Montreal, December 2022

**Letter to the Ministers of the world participating at the 15th meeting of the**

**Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

The eyes of the world are on you. The new Global Biodiversity Framework must put us onto a path of structural change to stop the destruction and loss of biodiversity across the planet. But this cannot be achieved through distractions and empty slogans. It has to be done through real political will and implementation.

Therefore, the signatories to this letter from all over the world urge you to:

1. ***Do not include the phrase ‘nature-based solutions’ (NBS) in the GBF. Instead use and refer to the term ´ecosystem-based approaches´***.

NBS is not an agreed term under the CBD. Including it in the GBF would be tantamount to signing a blank cheque, giving an undefined term a place in the implementation of a legally-binding treaty. Many of the principal actors using the term are corporates, using it to greenwash carbon offsetting projects that rely on ‘nature’. The supporters of NBS are promoting the concept in order to avoid changes to their current mode of business, to distract from the need for drastic and urgent emissions reductions, and to allow them to carry on polluting. This will harm biodiversity. Including the phrase NBS would open the door to mass land-grabbing by corporate interests, conversion of large areas of land to intensive plantations, and huge expansion of strictly protected areas by international conservation organizations, violating the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities who safeguard biodiversity. The term ”ecosystem-based approaches”, however, has a long history of use in the CBD and is central to its implementation, has a sound legal basis and clear principles and safeguards.

2. ***Do not include the phrase ‘nature positive’ or 'biodiversity offset and credits' in the GBF.***

‘Nature positive’ is also not a term defined in the CBD. It is a public relations exercise that should not be adopted by CBD Parties in the implementation of the Convention.The term has been invented for the purpose of greenwashing the practice of biodiversity offsetting, where ecosystems and species are destroyed in one place and the loss is supposedly compensated by protecting similar ecosystems and species in other places. In this vision, if more biodiversity is protected than is lost, that is somehow ‘nature positive.’ But this approach implies that it is alright to continue losing nature.

3. ***Concentrate on targets that address the root causes of biodiversity loss, and not on a single colonial conservation target to expand Protected Areas by 30 percent***.

30x30 is an arbitrary number that lacks robust scientific evidence, however, the evidence is clear that stopping ecological collapse will take much more than an enlarged global Protected Area network, with a much stronger focus needed on addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss, such as overconsumption. Given that 80% of the world’s biodiversity is found on Indigenous Peoples’ lands, the evidence is clear that the best way to conserve ecosystems is to protect the rights of those who live in and depend on them by the recognition and protection of collective and customary land tenure systems of Indigenous Peoples, guaranteeing their rights to lands, resources, self- determination and to free, prior and informed consent, as required by international human rights instruments. We call on you to focus on ensuring that all threatened species and ecosystems are adequately protected, rather than just increasing Protected Areas, and to adequately address the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss.

**Signatories**

* International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty - Agricultural Biodiversity Working Group
* African Civil Society Biodiversity Alliance - ACBA
* Sahabat Alam Malaysia - SAM
* Third World Network - TWN
* Fundación Barranquilla+20
* GYBN Colombia
* Red Nacional de Jóvenes de Ambiente
* Earth in Brackets
* Reacción Climática
* AbibiNsroma Foundation
* Friends of the Earth International
* Red de Cooperación Amazónica - REDCAM
* MKAAJI MPYA asbl (DRC)
* AJVC - Association Jeunesse verte du Cameroun.
* ECare For Environment (Cameroon)
* Paulownia-Tech Foundation (Cameroon)
* Esaff Burundi
* Club de l'environnement université du Burundi
* RPEEBU-Réseau pour la Promotion de l'Education Environnementale au Burundi (BURUNDI)
* ABN- Association Burundaise pour la Protection de la Nature (BURUNDI)
* Kalpavriksh (India)
* Jardin d'Eden Cameroun
* Earth Day Tokyo
* Terra de Direitos
* Articulação Nacional de Agroecologia - Brazil
* Global Youth Biodiversity Network
* Plate-forme haïtienne de Plaidoyer pour un Développement Alternatif (PAPDA)
* Colectivo VientoSur
* Environics Trust, India
* Instituto Shirley Djukurnã Krenak
* Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity (ZAAB)

Association For Promotion Sustainable Development. India

* Centre for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
* The Soil Solution (NGO), The Gambia
* Blue Dalian, China
* Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), Nigeria
* Koalisi Rakyat untuk Hak atas Air (KRuHA) / people's coalition for the right to water, Indonesia
* Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA)
* New Wind Association, Finland
* Adivasi ry, Finland
* Centre for 21st Century Issues (C21st) Nigeria
* Okinawa ReefCheck and Research Group（ORRG）
* Vigilance OGM (Québec, Canada)
* EcoNexus, UK
* Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance
* COECOCEIBA - Costa Rica
* WhyWeCraft Association (Romania)
* Den Grønne Ungdomsbevægelse (Denmark)
* CoopeSoliDar R.L- Costa Rica
* Center for Environmental Justice, Sri Lanka
* Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria
* CENSAT Agua Viva - Colombia
* Sustainable Environment Food and Agriculture Initiative (SEFAAI), Lagos, Nigeria.