



# The UN Food Systems Summit and the Convention on Biological Diversity's COP15

Opportunities to integrate biodiversity in food systems and how  
to engage



Convention on  
Biological Diversity



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# Opportunities to Integrate Biodiversity in Food Systems



In 2021, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will convene a **Food Systems Summit** as part of the **Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030**. The UN Food Systems Summit broadly aims to deliver progress on all 17 SDGs, each of which rely in part on the existence of healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems. The Summit will foster **collaborative action** to transform the way the world produces, views, and consumes food. All food system leaders will come together to bring about **positive change**, including farmers, indigenous people, youth organizations, academia, business, health care professionals, policy makers and more.

## The UN Food Systems Summit

The Summit has **5 objectives**, which address all components of our food systems, from production, to distribution, to consumption:



**Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food**



**Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns**



**Boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale**



**Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution**



**Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress**

To find out more, visit the [UN Food Systems Summit 2021 website](#).

## The CBD's COP15

The Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will hold its 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Kunming, China in 2021. At COP15, Parties to the Convention will adopt the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which will include goals, targets and policy directions for our global society and lead the way to achieving the CBD 2050 vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature”.

“Recognizing the role of biodiversity in underpinning the productivity and resilience of agricultural and other ecosystems is a critical first step towards transforming the way we produce food while guaranteeing food security.”

– Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary, CBD

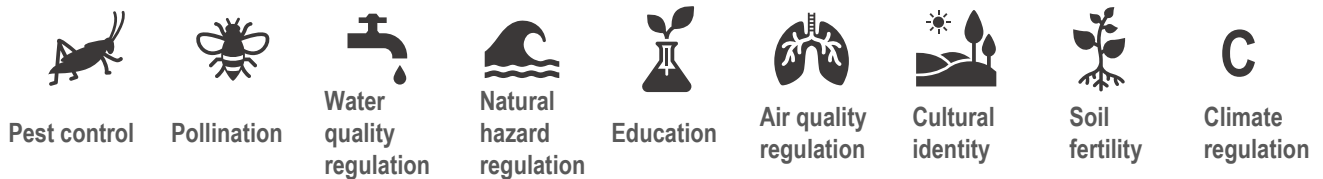
# The Links Between Biodiversity and Food Systems

A **food system** encompasses all activities related to food, including production, processing, transportation and consumption. Many of the world's food systems are currently unsustainable and vulnerable to external shocks, in part due to biodiversity loss. **Biodiversity** includes domesticated crops and animals, harvested forest and aquatic species, and all species found in and around production systems.



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**Biodiversity underpins the ecosystem functions and services that are essential for the productivity and sustainability of our food systems.** Examples of ecosystem services provided by biodiversity include:



**Biodiversity supports the livelihoods of food producers while also reducing the need for external inputs that have negative impacts on the environment.**

- By providing important ecosystem services, like pest control and nutrient cycling, biodiversity **reduces the need for costly and harmful external inputs.**
- Having a greater diversity of genes, species and ecosystems makes production systems and livelihoods **more resilient** to shocks and stresses and often leads to **more stable and efficient** ecosystem service provision. This is especially important to consider in the context of climate change.

**Biodiversity also contributes to food security and nutrition by providing nutritionally diverse foods.**

- **Cultivated species** are an important source of nutrition, yet of the more than 6000 plant species that are cultivated for food, only 9 species account for 66% of total crop production.
- **Wild species** are also an important source of nutrition, rich in micronutrients, for many households around the world, yet many are under threat from overexploitation and habitat loss.

**Food systems based on the sustainable use of biodiversity have the potential to provide food security and livelihoods in a sustainable manner, making them an important lever in attaining the SDGs.**

- The **Sustainable Agriculture Transition** presented in the **5<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Outlook** highlights how incorporating a greater diversity of crops and livestock, creating and maintaining well connected habitat for associated biodiversity, practicing sustainable soil management, improving the efficiency of use of land and inputs of water, and avoiding the use of pesticides and excess fertilizers can increase biodiversity and ecosystem services in food production systems.
- The **Sustainable Food Systems Transition** presented in the **5<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Outlook** recognizes the importance of enabling sustainable and healthy diets with a greater emphasis on a diversity of foods, mostly plant-based, and more moderate consumption of meat and fish, as well as dramatic cuts in the waste involved in food supply and consumption.
- The total economic gains to society, from transforming the food and land systems, have been estimated to have the potential to reach **\$5.7 trillion a year by 2030.**

# Food Systems and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

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## The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

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The adoption of this framework is an opportunity to build the resilience of our food systems by undertaking cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary actions to address inter-related environmental, health and development challenges. The negotiations of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework offer a unique opportunity for all of us to commit, mobilize, and join forces to transform agriculture and food systems to benefit people and the planet, through sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity.

## Some Key Elements of the Global Biodiversity Framework for Food System Transformation

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The current draft of the framework contains **2030 targets** that:

- Aim to ensure benefits, including **nutrition, food security and livelihoods**, through sustainable management of wild species of fauna and flora.
- Support **the productivity, sustainability and resilience of biodiversity in agricultural and other managed ecosystems** through conservation and sustainable use of such ecosystems and reducing productivity gaps.
- Reduce negative impacts on biodiversity by **ensuring production practices and supply chains are sustainable**.
- Eliminate unsustainable consumption patterns, **ensuring people everywhere make responsible choices** commensurate with 2050 biodiversity vision.

## The UN System at the Heart of the Transformation

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'Making peace with nature' is among the top three priorities of UN Secretary-General António Guterres for this year. 2021 is a critical year for climate and biodiversity. COP26 in November will be critical for climate action. COP15 on biodiversity will provide a roadmap at the global level setting the agenda for biodiversity and nature through a new post-2020 biodiversity framework. The Food System Summit can transform the way the world produces, views, and consumes food. The UN System is committed to support countries undergoing these transformations, including through the development of a common understanding and approach to integrating biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches for sustainable development into the UN's policy and programme planning and delivery.

**“ Making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century. It must be the top, top priority for everyone, everywhere. In this context, the recovery from the pandemic is an opportunity.”**

– UN Secretary-General António Guterres,  
*State of the Planet Address, 2020*

# How to Engage

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## The UN Food Systems Summit

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**National Dialogues:** These are inclusive national dialogues organized by National authorities, bringing together all food system stakeholders. A National Dialogue Convenor is appointed by the Member State to lead the dialogues. Dialogue participants explore pathways towards sustainable local and national food systems by 2030 and are encouraged to make commitments towards transformative change.

CBD National Focal Points are invited to participate in National Dialogues. Many countries have already nominated **National Dialogues Convenors**. If you are interested in engaging with a National Dialogue programme, you are invited to reach out to respective national Convenors via respective official government channels. To learn more about National Dialogues, visit the **Dialogue Gateway**.

**Pre-Summit:** A moment that brings together countries, stakeholders, and constituencies from all parts of food systems to strengthen systemic understanding, collaboration and partnerships. This is an opportunity for global leaders to feature and advance their commitments to action and inspire engagement in the run up to the Summit.

**Action Tracks:** The Summit's Action Tracks offer stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds a space to share and learn, with a view to fostering new actions and partnerships and amplifying existing initiatives. The Action Tracks are aligned with the Summit's five objectives. Together, they will explore how key cross-cutting **levers of change** such as human rights, finance, innovation, and the empowerment of women and young people can be mobilized to meet the Summit's objectives.



**Join the community!** The Food Systems Community platform is gathering key stakeholders across the food system and is open to everyone with an interest in following developments and contributing to the Summit. More at: <https://foodsystems.community/>

## The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

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**The 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24)** will contribute to the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and support the work of the Open-ended Working Group.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI3)** will address a number of issues closely related to the development of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, such as means of implementation, enabling conditions, and responsibility and transparency.

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group** will engage in text-based negotiations to enable the preparation of the first draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The agricultural community and relevant stakeholders are invited to participate in upcoming meetings and share their views to inform the process to develop the **post-2020 global biodiversity framework** through their National Focal Points.

# Further Reading

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- ❑ [The Food Systems Summit website](#)
- ❑ [Handbook for Member State Dialogues](#)
- ❑ [FAO 2019 Report on the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture](#)
- ❑ [Convention on Biological Diversity's 5<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Outlook](#)
- ❑ [The Food and Land Use Coalition 2019 Report Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use](#)
- ❑ [CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches](#)
- ❑ [One Planet network Sustainable Food Systems Programme](#)
- ❑ [Trade, Development & The Environment Hub](#)
- ❑ [WWF, UNEP, EAT, Climate Focus 2020 Report on Enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\) for Food Systems](#)
- ❑ [Healthy Food for All: How do We Make Healthy Diets Accessible and Affordable for All?: A Framework for Action](#)
- ❑ [COVID-19, the Environment and Food Systems: Contain, Cope, and Rebuild Better](#)
- ❑ [Chatham House, Food system impacts on biodiversity loss, Research Paper, February 2021](#)



Quang Nguyen Vinh/Pexels