



Convention on  
Biological Diversity

# Media Kit: Ways forward for biodiversity and people – press briefing for 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of Local Biodiversity Outlooks

23 Sept 2020

- **Press briefing:** we will hold a press briefing on 23 September 2020 (0900 Montreal/1400 UK time, GMT+1). [Please register here.](#)
- The briefing will include **speakers** from UN Biodiversity, IPBES and Indigenous and local community leaders.
- Panellists and experts will be available for interview (details below).
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## Summary

- *The world is facing unprecedented challenges from biodiversity loss and climate change, and one million species are at risk of extinction.*
- *There is a way to protect the world's biodiversity by listening to indigenous peoples and local communities who have sustainably managed biodiversity for millennia*
- *The majority of the world's most biodiverse areas are found within the ancestral lands of indigenous peoples and local communities; securing their rights to land would secure biodiversity*
- *More than a quarter of the global land area is traditionally owned, managed, used, or occupied by indigenous peoples, and has been for millennia.*



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## Media Release: Islands of nature – Biodiversity needs the voices and actions of indigenous peoples

Without immediate action we face catastrophic loss of nature and biodiversity and increasing risks of pandemics as a result, as showcased in a [major report](#) released by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity last week. A complementary report released at the same UN meeting, the [Local Biodiversity Outlooks 2](#), shows the need for a step change in how we confront these crises.

Globally, we have failed to stem the loss of biodiversity and commitments stand unfulfilled. As negotiations proceed on new commitments for post-2020, there must be change.

“Ongoing disregard of the vital contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use constitutes a major missed opportunity for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020,” said Joji Cariño, (Philippines) of Forest Peoples Programme, representing Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge, International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, and a co-author of the LBO-2.

“[This] neglect has affected the under-achievement of all 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, with fundamental lessons remaining to be learnt about securing the future of nature and cultures,” she said.

“Putting the cultures and rights of IPLCs at the heart of the 2050 biodiversity strategy would deliver sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing, and positive outcomes for biodiversity and climate,” said Carino.

### **The science is clear: biodiversity needs indigenous peoples**

The [IPBES Global Assessment](#) shows that much of the world’s biodiversity is located on the lands of IPLCs. Approximately 35% of the global area that is formally protected and 35% of all remaining terrestrial areas with very low human intervention and rich in biodiversity overlap with indigenous lands; when the lands of local communities are added, those percentages are even higher.

The key role of indigenous peoples and local communities in protecting biodiversity is supported by increasing bodies of research, including [Science, Nature](#) and the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#), as cited last year by the UN’s climate and biodiversity panels.

Yet far from being viewed as allies, too often indigenous peoples and local communities have been attacked – both by those who would exploit the natural world and those who seek to forcibly protect it. This much change.

Indigenous peoples and local communities are also disproportionately impacted by violent land grabs and brutality on the frontier of expanding industrial agriculture, meat and crop production.

The LBO-2 is dedicated to these people who are risking their lives protecting the world’s soils, forests, and rivers, and the biodiversity that they nurture. The report says “We stand with these brave environmental human-rights defenders who are routinely harassed and criminalised—some even killed—for standing up for their rights and for nature.”



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Speaking about evictions from her ancestral territory in Kenya, Milka Chepkorir said "Continuous evictions leads to a continuous loss of our culture and traditions which has been the enabling factor for our conservation way of live. And therefore, loss of biodiversity."

"Do we ever ask ourselves how much biodiversity is lost over a period of time of continuous evictions using fire just to keep communities off "protected areas", areas that they have been living in since time immemorial?"

Fortress protections do not work and indeed "The only way to achieve these global goals is through secure land rights for indigenous peoples and local communities", said Milka.

### **Cause for optimism: unleashing the power of local and collective actions**

Ahead of the UN Biodiversity Summit on 30 September 2020, more than 50 indigenous and community authors have contributed to the LBO-2, providing their perspectives on what should be done to bend the curve of biodiversity loss and change our direction of travel.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the UN Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said "LBO-2 embodies an optimism that the destruction of Nature and the dramatic loss of biodiversity and cultural diversity can be successfully reversed, by embracing the values, and building on the collective and local actions of the World's indigenous peoples and local communities."

Co-author of the LBO-2, Maurizio Faran Ferrari, said, "It is clear that we as a human family are at a crossroads; we can allow unprecedented biodiversity loss and rapidly accelerating climate change to continue, or we can challenge existing unsustainable systems and ourselves to find solutions"

"Protecting biodiversity at all scales must embed indigenous peoples' and local communities' own territories and systems of governance and management. Considering that much of the world's biodiversity and more than 20% of carbon is stored on their lands and territories, securing their rights to land should be considered one of the most effective ways to make rapid progress towards biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development goals," he said.

In a statement, the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity said, "In order to bend the curve of biodiversity loss, we need to bend the curve of inequality and ensure the equitable sharing of benefits and costs. To achieve the vision 2050, there is a need for a paradigm shift in terms of values at the core of society that influence their behaviour for a transformation towards a responsible and sustainable society."

The authors of this publication argue that future global biodiversity goals must embed the vital role of indigenous peoples and local communities in protecting biological and cultural diversity.

### **From connectedness to nature comes the drive to safeguard it**

"From connectedness to nature comes the drive to safeguard it," said Josefa Tauli, Philippines, Global Youth Biodiversity Network.

"From valuing our natural & cultural heritage comes the drive ensure it is passed on. These are the things we learn in school & at home, from our peers and elders," she said.



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Increasingly, these 'islands' of great biological and cultural diversity found on indigenous and local community lands are being surrounded by declining resilience in vast tracts of the earth. This difference in biodiversity directly correlates with the value systems through which societies view nature.

"Indigenous peoples don't see nature as separate from people," said Lakpa Nuri Sherpa of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and member of IIFB.

"We interact with nature every day, and we think carefully how we manage our resources – we have spiritual and sacred relationships with our natural resources, which means we must manage our lands in a sustainable way so we can pass it on to the next generation.

"Without security for our collective land rights, the land can be exploited, nature loses out, and there's nothing to pass on to the next generation," he said.

The LBO-2 reveals local solutions to the pressing global challenges, developed, implemented and sustained by indigenous peoples and communities.

"In order for the 2050 vision [of living in harmony with nature] to be successful, the contribution of all sectors must be taken into account," said Ramiro Batzin, Co-Coordinator of the IIFB.

"In our case, it must be in line with indigenous worldviews that place emphasis on the intrinsic relationship between human beings, Mother Nature and the universe, and the essential link that exists between nature and culture," said Batzin.

Carino said, "Indigenous peoples' values and knowledge provide insights for reciprocal human-nature relationships amidst the crisis of biodiversity loss and climate change."

"Biodiversity needs the voices and actions of indigenous peoples," she said.

#### Note to editors

Panellists and experts from this session are available for interview.

Please contact:

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A [selection of images is available here](#). Others available on request.

Further information is available at: <https://lbo2.localbiodiversityoutlooks.net/>

We will be holding a **full press briefing** on LBO-2 on 23 September, where contributing authors and experts will be available for comment: [Please register here for the press briefing](#).



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## Speakers

### Speakers at this event will include:

- John Scott (UN Convention on Biological Diversity)
- Joji Carino (Philippines/Asia)
- Tonio Sadik (Canada/N. America)
- Robert Guimaraes (FECONAU, Peru, Lat Am) ([Case study](#))
- Miguel Guimaraes (FECONAU, Peru, Lat Am)
- Kevin Chang (TBC) (Hawaii/N. America) ([Case study](#))
- Josefa Tauli, Philippines, Global Youth Biodiversity Network ([Case study](#))
- Peter Kitelo (Cheptikale Indigenous Peoples Development Programme, Kenya/Africa) ([Case study](#))
- Lakpa Nuri Sherpa (TBC)(AIPP, Asia)

## Annex I: Background

The Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 (GBO5), published by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), offers an authoritative overview of the state of nature. It is a final report card on progress against 20 global biodiversity goals agreed to in 2010 with a 2020 deadline, and offers lessons learned for getting on track. GBO-5 underlines the urgent need to act to slow and end further loss, and highlights examples of proven measures available to help achieve the world's agreed vision: "Living in harmony with nature" by 2050.

[The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Local Biodiversity Outlooks](#) (LBO-2), is a landmark collaborative piece of research and analysis, and acts as a sister publication to the UN report, the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

Published on 16 Sept 2020, LBO-2 presents the perspectives and experiences of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) on the current social-ecological crisis, and their contributions to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and to the renewal of nature and cultures. The first edition (*LBO-1*), produced in 2016 as a complement to the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4)*, has become a key source of evidence about the actions and contributions of IPLCs towards achieving the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The LBO-2 publication assesses progress against all 20 [Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#) which expressed global ambitions between 2011 and 2020. It finds that the contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities have too often been neglected and marginalised, signifying global underachievement in meeting a majority of these goals.

LBO-2 is released during crucial negotiations towards a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and **the findings presented here are of fundamental importance to the outcome of those negotiations.** The authors demonstrate through grounded cases that effective conservation and restoration of our natural world happens through a mosaic of locally tested and proven systems of sustainable use. And this contributes to resilience, where locally grounded food systems can provide sustainable and nutritious food for our families and communities in good times and bad times. But support for these solutions is needed.

Following up on the publication of the first global assessment of nature and biodiversity in 2019, which suggested that IPLC lands are '[islands of nature in a sea of decline](#)', this publication points to



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the reasons for these slower rates of decline and **provides powerful recommendations about how to support these local efforts and to re-think our global relationships with our planet.**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Local Biodiversity Outlooks also addresses transformation towards a more reciprocal and balanced relationships between humans and nature. Outlining 6 key transitions underpinning such a journey, the report provides **concrete and real steps that can be taken towards meeting biodiversity goals and our global commitments on climate change and on sustainable development.**

## Annex II: Quotes available for publication

### International actors

#### **Elizabeth Maruma Mrema**

*Executive Secretary of the UN Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity*

“LBO-2 embodies an optimism that the destruction of Nature and the dramatic loss of biodiversity and cultural diversity can be successfully reversed, by embracing the values, and building on the collective and local actions of the World’s indigenous peoples and local communities.”

“Now more than ever it is time to bring together the diverse knowledge systems of traditional knowledge and science

“As partners in the CBD, IPLCS will play a crucial role in the post 2020 global biodiversity framework. The stories encourage me to

“I call on govts to unleash the power of the collective of local actions of Indigenous peoples and local communities to assist humanity to achieve the 2050 vision of living in harmony w/ nature...and I recommend the findings of the LBO to you all.

#### **Maurizio Ferrari, co-author, LBO-2**

"It is clear that we as a human family are at a crossroads; we can allow unprecedented biodiversity loss & rapidly accelerating climate change to continue, or we can challenge existing unsustainable systems and ourselves to find solutions"

#### **Eduardo Brondizio, IPBES Co-chair**

"Local experiences have been the main protagonists in the past decades. 25% of land is in the hands of #indigenous peoples and in these places, there are lower rates of #biodiversity loss."

“A new set of targets must rest on the recognition of the rights and territories of indigenous peoples and local communities.”

#### **Inger Andersen**

*Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme*



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“To succeed, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework needs ambitious targets, along with solutions and means of delivering them. As *LBO-2* shows, indigenous people and local communities have long been deploying the kind of solutions the world needs to adopt.”

### **Jon Waterhouse**

*Indigenous Peoples Scholar at the Oregon Health and Science University and a National Geographic Education Fellow Emeritus and Explorer*

“Indigenous peoples have mastered the art of living on the Earth without destroying it. They continue to teach and lead by example, from the restoration of eel grass and salmon by the Samish Nation, to the bison reintroduction by the Kainai Nation of the Blackfoot Confederacy, to the restoration of traditional 800-year-old Hawaiian fish ponds. We must heed these lessons and take on this challenging task if we want our grandchildren to have a future.”

### **Hesiquio Benitez, SBSTTA Chair**

“Inclusiveness and human rights are key conditions for a successful post-2020 global biodiversity framework.”

### Indigenous peoples & local community representatives

**Joji Cariño**, (Philippines) of Forest Peoples Programme, representing Centres of Distinction on Indigenous and Local Knowledge and a Member of IIFB.

“Ongoing disregard of the vital contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use constitutes a major missed opportunity for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020.

“This neglect has affected the under-achievement of all 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, with fundamental lessons remaining to be learnt about securing the future of nature and cultures.”

“Putting the cultures and rights of IPLCs at the heart of the 2050 biodiversity strategy would deliver sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing, and positive outcomes for biodiversity and climate.”

### **Lakpa Nuri Sherpa**, *International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity*

“Indigenous peoples don’t see nature as separate from people,” said Lakpa Nuri Sherpa of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) and member of International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB).

“We interact with nature every day, and we think carefully how we manage our resources – we have spiritual and sacred relationships with our natural resources, which means we must manage our lands in a sustainable way so we can pass it on to the next generation.



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"Without security for our collective land rights, the land can be exploited, nature loses out, and there's nothing to pass on to the next generation," he said.

"For this reason, we must continue to fight for the rights to our lands, territories and resources – if we don't have rights, if we are attacked, we cannot protect our forests – they take the resources from our lands, but we care for these lands. "

**Josefa Tauli, Philippines, Global Youth Biodiversity Network**

"From connectedness to nature comes the drive to safeguard it. From valuing our natural & cultural heritage comes the drive ensure it is passed on. These are the things we learn in school & at home, from our peers and elders."

**Ramiro Batzin, Co-Coordinator of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)**

"In order for the 2050 vision to be successful, the contribution of all sectors must be taken into account. In our case, it must be in line with indigenous worldviews that place emphasis on the intrinsic relationship between human beings, Mother Nature and the universe, and the essential link that exists between nature and culture."

"Without a transformative action plan for the next 30 years, we risk the destruction of nature. It is important to work together to achieve good living with nature."

**Rodion**

"The biggest challenge and Number One Task for countries in the post-pandemic time will be economic recovery. And the greatest fear for us is how to ensure that this recovery will encapsulate the principles of sustainability, biodiversity and green economy. Will the governments demonstrate ambitions and willpower to accelerate action on biodiversity and follow-up mechanisms?"

**Cristina Coc, Indigenous Q'eqchi, Maya Leaders Alliance**

"The value that is placed on natural resources by state and companies is a dollar value. For us, that's not the same. Mother Nature is more than a dollar value. She's a part of who we are."

**John Mohawk, Indigenous teacher from North America**

"Indigenous people are here to maintain survival as a plausible goal. Subsistence is a moral relationship with nature. In many ways, it is the indigenous cultures' relationship to the earth that represents the only real hope for the long-term survival of people on any scale in the world. Subsistence means that there's a forest here today, and we find a way to make a living here. Then tomorrow, there's still a forest here. That's subsistence."

**Nailepu Naiguta, Maasai medicine woman from Paran women's group Ololulung, Narok, Kenya**



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"Indigenous women are keepers of our natural resources. As a medicine woman I have to go far away to look for medicinal plants; we do not even have a forest anymore near us. I am even thinking of creating a small forest in my home. Am glad as indigenous women we are working together to share knowledge and have these plants just next to our kitchen gardens. We have the first step. We need you all to work with us and us with you."

**Chief Howard Thompson, Haudenosaunee**

"I want to be a good ancestor. Indigenous Peoples' commitments to climate action ensure that we are thinking of the seven generations to come."

### **International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity**

"In order to bend the curve of biodiversity loss, we need to bend the curve of inequality and ensure the equitable sharing of benefits and costs. To achieve the vision 2050, there is a need for a paradigm shift in terms of values at the core of society that influence their behaviour for a transformation towards a responsible and sustainable society."

**Raoni Metuktire, Environmentalist and Chief of the indigenous Brazilian Kayapó people**

"Why do you do this? You say it is for development – but what kind of development takes away the richness of the forest and replaces it with just one kind of plant or one kind of animal? Where the spirits once gave us everything we needed for a happy life – all of our food, our houses, our medicines – now there is only soya or cattle. Who is this development for?"

**Milka Chepkorir, Sengwer community representative, Kenya**

"Continuous evictions leads to a continuous loss of our culture and traditions which has been the enabling factor for our conservation way of live. And therefore, loss of biodiversity."

"Do we ever ask ourselves how much biodiversity is lost over a period of time of continuous evictions using fire just to keep communities off "protected areas", areas that they have been living in since time immemorial?"

"What would it be like if such communities were left to take care of their own lands? We have lived in our lands and have conserved the biodiversity for so long, it only helps if we are empowered to do more. Evictions just leads to more loss of biodiversity."

**Brenda Asuncion, Hui Mālama Loko I'a Coordinator, @kuahawaii**

"Food sovereignty, sustainable agriculture, aquaculture & forestry is entwined w/ empowerment of #indigenous peoples and local communities."

"We are proud and grateful that these works of our ancestors – and the work of our people today - are included in this global evidence base to support movement for the kinds of changes & transitions the report calls for."