are specific ways in which environmental issues can be considered in bilateral regional trade agreements. The Government may consider analysing different approaches taken by countries to address environmental aspects in trade agreements. Over the years, these approaches have ranged from the inclusion of broad preamble language

on environment or no reference to the environment at all, to the recent inclusion of a provision in an agreement between Indonesia and the EFTA countries for preferential tariff treatment for palm oil and its derivatives. The treatment is contingent on compliance with private sustainability standards.

Those are some ideas that perhaps the Government could consider in addressing the linkages between trade and biodiversity. Perhaps UK participation in the G7 could also provide an opportunity to continue its leadership role to work towards achieving the targets set in the G7 2030 nature compact and beyond.

In the interests of time, I have to stop. I would say simply that resource mobilisation, including ODA, is crucial to help the countries meet the targets.

Baroness Young of Old Scone: Thank you very much. I do not know whether David has anything to add. Do we have time to come to David?

The Chair: We have time for Lord Puttnam.

Q53 **Lord Puttnam:** In a sense, my question has been partially answered. I have an observation for Bernadette and a question for David. This morning, I heard several times an expression I have never heard before, which is "invasive alien species". It sounded to me like the title of a science fiction movie. Clearly, one of the invasive alien species is us as regards our level of habitat destruction. I was really disappointed, Bernadette—it is not your fault—by the fact that the very good scientific analysis I circulated that linked pandemics with invasive alien species got so little cut-through. I was disappointed and surprised, actually, but that is a conversation we could have offline.

David, you made the very important point that the difference between 1.5 and 2 between now and 2030 is huge. It is not 30%. It is big, very big. Minister Yang in his evidence earlier used the word "sacrifice", and it is the first time I have heard it in a long time. He talked about the nature of the sacrifice of the Chinese people. Dominic Cummings, in referring to our response to COVID, used the phrase "war footing". David, what would the war footing that prevents us getting to 2% look like?

David Cooper: I think the advice we have had from the IPCC on what needs to be done to get to 1.5 is what we need to follow. I re-emphasise what Dilys said earlier: that we need to invest fully in how nature can be part of the solution. It has to be in addition to very stringent fossil fuel reductions, not instead of, not to offset them. We need to do all those things. We will see, I hope, progress in national commitments at COP26, but we still have to go far beyond what we are seeing already. That means no more exploration for fossil fuels. They have to stay in the ground. We have to put all the emphasis on reducing fossil fuel emissions alongside everything else we can do through nature.

The broader interactions with pandemic risk mean looking at land use change, including how we manage agriculture and infrastructure

development. That means reducing the total footprint. It also means very careful spatial planning of that footprint to reduce encroachment into natural areas. At the same time, we have to be very careful about protecting the customary sustainable use of nature and of wildlife by indigenous peoples and local communities. Pandemic risk certainly increases through unregulated wildlife trade, and from damage to the natural environment through infrastructure development and the expansion of agriculture. Another amplifier is often intensive agriculture—in particular, intensive livestock production. We have to look at the totality of those.

Dilys talked about a triple emergency, and that emergency clearly includes the health emergency that we are facing. The current pandemic shows that we are not living in harmony with nature. There is something very wrong with our relationship with nature. We have to address all the drivers of biodiversity loss, climate change, land use change, invasive species, pollution and overexploitation. To do that, as Sandra Díaz said in an earlier session, we need to look at the indirect drivers. That brings us back to the theme here, which is that that requires changes across the whole of government and across the whole of society.

Lord Puttnam: I hugely admire the figure. That is all I would say. How confident are you that the western democracies between now and 2030 can achieve even half of that?

David Cooper: It is an imperative. This decade is the decade when action has to be taken on these fronts, on climate change, on biodiversity loss, and it can be done only, as Dilys emphasised, if we also have serious efforts to address development and to reduce inequalities.

People can live on this planet and prosper on this planet. We have talked about the relationship between biodiversity and the sustainability development goals, the SDGs. Biodiversity underpins nature's contributions to people—clean water, nutritious food, protection against disease, protection against extreme climates and the like—so if we destroy nature, we jeopardise the possibility of sustainable development.

At the same time, without more equality, without investment in girls' and women's education, and without building institutions, we will not have the enabling environment to be able to address biodiversity loss. We are looking at one issue here. The biodiversity convention and COP15 are one entry point. COP26 is another. Certainly, the global north will need to do more, including in overseas development assistance. One thing the UK must do is reverse the cuts in ODA. We prosper together.

Lord Puttnam: Thank you very much. I am very grateful.

The Chair: I think that is a good place to end our session—making it clear what the UK Government can do between now and COP15 to try to secure the best outcome, which fully takes into account the links between biodiversity, climate change, development and trade. I thank all four witnesses for your participation and for your elucidation of the issue.