

FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE LARGEST AND BEST PROTECTED TROPICAL FOREST IN THE WORLD

The [North Amazon Alliance](#) (ANA) is an initiative of civil society organizations compromised with safeguarding the ecosystem and socio-cultural connectivity in the region North of the Amazon river, area of the largest and best protected tropical forest in the world¹. Based on our experience of work in six Amazonian countries, we promote the scaling-up of solutions and strategies built hand in hand with indigenous peoples and local communities². As a unified voice from the region, we proclaim about the most relevant topics for the Amazon.

Contributions to the 1st Draft of the new post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) from the North Amazon Alliance

In June 2021, the ANA member organizations [pronounced](#) themselves regarding the Zero Draft of the new Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)³. Later in July, the CBD published the GBF first draft, which is currently in negotiation. Taking the developments made by the Convention of the Parts of the United Nations for Biological Diversity and the Un Conference for Climate Change in 2021 into consideration, we present the following five (5) recommendations regarding the new text which will be discussed in Kunming, China in May 2022.

1. The North Amazon Alliance understands ecosystem and socio-cultural connectivity as the structural and functional connection amongst natural areas which are important for the maintenance of the integrity of ecosystems, local communities, life supporting systems and regional economies. This approach recognizes the importance of addressing three dimensions in order to achieve connectivity between ecosystems and landscapes: the ecological, social and cultural.
2. For more information about our alliance and the Andes-Amazon-Atlantic Corridor please visit: <http://alianzanoramazonica.org>
3. Contributions to the Global Biodiversity Framework Post 2020. North Amazon Alliance Statement 2021. http://alianzanoramazonica.org/conferencias2021/pronunciamiento/06-15_pronunciamiento_ESP.pdf



STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

As ANA, we forewarn that the current GBF draft does not integrate a rights-based approach adequately nor broadly⁴. Specifically, it is important that the framework's text approaches indigenous peoples rights⁵ and local communities effectively, as well as the protection of environmental leaders and defenders. This last item is of particular relevance in the Amazonian context, where the indigenous territories protect 27,5% of the biome, and in which countries present alarming murder rates and assaults to environmental leaders and defenders. According to Global Witness, the climate crisis is accompanied of an increase of violence: during 2020, around 40% of the murder of social leaders concentrated in Colombia, Brazil and Peru. Only in Colombia, one of every three attacks were directed to ethnic authorities⁶.

Therefore, **we make a call to the national delegations and other stakeholders for the new BGF targets, goals and measures to be rooted in the promotion and guarantee of human rights**. It is only by fully implementing this approach as a reference and goal for the Convention on Biological Diversity will we be able to reach the 2050 vision established of living in harmony with nature.

4. The rights-based approach encompassed in multilateral agendas of the United Nations (UN) establish that local communities and indigenous peoples are key stakeholders in order to achieve conservation international goals, and therefore it requests the full performance of their rights as a central element for the definition and implementation of conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity strategies. This has been recognized by multiple international spaces and forums. As an example, see the Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council about indigenous peoples rights Mrs. Victoria Tauli-Corpus (A/71/229); and the letter from the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment about the adoption of a rights-based approach for global biodiversity and climate crisis.
5. With this term, we refer to what in the Ecuadorian context is referred to by "original or originary" peoples.
6. In this sense, The Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations from the Amazon Basin (COICA) denounced that "in 2020 the environmental leaders murders increased significantly, reaching 202 victims between Colombia, Brazil, Peru and Bolivia".

Some concrete examples about how to include a rights-based approach for each of the biological diversity goals are:

Regarding the Amazon, the rights-based approach requests we all:

- Maintain an ongoing intercultural dialogue with indigenous peoples and local communities in which the scope of this approach is defined for the CBD.
- Ensure that international conservation strategies effectively incorporate the world visions and knowledge systems that emanate from these territories.
- Do not lose sight that indigenous peoples and local communities understand themselves as part of their territory, and that from this close and unique relation, unfold rights that are relevant for the conservation and effective management of the Amazon.
- Comprehend that the fair and equitable distribution of benefits is a goal of the CBD as much as a right for the Amazonian and world indigenous peoples and local communities, which is not only limited to genetic access and traditional knowledge.

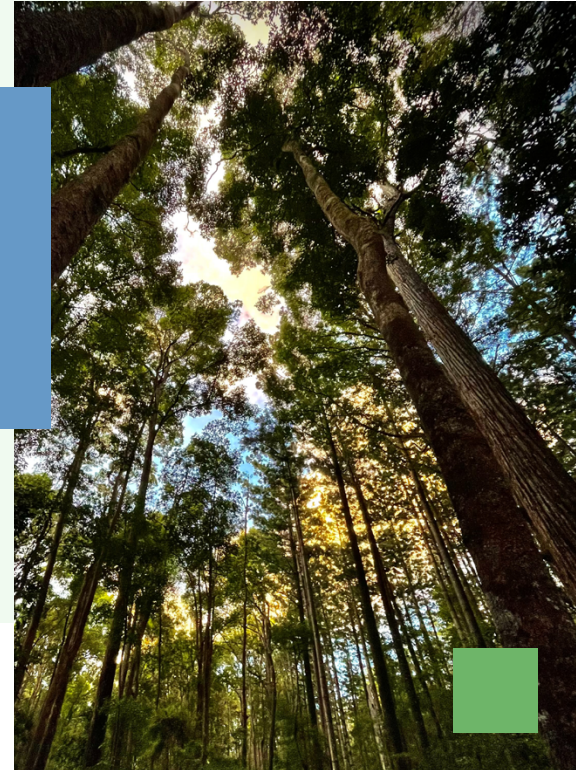
ARTICULATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY AGENDAS

A relevant development model for the Amazon is required according to the Science Panel for the Amazon (SPA), “an intersectoral approach, horizontal and system is needed in order to identify synergies between Climate Change, biodiversity loss, human rights and sustainability, which take local and indigenous wisdom into account”. SPA declaration at COP26 on Climate Change <https://www.theamazonwewant.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SPA-Statement.pdf>

In the same way, the CBD co-chairs highlight that “ the new GBF is complementary and contributes to the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, because it entails long-term strategies that aim at several multilateral environmental agreements in order to secure synergy amongst the different agreements that aim for the wellbeing of both people and planet”⁷.

Biodiversity and Climate Change are interconnected in many ways. Recent reports affirm that protecting biodiversity is fundamental in order to preserve and increase resilience, as well as to reduce vulnerability towards the effects of Climate Change, and maintain the capacity of ecosystems to store carbon and regulate the temperature⁸.

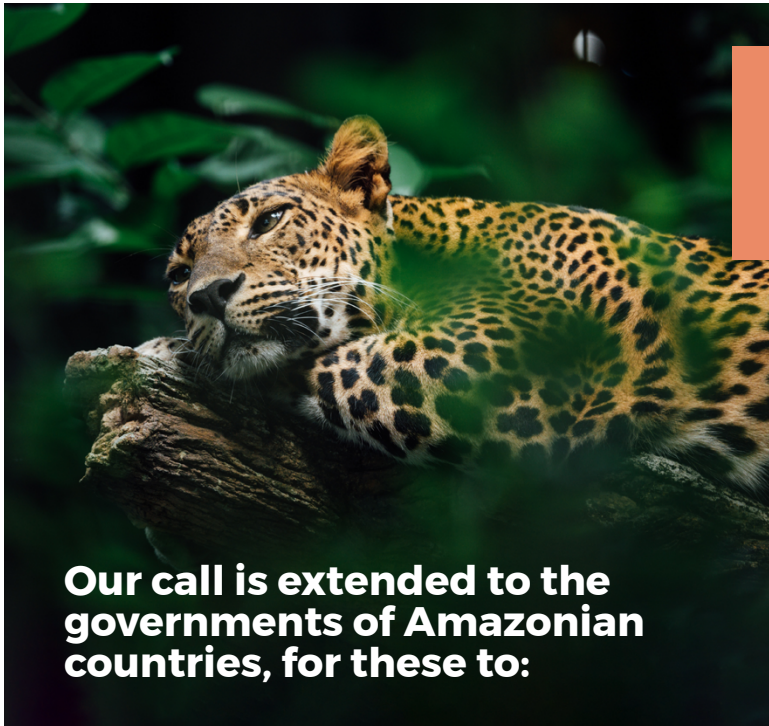
Therefore, the North Amazon Alliance we adhere to the call made by scientists and organizations, and insist about the urgency of articulating agendas and solutions to stop biodiversity loss and mitigate climate change. This must be achieved by promoting a holistic approach which, for the case of the Amazon, implies transcending the extractivist development model and the reductionist vision regarding environmental contributions, understanding that the most extensive tropical forest in the world is much more than a carbon sink. Many vital processes like the water cycle and global climate regulation, depend on securing the integrity of the Amazon based on its capacity to maintain its high diversity and the ecosystem and sociocultural connectivity.



As ANA, we recommend for the Amazon to be recognized as key region for the regulation of life-sustaining systems¹⁰, in which the knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities are necessary for its maintenance and protection, as well as their full and effective participation. We also highlight the inclusion of the intrinsic value of biodiversity in decision-making, monitoring, evaluation and the participative management of the climate change agenda.

7. Taken from: “Convention of Biological Diversity”. Subsidiary body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice. CBD/SBSTTA/23/3 August 19, 2019.
8. The Climate Change agenda updated its goals 2030 and 2050 during COP26, which took place in Glasgow in November 2021.
9. [Definición por acotar a partir de lo establecido por el climatólogo Germán Poveda].
10. Recommendation document recently published by the CBD Co-Chairs, which includes the discussions of the virtual sessions of de SBSTTA and SBI, subsidiary bodies of the convention. <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/2f74/dda0/270258bf5deaab47fbc43da4/wg2020-03-06-en.pdf>

ESTABLISHING SPECIFIC TARGETS FOR KEY REGIONS LIKE THE AMAZON



Our call is extended to the governments of Amazonian countries, for these to:

1

Commit to specific targets and relevant for the Amazon through their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)¹⁴. The national plans can consolidate a regional perspective¹⁵ that contributes to maintain the integrity of this region for the protection of global biodiversity. This perspective requires the articulation amongst countries and stakeholders in the region, a goal to which the North Amazon Alliance is willing to contribute through the strengthening of multi-stakeholder dialogue and exchange platforms.

2

Establish national targets that contribute to safeguarding ecosystem and sociocultural connectivity in the region, and to strengthen a conservation model that involves other effective protection and management mechanisms, besides natural protected areas.

In the first statement regarding the new GBF, ANA backed the now Target 3 (in Draft 1)¹¹, also known as the 30x30 target, which commits countries to ensure 30% of the marine and terrestrial surface by 2030 under some type of protection figure. Regarding this target, we would like to reiterate that in spite of being ambitious, it is the minimum percentage to avoid the acceleration of biodiversity loss. Nonetheless, we insist that this percentage is not significant or enough for large forest extensions like the Amazon.

Today, 47% of the Amazon is found under some type of protection figure, therefore, protecting 30% of its surface is not ambitious, nor it implies a contribution from the region to the global target¹². In this context, we affirm that the 30x30 Target is not ambitious for the region. Therefore, ANA recommends for the GBF to highlight strategic regions for the protection of biodiversity and other natural cycles of global importance (like the regulation of water cycles and amount of carbon in the atmosphere¹³), like the Amazon, and should set specific targets which are significant and coherent for these regions.

11. Target 3, also known as the 30x30 target, commits countries to ensure 30% of the marine and terrestrial surface by 2030 under some type of protection figure.
12. 32% of the Amazon region has been declared under natural protected areas, and another 35% corresponds to constituted Indigenous Territories. The total of hectares under some type of protection figure does not match the addition of the total of protected areas and indigenous territories, because there is an overlap of 17,7% between these two categories.
13. Each of the 400.000 million trees in the Amazon cool the atmosphere and transpire up to 1.000 liters of water a day, forming flying rivers or great water vapor currents, which produce rainfall, and take water towards the Andes mountains and other regions of the continent.
14. NBSAPs: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
15. This context is adequate in order for Amazonia countries to commit with the implementation of the Leticia Pact, in which most of these countries converge, and which sets targets and joint actions that can contribute to safeguarding connectivity.

SPECIFIC LANGUAGE ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND/OR THEIR TERRITORIES IN THE SPATIAL TARGET (TARGET 3)

Regarding Target 3 (30x30), it is important to take into account that a high percentage of the Amazon region corresponds to legally constituted indigenous territories. For this reason, **we highlight the importance of including specific language regarding indigenous peoples in a way in which their territories can finally be recognized as spatial measures that can contribute with the accomplishment of this target** (aside from the spatial measures already included in the wording of this target). Indigenous territories constitute territorial management units that effectively protect biodiversity, and therefore, we suggest that the GBF Action Plan includes specific indicators that refer to these.

We are convinced that recognizing the contributions of Amazonian indigenous territories to the conservation targets (national and global) is not an achievement that should be exclusively conditioned to an endorsement process to be recognized as OECMs or TICCA (protected territories and areas by indigenous peoples and local communities). Conditioning their contribution to a formal administrative procedure disclaims the material effects that their territorial management in exercise has proven to have, based on their knowledge systems¹⁶.

These territories have demonstrated to have the lowest deforestation rates, what confirms the effectiveness of this management for protection¹⁷. For this reason, we consider the new GBF represents a unique opportunity for Amazonian countries to **become a reference in the due implementation of an ambitious spatial target that encompasses indigenous territories in the established percentage.**



16. This topic is related to Target 20, which contemplates traditional knowledge, and innovation and practices applied by indigenous peoples as relevant to inform decision-making for the effective management of biodiversity.

17. Scientific studies have proven the importance of indigenous peoples in the configuration of the Amazon as an anthropomorphic landscape from an archaeological perspective, as well as reassured that indigenous presence strengthens biodiversity and agrobiodiversity, as the recently published IPBES report confirms.



EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The North Amazon Alliance, in coherence with the work we develop hand in hand with indigenous organizations in Amazonian territories, reiterate the need for the new GBF to effectively recognize the role and the rights of indigenous peoples in the management of their territories. This includes their own land planning and management models as determinant elements for the use and land planning (Target 1 of the GBF about spatial planning).

Effective participation should be made evident in the planning, distribution and resource execution; in offering support for the implementation of self-defined management and planning instruments, and the creation of the coordination instances required. In this sense, it is essential to secure the indigenous people's voice during the whole process that gives shape to national positions of Amazonian countries, and in the same way they should make part of the national delegations that participate in the COP¹⁸ (Target 21 of the GBF regarding effective participation).

18. COP: Conference of the Parties

FROM ECOSYSTEM SERVICES TO LIFE SUPPORTING SYSTEMS

Aware that a transformation transcends the negotiations of the new GBF, we consider relevant, coherent and necessary to promote a paradigm shift in our approach towards nature, from a vision based in “ecosystem services” towards a perspective that accredits “life-supporting systems”.

We forewarn that the notion of “service” has lost validity, catalogued as econometric. As it refers to nature as a lender of an accountable service, and humans as the exploitative and extractor of natural resources. Nonetheless, in spite of the inclusion of “contributions of nature to people” in Goal B in Draft 1 of the GBF as an alternative concept to “ecosystem services”, this concept situates human beings as a passive beneficiary of the contributions made by nature as something exogen, rather than what we are: part of nature.

In this sense, the discussion must entail the intangible elements, both natural and cultural, that are necessary and relevant for the conservation of our sociocultural and biological diversity. The ANA promotes an integral approach in which we conceive ourselves as participants of the natural systems that sustain us (water cycle, climate regulation, amongst many others). This vision resonates with the way in which indigenous peoples from the Amazon understand and embody their role in the world, and who with their systems of thought contribute with the regulation of the cycles that make life possible on Earth, or as they say in their own words, they regulate and maintain **“the flow of vital energy”**.

