

IFAD Global Policy Engagement Forum

“The Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: Placing Food Systems and Rural People at the Centre of Accelerated Action”

Outcome Summary

On Wednesday 11 May 2022, a range of stakeholders convened to share their experiences and provide recommendations on how to accelerate biodiversity actions in support of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, with food systems and rural people at the centre (see [recording](#)).

The event was organized by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in the lead up to COP-15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Following opening remarks by Dr Jo Puri (IFAD’s Associate Vice-President of the Strategy and Knowledge Department), participants listened to a [presentation](#) from Mr Chris Pereira, Agriculture and Inland Waters Biodiversity Consultant at the CBD Secretariat. This was followed by a lively panel conversation involving four expert speakers:

- Ms Jaana Keitaanranta, IFAD’s Country Director in the East and Southern Africa Division;
- Mr Nabil Moura Kadri, Head of the Department of Environment and Management of the Amazon Fund, at the Brazilian Development Bank - BNDES;
- Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Director of the Tebtebba Foundation in the Philippines and the former special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples; and
- H.E. Pio Wennubst, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN in Rome.

Panellists were asked to reflect on lessons learned and to identify the main actions that can be undertaken by IFAD and partners to promote biodiversity as a critical pathway for sustainable food systems transformation, benefitting the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people.

Key Takeaways:

The discussions gave rise to several proposals and recommendations, with panellists providing examples of existing institutions and initiatives that are already delivering results in these areas.

In particular, five key messages were highlighted for the attention of the global community.

1. **Tackling biodiversity with an integrated food systems approach.** Diversity in agriculture and food systems is a key element in building resilience for rural families. It leads to multiple benefits: productivity, climate change adaptation and mitigation, food security and improved nutrition. Concurrently, the global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss. It is therefore important to tackle biodiversity with a food systems approach, promoting a shift to sustainable consumption and optimizing environmental resource use in food production, processing and distribution. Yet, governments and institutions often deal with climate, social and biodiversity issues separately – sometimes in different ministries. This risks adding complexity to an already complex global outlook. More can be gained from integrated solutions. As an example, the IFAD-and GEF-supported Smallholder Market-led Project (SMLP-CSARL)¹ was implemented as an integrated package, achieving biodiversity conservation and land restoration, while creating income opportunities.
2. **Putting biodiversity at the centre of planning for development strategies at all levels.** The impacts of environmental considerations are usually seen in the longer-term, so they are not

¹ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/operations/-/project/1100001665>

always prioritized in the short-term where day-to-day realities take precedence. It is therefore important to mainstream biodiversity actions and their related positive externalities for resilience, productivity and social inclusion, into countries' development plans. As an example, in Brazil, the diverse range of biomass provides opportunities for economic growth, development and improved livelihoods. By integrating biodiversity into national development planning, there can also be more investments in education and capacity-building to improve governments and communities' ability to access funding for, and implement, biodiversity actions including Nature-based solutions.

3. **Catalysing investments in biodiversity, food systems and small-scale farmers, with a particular focus on de-risking.** As outlined in a recent report,² if the world is to meet the climate change, biodiversity and land degradation targets, it needs to close a US\$ 4.1 trillion financing gap in nature by 2050. The public sector and institutions such as IFAD can help de-risk private sector investments in agriculture and food systems by creating an enabling environment, investing in programmes and proving that they work, and aligning incentives for the financial sector. Public Development Banks, with their social impact mandates, flexible financing tools, and significant resources, have an important role in financing the transition to more sustainable food systems. An example is the recent launch by BNDES of an innovative environmental match-funding program to catalyse investments in the sector. Equally important is the expanded use of environmental, social and governance (ESG) indicators to quantify and disclose impacts, rather than at entry. The IFC Performance Standard 6 on biodiversity is also a relevant tool that can help financial institutions align investment decisions with biodiversity targets but additional guidance is needed to facilitate the integration of these indicators within management systems.
4. **Promoting participatory approaches and ensuring that the rights of indigenous peoples are protected and respected.** It is essential to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples, their lands and territories are protected and respected. As recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous communities should be provided before any kind of project is brought to the table. It is also important to ensure high community engagement throughout the life-span of a project. One success factor of the SMLP-CSARL project in Eswatini was its participatory approach. It successfully empowered rural communities in the conservation of biodiversity by engaging local chiefdoms in the establishment of rangeland and natural resource management committees. This helped increase awareness, ownership and sustainability of results. Moreover, the voices of indigenous peoples and other rural people should be heard at the global levels, where major agreements are made with implications for communities.
5. **Protecting and enhancing indigenous knowledge systems while investing in innovation.** There is a need to ensure the protection, recognition and sharing of traditional knowledge systems and practices that have contributed to preserving biodiversity. Foundations such as that of the Tebtebba contribute to enhancing these knowledge systems, helping indigenous communities to map out territories and do resource inventory to ensure biodiversity remains diverse and is protected. It is also important to make space for innovative solutions and practices, with youth playing a particularly important role in this regard.

² [State of Finance for Nature](#). UNEP, WEF, ELD, Vivid Economics. May 2021.