

Debate Pack
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By Dr Elena Ares,
Nikki Sutherland,
Paul Bolton

Protecting and restoring nature at COP15 and beyond

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Summary

A debate has been scheduled in the Commons Chamber for Thursday 14 July 2022 on protecting and restoring nature at COP15 and beyond. The subject for this debate has been nominated by the Backbench Business Committee, and the debate will be opened by Caroline Lucas MP.

1 Background

1.1 What is the Convention on Biodiversity?

The 1992 United Nations [Convention on Biodiversity \(CBD\)](#) aims to prevent and reverse global biodiversity loss. The fifteenth [Conference of the Parties \(COP15\)](#) is due to take place in December 2022 in Canada, hosted by the Chinese Government. COP15 was originally due to take place in 2021 in Kunming in China, but postponed due to the Coronavirus pandemic

The CBD has three objectives:

- conservation of biodiversity
- sustainable use of biodiversity
- equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of [global biodiversity's genetic resources](#).

One of the main aims of COP15 is to agree a post 2020 global biodiversity framework as a successor to the [strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020](#). This set [20 biodiversity targets](#) for 2020, often referred to as the [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#).

[Reporting in 2020 on whether the targets had been achieved](#), the CBD concluded that none had been fully achieved, but some progress had been made:

At the global level none of the 20 targets have been fully achieved, though six targets have been partially achieved (Targets 9, 11, 16, 17, 19 and 20). Examining the 60 specific elements of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, seven have been achieved and 38 show progress. Thirteen elements show no progress or indicate a move away from the target, and for two elements the level of progress is unknown.¹

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) reports

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent intergovernmental body established in 2012.² Its roles include providing scientific assessments on a range of themes related to global biodiversity.

¹ CBD [Global Biodiversity Outlook 5; Summary for Policy makers](#), September 2020

² Similar role to the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#)

IPBES published a [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) in 2019. The report included the following key messages:

- Nature and its vital contributions to people, which together embody biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are deteriorating worldwide.
- Direct and indirect drivers of change have accelerated during the past 50 years
- Goals for conserving and sustainably using nature and achieving sustainability cannot be met by current trajectories, and goals for 2030 and beyond may only be achieved through transformative changes across economic, social, political and technological factors.
- Nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably while other global societal goals are simultaneously met through urgent and concerted efforts fostering transformative change.³

The report also included the [following key statistics, covering issues like wetland loss and reduction of ecosystem extent](#):

- 75%: terrestrial environment “severely altered” to date by human actions (marine environments 66%)
- 47%: reduction in global indicators of ecosystem extent and condition against their estimated natural baselines, with many continuing to decline by at least 4% per decade
- 28%: global land area held and/or managed by Indigenous Peoples , including >40% of formally protected areas and 37% of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low human intervention
- +/-60 billion: tons of renewable and non-renewable resources extracted globally each year, up nearly 100% since 1980
- 15%: increase in global per capita consumption of materials since 1980
- >85%: of wetlands present in 1700 had been lost by 2000 – loss of wetlands is currently three times faster, in percentage terms, than forest loss⁴

IPBES published two further assessment reports in July 2022:

- [IPBES Sustainable Use of Wild Species Assessment](#) concluded that the use of wild species is an important source of income for millions of people worldwide, with about 50,000 wild species used through different practices. It also found that 70% of the world poor are

³ IPBES, [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#), 2019

⁴ IPBES, [Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#), 2019.

directly dependent on wild species. The uses fall under five categories: fishing; gathering; logging; terrestrial animal harvesting (including hunting); and non-extractive practices, such as observing.

- [IPBES Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature](#) concluded that “decisions based on narrow set of market values of nature underpin the global biodiversity crisis” and that:

Although often privileged in policymaking, these market values do not adequately reflect how changes in nature affect people’s quality of life. Furthermore, policymaking overlooks the many non-market values associated with nature’s contributions to people, such as climate regulation and cultural identity.⁵

The IPBES report on values also concluded that the necessary tools are available to address the issue, “with more than 50 valuation methods and approaches, there is no shortage of ways and tools to make visible the values of nature”.⁶

1.2

COP15: negotiating a post 2020 global biodiversity framework

The [first official draft of the post-2020 framework](#) was published by the CBD in July 2021, in advance of the first part of the conference took place virtually on 11-15 October 2021.

The second part of the conference was scheduled to take start in Kunming, China in April 2022. Defra said in January 2022 that [COP15 was likely to be postponed](#). It was delayed until the third quarter of 2022.

In the meantime, preparatory talks have taken part in Geneva in March 2022 and Nairobi in June 2022. The decision was taken in Nairobi to move the conference, still to be hosted by China as President, to [Montreal in Canada in December 2022](#).

What was the outcome of the October 2021 virtual COP15?

The [Kunming declaration was agreed at the conference](#). This stressed the need for urgent and integrated action to address biodiversity loss and policy coherence at all levels of government. This included a commitment to ensure:

⁵ [IPBES Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature, July 2022](#)

⁶ [IPBES Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature, July 2022](#)

a reversal of the current loss of biodiversity and ensure that biodiversity is put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of “Living in Harmony with Nature”.⁷

On a national level the signatories agreed to accelerate and strengthen the development and update of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

What was the outcome of the March and June 2022 pre-COP meetings?

UK- based website, CarbonBrief, summarised that there was little progress made and additional areas were added to the discussion - such as finance for biodiversity from developed countries - in a two-week meeting held in Geneva in March 2022

But with just months to go until COP15, countries left Geneva without resolving many of the key elements of the GBF. And in the final plenary session, developing countries issued a surprise demand for richer nations to provide at least \$100bn a year for biodiversity, rising to \$700bn by 2030.

Observers said the talks moved at a “glacial pace”. Some raised concerns that countries are “heading for Copenhagen” – a reference to the 2009 climate summit that was widely perceived to have ended in failure.⁸

The press release from the CBD announcing the end of the meeting did set out progress in some areas:

Good progress made towards a solution for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from Digital Sequence Information on the use of Genetic Resources

Intersessional work agreed to address resource mobilization and monitoring framework, marine and coastal biodiversity, and other issues.⁹

The limited progress made resulted in a further week-long meeting being held in Nairobi in June 2022. Again, progress was limited, as reported by CarbonBrief:

The week-long Nairobi negotiations followed talks in Geneva in March that concluded with key elements still unresolved. Both sets of preparatory talks were intended to simplify a crucial framework for nature – the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) – that parties were supposed to sign off on in Kunming, China, later this year.

⁷ CBD, Kunming Declaration, 15 October 2022

⁸ CarbonBrief, COP15: Key outcomes for nature loss and climate change from UN talks in Geneva, 31 March 2022

⁹ CBD, Governments advance negotiations on ambitious global biodiversity framework but require more time, 29 March 2022

However, target-setting for issues from protected areas to pesticides saw “more divergence than convergence”, raising concerns for the deal that will now be cemented in Montreal this December, with China continuing as chair of the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15).

Many of the most hotly debated targets are strongly related to climate change, food security and a “nature-positive” economy: keeping carbon-rich ecosystems intact, subsidies for fossil fuels, agriculture and fishing, genetic resources that concern climate-resilient crops and sustainable consumption.

The Nairobi negotiations delivered a few clear wins, including a new target on gender, youth and biodiversity, and unambiguous recognition of the value of ecosystems in cities, such as mangroves and urban parks. It also delivered a date and a final venue for the much-delayed COP15, which will take place just weeks after the COP27 climate talks in Egypt.

However, with only two targets finalised and many issues still not agreed, NGOs warned that the stage is set for a “Copenhagen” moment for nature.¹⁰

The [negotiating document, published on the final day of the Nairobi meeting](#), shows a significant amount of text (through the use of square brackets) which is not yet agreed. Further details can be found in the CarbonBrief analysis, including discussions about [financing for nature and biodiversity](#).

The [press release from the CBD](#) following the meeting set out where some progress was made:

Delegates took the text from the March meetings held in Geneva, rationalized parts of it, achieved consensus on several targets, and proposed diverse options for large parts of the framework.

Parties set out their ambitions with respect to the goals of the framework, and refined the essential targets related to conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing.

They worked to develop a plan for resource mobilization and other means of implementation and highlighted the contribution of nature to climate change mitigation and adaptation.¹¹

However, it also acknowledged that “a considerable amount of work will be required to advance the text for final high-level consideration by CBD’s 196 Parties at COP15”.

The [UK Government priorities for the conference](#) were set out in a written response on 14 June 2022:

¹⁰ Carbon Brief, [COP15: Key out outcomes for nature loss and climate change from UN talks in Nairobi](#), 29 June 2022

¹¹ CBD, [Governments advance text of landmark global agreement on biodiversity, prepare final steps in negotiation to be concluded in Montreal in December](#), 26 June 2022

Biodiversity loss is a global problem that needs a global solution, and the UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

As part of this framework, the UK will be advocating for ambitious global targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. This includes targets to ensure at least 30% of the global land and of the ocean is protected, ecosystems are restored, species population sizes are recovering, and extinctions are halted by 2050. The UK is calling for this ambitious set of targets to be supported by increased finance for nature from all sources (public and private) and at all levels (domestic and international), and for strengthened reporting and review mechanisms to facilitate the achievement of targets and hold Parties to account to their commitments.¹²

Other developments

There have been a number of other international agreements at international level in the run up to COP15. This includes:

- a [Leaders' Pledge](#) agreed at the UN Biodiversity Summit in September 2020 to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.
- a [High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People](#) at the COP26 Climate Conference in November 2021 set a 30x30 goal of protecting at least 30 percent of world's land and ocean by 2030.

The UK Government is signatory to both.

1.3

UK Biodiversity Policy

The UK Government has produced a number of actions plans and strategies on biodiversity, which is a devolved matter. A [Biodiversity Action Plan 1992-2012](#) was published in 1994. This was followed by [Biodiversity 2020](#) a strategic plan for biodiversity in England, in 2011. The [25 Year Environment Plan](#), published in 2018, included a commitment to publish a new strategy for nature, building on the existing strategy.

Environment Act 2021

[The Environment Act 2021](#) included a number of new policies aimed at improving biodiversity in England including:

- A 10% biodiversity net gain requirement for development

¹² [HC Deb 14 June 2022 | PQ 13180; PQ 13178; PQ 13176](#)

- A target on species abundance for 2030
- A requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the creation of a Nature Recovery Network

In addition under the Act the Government has proposed a number of further 2042 targets for biodiversity in its [consultation on environmental targets](#), which closed in June 2022 :

- increase species abundance by at least 10% by 2042, compared to 2030 levels.
- improve the England-level [GB Red List Index](#) for species extinction risk by 2042, compared to 2022 levels.
- create or restore in excess of 500,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2042, compared to 2022 levels.

Agricultural support

Changes to agricultural support after leaving the EU's Common Agricultural Policy focus on the [delivery of public goods](#), including nature recovery and conservation, under a range of funding schemes such as the [Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery schemes](#).

Nature Recovery Green Paper

The Government published a consultation, [Nature Recovery Green Paper: Protected Sites and Species](#) for England in March 2022. The consultation closed in May and is awaiting a government response. The Government summarised the proposals in the consultation paper as follows:

The Green Paper includes options to bring clarity and coherence to our framework for protected sites; to reform species protections; and to modernise funding arrangements. It also looks at what institutional and delivery arrangements would best support our nature recovery objectives.

We are setting out proposals to create a system which better reflects the latest science and the impending impacts of climate change, which better reflects our domestic species and habitats, and which will help us achieve our significant goals to recover nature.¹³

An [ENDS report article](#) summarised what it considered to be the main proposals in the consultation, including:

- DEFRA wants a 'simpler' legal structure for habitat protections, covering UK and EU designated sites

¹³ Defra, [Nature Recovery Green Paper consultation](#), 11 March 2022

- The power to designate those sites may be taken off Natural England's and given to the Secretary of State, with the aim of ensuring a consistent decision-making process.
- DEFRA has wider reform of all its arm's-length bodies in mind including whether their duties and purposes need updating. This is reported to including the [merger of the Environment Agency and Natural England](#)
- The Habitats Regulations are being considered for wider substantial reform, including simplified designations and processes, and a more strategic approach. The Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs has since restated this intention in evidence to the Environment Audit Committee.
- Further information on what will count towards the UK's 30 by 30 target, including a clear purpose of conserving biodiversity, long-term protection or management in place, and measurable improvements for biodiversity.
- A potential [new 'spatial designation' for nature recovery](#) (in addition to existing designations for nature protection)
- [Site Improvement Plans \(SIPs\)](#) for designated sites of European importance, [falling within Nature 2000](#) network, may gain statutory footing
- Stronger penalties for wildlife crime proposed, including higher fines and tougher sentencing.¹⁴

The article also sets out concerns expressed by environmental and nature conservation groups:

Greenpeace has lambasted these new criteria [for the 30 by 30 target], saying it "falls far short of full or high protection", and that it makes a mockery of Boris Johnson's recent membership of the high ambition coalition for ocean protection.

[...]

Richard Benwell, chief executive of the NGO coalition Wildlife and Countryside Link, said that DEFRA had "asked the right questions", but come up with the wrong answers. "How can we improve protection for wildlife sites and species? The answer isn't to make changes to names and processes. It is to designate more sites in the network, and increase protection and investment across our important wildlife areas, so that

¹⁴ ENDS report, [DEFRA's Nature Recovery Green Paper: 9 things you need to know](#), 16 March 2022

they can no longer be harmed by development, over-exploitation or pollution,” he said.¹⁵

1.4

Biodiversity statistics

UK and England

The Government developed a range of indicators to measure progress on its 2011 [Biodiversity 2020](#) strategy. It currently has a set of 24 indicators which are informed by 51 measures across four themes:

- A more integrated, large-scale approach to conservation on land and at sea
- Putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy
- Reducing environmental pressures
- Improving knowledge

This set of indicators is aimed at measuring progress towards meeting the [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#) agreed under the Convention on Biological Diversity.




The Government publishes UK wide annual assessment of biodiversity indicators and separate biodiversity indicators for England. The [latest UK wide biodiversity indicators for 2021](#) were published in March 2022. As part of the new global biodiversity framework to 2030 being negotiated at COP15 the UK indicators are due to be reviewed in 2022 to reflect any outcome.¹⁶ The Government has said it will [not be publishing an annual assessment in 2022](#).

Defra also published its latest [assessment of England’s biodiversity indicators](#) in March 2022. The table below looks at progress for a selection of indicators. Short-term progress is normally assessed over five years. Long-term progress is over the longest time period available, in all the indicators below this is more than ten years.

¹⁵ ENDS report, [DEFRA’s Nature Recovery Green Paper: 9 things you need to know](#), 16 March 2022

¹⁶ Defra, [A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services, Biodiversity indicators: 2021 assessment revised](#) (October 2021)

	Long term change	Short term change
Relative abundance of priority species	↓	↓
Breeding farmland birds	↓	↓
Butterflies on farmland	↔	↔
Bat populations on farmland	↑	↑
Breeding birds in woodland	↓	↓
Butterflies in woodland	↓	↔
Breeding wetland birds	↔	↔
Wintering waterbirds	↑	↓
Distribution of pollinating insects	↓	↔
Fish size in NW North Sea	↓	↓

-  Deteriorating
-  Little or no overall change
-  Improving

Source: DEFRA, [England biodiversity indicators: 2021 assessment](#), (March 2022)

The assessment also found that public expenditure on biodiversity had improved since 2022/01, but deteriorated since 2014/15.

The report gave the following summary about all the indicators:

There are 51 individual measures that make up 24 indicators. In the long term:

- 21 measures (41%) show an improvement
- 4 measures (8%) show little or no overall change and
- 15 measures (29%) show a deterioration.

There are insufficient data to make long-term assessments for 4 measures (8%), and 7 measures (14%) are not assessed.

In the short term:

- 14 measures (27%) show an improvement
- 9 measures (18%) show little or no overall change and
- 15 measures (29%) show a deterioration.

There are insufficient data to make short-term assessments for 3 measures (6%) and 10 measures (20%) are not assessed.

Global biodiversity assessment

The Natural History Museum published its latest [Biodiversity Intactness Index](#) (BII) in October 2021. This found:

- **Global biodiversity intactness was just 75% in 2020** - when every square kilometre is given equal weight in calculations - and **below 69%** if areas are weighted by their ecological productivity.
- **These are both significantly lower than the 90% average** which the [Planetary Boundaries framework](#) sets as the 'safe limit' to prevent the world tipping into an ecological recession – a future in which ecosystems lose resilience and can no longer be relied on to meet our needs enough to avoid widespread shortages
- The UK's average BII – 53% – is well below the global average and places us in the bottom 10% of the world's countries, last in the G7 and also a long way behind China, the host of the UN biodiversity conference. The UK's low position in the league tables reflects a combination of history and what is happening today. The Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions transformed the UK landscape. The result of this combined immense destructive forces meant the UK has been among the most nature-depleted countries on Earth for a long time.
- In the last few decades, human activity has continually shaped and reshaped our rural and urban environment. In 2020, over two thirds of the UK is still used for agriculture and another 8% has been built on – leaving little room for nature.

The UK was ranked 165th highest on this out of 177 countries on this measure, where a higher ranking represents a more intact native biodiversity.

The [BII explorer](#) allows the user to look at different projections to 2050 and biodiversity changes in different types of areas.

The Zoological Society of London and World Wildlife Fund's latest [Living Planet Index](#) was published in 2020. It looks at the average change in the number of individuals animals in more than 20,000 studied vertebrate species populations.

It found there was a 68% average decline in populations between 1970 and 2016. There was considerable variation between species and some populations were stable or increasing. Amphibians had the greatest share of species populations that had declined (58%), reptiles the smallest (43%). The overall average decline is also subject to uncertainty and the change since 2010 is within this range of uncertainty.¹⁷

¹⁷ ZSL/WWF, [The Living Planet Report 2020](#)

Our World in Data have produced [an article on the Living Planet Index](#) which looks at what it does and does not mean. They have also collated a wide range of [indicators of biodiversity](#).¹⁸

1.5 Further Reading

Further information on UK policy can be found in the [In Focus briefing on biodiversity from the House of Lords Library](#). Further information is also available in the [PostNote on effective biodiversity indicators](#) and the [PostBrief on biodiversity indicators](#). These include details of policy in the devolved administrations.

The Environmental Audit Select Committee has published two reports on biodiversity:

- [Biodiversity in the UK: Boom or Bust?](#) published in June 2021. The [Government response](#) was published in September 2021
- [The UK's footprint on global biodiversity](#) published in January 2022. The [Government response](#) was published in February 2022

The reports includes recommendations for the Government on both UK and international policy, including the [negotiation position the UK should take at COP15](#).

¹⁸ Hannah Ritchie and Max Roser (2021) - "Biodiversity". *Published online at OurWorldInData.org*. Retrieved from: <https://ourworldindata.org/biodiversity>

2

News items

ENDS Report

27 June 2022

[COP15: NGOs 'appalled' by lack of progress on global nature targets ahead of summit](#)

Guardian

21 June 2022

[Montreal to host delayed Cop15 summit to halt 'alarming' global biodiversity loss](#)

Politics Home

24 May 2022

[The COP15 global biodiversity summit must deliver for wildlife and people](#)

Guardian

2 April 2022

[What really happened at Geneva's crucial biodiversity negotiations?](#)

Environment Times

17 November 2021

[The Environment Act: What now?](#)

New Scientist

28 October 2021

[UK will 'pause' publication of data showing biodiversity in decline](#)

Guardian

16 October 2021

'Ecological civilisation': an empty slogan or will China act on the environment?

ENDS Report

21 July 2021

COP15: Government must step up ahead of biodiversity summit, urge peers

3

Blogs and press releases

Environment Agency press release

12 July 2022

[Environment Agency report sets out urgent need to work with nature](#)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs press release

21 June 2022

[UK takes lead to seek global action on nature at COP15 biodiversity conference](#)

House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee and House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee joint press release

17 June 2022

[Lords and Commons committees to quiz George Eustice MP and Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on COP15](#)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs press release

1 June 2022

[Countries call for action to finance nature recovery ahead of COP15](#)

Environment Agency Blog

3 November 2021

[The connection between the climate and nature crises](#)

European Commission Directorate-General for Environment Press
Release

11 October 2021

[UN Biodiversity Summit COP 15 Phase One: EU leading the ambition for a new deal to protect people and planet](#)

DEFRA Press Release

18 July 2021

[Environment Secretary to set out plans to restore nature and build back greener from the pandemic](#)

4 Parliamentary material

4.1 PQs

Convention on Biological Diversity

Asked by: Maskell, Rachael

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the president of COP26 on the potential outcomes of the COP15 conference in October 2022.

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken in response to part one of COP15.

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his priorities are for COP15 in October 2022.

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Biodiversity loss is a global problem that needs a global solution, and the UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

As part of this framework, the UK will be advocating for ambitious global targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. This includes targets to ensure at least 30% of the global land and of the ocean is protected, ecosystems are restored, species population sizes are recovering, and extinctions are halted by 2050. The UK is calling for this ambitious set of targets to be supported by increased finance for nature from all sources (public and private) and at all levels (domestic and international), and for strengthened reporting and review mechanisms to facilitate the achievement of targets and hold Parties to account to their commitments.

Following COP15.1 in October 2021, the UK has continued to work towards achieving a high ambition outcome at COP15.2 this year. Progress was made at recent negotiations in Geneva, and all UK priorities remain on the table. The Government continues to meet regularly with a wide range of international partners to drive ambition on the CBD and to maintain momentum as we move from COP15.1 to COP15.2.

The UK's United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Presidency placed nature at the heart of COP26. Our priority is to continue to ensure there is global recognition that biodiversity loss and climate change is inextricably linked, and that action on nature is vital for achieving Paris goals. Defra works closely with the Cabinet Office and the

COP26 Unit, led by the COP President, to ensure that these twin objectives are included in UK priorities for a successful outcome at COP15

HC Deb 14 June 2022 | PQ 13180; PQ 13178; PQ 13176

[Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: Maskell, Rachael

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, by what method he plans to measure the UK's response to COP15.

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

A critical component of a high ambition outcome at the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 negotiations will be a robust, deliverable and clearly articulated agreement of how we will measure global progress towards achieving our commitments.

The current draft monitoring framework for the draft post-2020 global biodiversity framework contains a suite of ambitious proposals, many led by the UK, including on headline indicators, which should be used consistently by Parties to report on their progress.

In England our revised Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP), set to be published by January next year, will set out the steps the Government intends to take to improve the natural environment, which we expect would include measures needed to meet the goals and targets under the new global framework expected to be agreed at COP15. The EIP is subject to a robust statutory cycle of monitoring whether the natural environment, or a particular aspect of it, is improving. This includes through our public reporting of progress towards meeting any targets, or interim targets such as those agreed at COP15, and in accordance with the current EIP.

HC Deb 14 June 2022 | PQ 13177

[Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: Lucas, Caroline

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to ensure the outcomes of the Convention on Biological Diversity's COP15 meeting later this year (a) recognise and (b) support the contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to protecting nature.

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The UK recognises the leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), and the global contribution they make to climate change mitigation, biodiversity preservation, and sustainable development. As stewards of 80% of the world's biodiversity, IPLCs provide critical guardianship in protecting tropical forests and preserving vital ecosystem services.

At COP26 of the UNFCCC, the UK created a platform for IPLCs at the World Leaders' Summit Event. Tackling climate change requires global Governments to recognise and protect IPLC rights, and support their frontline role protecting forests and nature. The UK's ambition was translated into the \$1.7bn pledge by 23 public and private donors to advance IPLCs' forest tenure rights and support their role as guardians of forests and nature.

The UK is pushing for the CBD's post-2020 global biodiversity framework to recognise the important role and contribution of IPLCs as stewards of biodiversity and nature, and for it to be implemented through effective and meaningful consultation with Indigenous Peoples, through their own representative institutions.

Through our co-chairmanship of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, the UK is engaging with IPLC stakeholders, including the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, to ensure both that their views and concerns are reflected within the ongoing global negotiations, and that more explicit safeguards for IPLCs are integrated into the text of the global biodiversity framework.

HC Deb 28 April 2022 | PQ 157339

[Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: Lucas, Caroline

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking in its COP26 presidency to encourage (a) wealthier nations and (b) other stakeholders to increase their finance contributions for the delivery of the Convention on Biological Diversity Global Biodiversity Framework.

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Biodiversity loss is a global problem that needs a global solution. That is why the UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) of finance and targets to be adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

This is a crucial moment for donors and other public and private stakeholders to set out how they plan to contribute to an emerging finance target under the GBF. The UK Government is leading the way with our commitment to spend at least £3 billion of our £11.6 billion International Climate Finance pledge on protecting and restoring nature, alongside our commitment that all Overseas Development Assistance will do no harm to nature.

We are working closely with other donor Governments in advance of CBD COP15 to encourage others to make similarly ambitious commitments and to work towards aligning all international public finance with the GBF, once it has been agreed.

While necessary, international public finance will not be sufficient to finance the transition to a nature positive future. We are also working with private finance institutions to drive up investment in nature.

HC Deb 28 April 2022 | PQ 157338

[Biodiversity: British Overseas Territories](#)

Asked by: Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to consider the biodiversity of the UK's Overseas Territories at the forthcoming Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15); and what expectations they have for the contribution that the UK's Overseas Territories will make in respect of achieving the UK's overall biodiversity targets.

**Answering member: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park |
Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

The UK is seeking an ambitious outcome for nature at COP15. We will be supporting a set of goals and targets to halt and reverse the loss of global biodiversity by 2030. The UK Overseas Territories (OTs) are biodiversity hotspots containing 94% of the UK's endemic species. The Government recognises the need to continue to support the UK Overseas Territories in protecting their unique environments. Since 2012, Darwin Plus, Defra's flagship Overseas Territory environmental grants fund, has awarded over £32 million to over 162 projects in the OTs, helping the OTs and the UK to meet international obligations and deliver the UK 25 Year Environment Plan.

The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out the Government's ambition in protecting biodiversity in the UKOTs. As a result, the Government is taking action to recover threatened, iconic or economically important species of animals, plants and fungi, and where possible to prevent human-induced extinction or loss of known threatened species in the OTs.

Furthermore, supported by the UK Government, OTs have put in place a Blue Belt of marine protection and sustainable management over more than 4 million square kilometres, with more OTs set to join the Programme. This means that the UK has made a significant contribution to protecting 30% of the world's oceans and their biodiversity.

The Goal and targets agreed at COP15 will be global. All Parties will be expected to contribute according to national circumstances, but the UK will demonstrate global leadership in taking steps to deliver them. Actions taken domestically, and in the OTs, will all have a role to play.

HL Deb 25 April 2022 | PQ HL7824

Biodiversity

Asked by: Alex Sobel

How bio- diversity and renaturing is undertaken in the UK will be guided by the convention on biological diversity. Biodiversity has experienced a catastrophic collapse globally. The United Nations biodiversity COP15 is shortly to resume. What are the Government's strategic goals at COP15? What equivalent headline target is there to the net zero target at COP26, which is well understood in local urban communities and across the UK?

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

I thank the hon. Gentleman for that and for his shared interest in biodiversity. He is right: we must not just do this at home—we have to deal with it abroad as well. Biodiversity loss is a global problem and the forthcoming COP15 on the convention on biological diversity will be really important in furthering our work to bend the curve on the loss of biodiversity. That was agreed at the G7, and the aim of the CBD is to get as many as countries as possible to sign up to that.

HC Deb 10 March 2022 | Vol 710 c448

Convention on Biological Diversity

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his priorities are for the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15).

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Biodiversity loss is a global problem that needs a global solution, and the UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious

post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

As part of this framework, the UK will be advocating for ambitious global targets to bend the curve of biodiversity loss by 2030. This includes targets to ensure at least 30% of the land and of the ocean is protected, ecosystems are restored, species population sizes are recovering, and extinctions are halted by 2050. The UK is calling for this ambitious set of targets to be supported by increased finance for nature from all sources (public and private) and at all levels (domestic and international), and for strengthened reporting and review mechanisms to facilitate the achievement of targets and hold Parties to account to their commitments.

HC Deb 10 February 2022 | PQ 119443

[Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 28 January 2021 to Question 111517, how many (a) Government Ministers will join the UK delegation to COP15 led by Minister Goldsmith and (b) staff are in the core team working on COP15 in his Department.

Answering member: Rebecca Pow | Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we expect a delay to the planned COP15 dates of 25 April to 8 May. Minister Goldsmith will head the UK delegation, and attendance by other UK Government Ministers will be confirmed when revised dates for COP15 are available.

Defra is the lead department for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Cabinet Office. The core team dedicated to working on CBD in Defra is comprised of 21 staff. This team works closely with teams across Defra and its specialist arm's-length bodies, other Government departments, civil society organisations, and wider society. This includes the support of hundreds of staff in the Government's wider diplomatic service.

HC Deb 03 February 2022 | PQ 114662

[COP26: Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the President of COP26, how many staff in his Department have been assigned to work on the Convention of Biological Diversity; and how

many Ministers in his Department plan to attend the conference from 25 April to 8 May 2022.

Answering member: Alok Sharma | Department: COP26

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity represents a historic opportunity to secure an agreement to ambitious global action over the next decade. The UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at COP15. The COP is due to take place in Kunming, China, later this year; though, due to the coronavirus pandemic, we expect a delay to the planned dates of 25 April to 8 May. Minister Goldsmith will head the UK delegation.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the lead department for the Convention on Biological Diversity, working closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Cabinet Office. A core team is in place in DEFRA, drawing on expertise across DEFRA, its specialist arms-length bodies, working with other Government departments, civil society organisations and society at large. This includes working with the FCDO and our Posts across the diplomatic network, through which we are engaging host governments to support the delivery of our objectives. Nature is one of the key priorities in the UK's COP26 Presidency, and so the Cabinet Office COP26 Unit is also supporting preparations for COP15 to ensure successful delivery of our COP26 objectives.

HC Deb 03 February 2022 | PQ 111518

[Natural Resources: Conservation](#)

Asked by: Lucas, Caroline

To ask the President of COP26, what steps he is taking to help ensure that signatories of the Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forests and Land Use are held accountable; how that declaration is being connected to the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 process; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Alok Sharma | Department: COP26

The UK Government is committed to taking bold action to tackle the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. However, we are clear that countries cannot tackle environmental and climate crises alone; we need a concerted global effort. The Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use is an unprecedented commitment from 142 countries, covering over 91% of global forests, to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030. It's underpinned by almost \$20bn of public and private finance, by sustainable trade and by support for indigenous peoples' rights. We will work with other countries that endorsed the

Declaration to convert this political commitment into strong action on forests and land use. This will include working through multilateral events in 2022 such as meetings of the G7 and G20, and at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

All Parties to the Paris Agreement must report on their progress towards its goals via nationally determined contributions - which cover every emitting sector including forests and land use. At COP26, as part of the Glasgow Climate Pact, countries agreed to revisit and strengthen their current emissions targets to 2030 in 2022.

HC Deb 03 February 2022 | PQ 112530

[Cabinet Office: Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

Asked by: McCarthy, Kerry

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff in his Department have been assigned to work on the Convention of Biological Diversity; and how many Ministers in his Department plan to attend the conference from 25 April to 8 May 2022.

Answering member: Michael Ellis | Department: Cabinet Office

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity represents an historic opportunity to secure an agreement to ambitious global action over the next decade. The UK is committed to playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at COP15. The COP is due to take place in Kunming, China, later this year; though, due to the coronavirus pandemic, we expect a delay to the planned dates of 25 April to 8 May. Minister Lord Goldsmith will head the UK delegation.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is the lead department for the Convention on Biological Diversity, working closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Cabinet Office. A core team is in place in DEFRA, drawing on expertise across DEFRA, its specialist arms-length bodies, working with other Government departments, civil society organisations and society at large. This includes working with the FCDO and our Posts across the diplomatic network, through which we are engaging host governments to support the delivery of our objectives. Nature is one of the key priorities in the UK's COP26 Presidency, and so the Cabinet Office COP26 Unit is also supporting preparations for COP15 to ensure successful delivery of our COP26 objectives.

HC Deb 28 January 2022 | PQ 111516

Convention on Biological Diversity: Business

Asked by: Baroness Parminter

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the representatives from the business and finance sector on the business advisory group set up under the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework; and what is the group's remit.

**Answering member: Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park |
Department: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

In pursuit of high ambition outcomes for CBD COP15, Defra engages with a range of UK stakeholders including representatives from academia, the private sector, NGOs, and other interested parties, to gain valuable input from a wide range of sources.

As part of this engagement, a business advisory group has met several times to consider the draft global biodiversity framework, its implementation across the private sector, and the role of business in mainstreaming biodiversity.

Representatives of the business advisory group are:

The Biodiversity Consultancy

BP (independently but also on behalf of the UK Business and Biodiversity Forum, UKBBF)

Business for Nature coalition

Danone (independently but also on behalf of the One Planet Business for Biodiversity coalition, OP2B)

The Environment Bank

Firmenich (independently but also on behalf of the One Planet Business for Biodiversity coalition, OP2B)

FNZ UK

JP Morgan

National Hair and Beauty Federation (NHBF)

Scottish and Southern Electricity

Sound and Fair

Standard Charter

Tengri

Unilever

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Ocean Council

WSP

HL Deb 20 December 2021 | PQ HL4728

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Committee Inquiry

House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee

COP15: the international biodiversity conference

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