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V I E W P O I N T P A P E R

*Benefits and Costs of the Biodiversity Targets
for the Post-2015 Development Agenda*

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Post-2015 Consensus

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Introduction

The Post 2015 Consensus Assessment Paper for biodiversity and deforestation uses the “Aichi Targets” contained within the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as a basis for identifying – and costing - selected biodiversity and forestry targets that could be adopted in the Post 2015 sustainable development framework. The paper focuses on four of the 20 Aichi Targets on the basis that these are the ones that lend themselves best to credible evaluation. The targets covered include:

- Target 5 (reduce the rate of loss of all natural habitats - including forests - by at least half)
- Target 10 (minimise anthropogenic climate change pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems)
- Target 11 (increase protected area coverage)
- Target 15 (enhance carbon stocks through conservation and restoration)

The paper provides an interesting analysis of these targets - exploring whether the benefits of achieving the targets exceeds the costs. It concludes that this is indeed the case for coral reefs (Target 10) and carbon stocks (Target 15) and also for forests (Target 5) but is less conclusive for non-forest habitats (the paper looked specifically at wetlands) and for protected areas (Target 11).

The paper suffers from two key weaknesses, however. First, deliberations on the structure and content of the Post 2015 continues to move at pace and the current formulation encompasses some of the Aichi Targets but is not explicitly aligned with them. Second, economic analysis of individual targets is an insufficient mechanism for determining priorities in a sustainable development framework that is intended to be 'transformative,' 'universal' and 'integrated.' These two issues are discussed below.

Biodiversity and Deforestation in the Post 2015 Framework – Current Thinking

At the end of June 2014 the Open Working Group released a revised Zero Draft of the proposed goals and targets for the Post 2015 Framework. Biodiversity and deforestation is primarily covered in proposed Goal 15 (Box 1) - although also crops up elsewhere, for example marine and coastal ecosystems are covered in Goals 14. The influence of the Aichi Targets is clear within the Goal 15 (and elsewhere) targets (including in terms of the 2020 rather than 2030 timeframe set for some). However, Goal 15 extends much further to include other biodiversity priorities including the most recent headline issue – the need to address large-scale illegal wildlife trafficking. Goal 15 draws on a wide range of international environmental priorities beyond the CBD and any assessment of biodiversity and forest goals and targets for the Post 2015 framework should do the same.

Proposed goal 15. Protect and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss

- 15.1 by 2020 ensure conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, in particular wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with international agreements
- 15.2 by 2030, ensure the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, and increase reforestation by x% globally
- 15.3 by 2030, achieve a land degradation neutral world, and restore degraded land including land affected by desertification and drought
- 15.4 by 2020 take urgent and significant action to halt the loss of biodiversity, and protect and prevent the extinction of known threatened species
- 15.5 by 2030, end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and end demand and supply of illegal wildlife products
- 15.6 by 2020 introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems
- 15.a by 2020, mobilize and significantly increase from all sources financial resources to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020
- 15.b mobilize significantly resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management, and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance sustainable forest management, including for conservation and reforestation
- 15.c enhance support to developing countries efforts to combat poaching and illegal trafficking of endangered species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities

Source: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html> [accessed 17 July 2014]

From Individual Targets to an Integrated Framework

The CBD established a High Level Panel to conduct a global assessment of resources for implementing the Aichi targets. In its first report¹, the Panel was at pains to emphasise that

¹ CBD (2012). Resourcing the Aichi Biodiversity Targets: A First Assessment of the Resources Required for Implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal. <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/fin/hlpgar-sp-01/official/hlpgar-sp-01-01-report-en.pdf>.

inter-linkages and synergies between targets and between goals would mean that the approach, resourcing and effectiveness of the delivery of any one target may influence the investment needs of another. The same will be true of the Post 2015 targets and goals.

Analysis by IIED's Forest Team² highlights the need for biodiversity and forests to be considered across the full set of Post 2015 goals rather than in isolation. Biodiversity and forests impact on and are impacted by a large number of the proposed goals and targets. In assessing the costs and benefits of biodiversity and deforestation targets, a very limited picture is obtained if the costs and benefits in terms of synergies and trade-offs with other goals and targets is not taken into account.

IIED proposes a “modular” approach to thinking about forests within the Post 2015 framework – an approach which can also be applied to biodiversity. This approach explicitly recognises that right enabling environment – policies, processes, organisations, incentives and metrics – is needed for forests to help deliver sustainable development.

Understanding enabling conditions can be drawn from existing frameworks. Examples include globally applicable criteria for sustainable forest management,³ pillars for inclusive and integrated forest/landscape management,⁴ enabling investments for locally controlled forestry,⁵ and key areas for forest contributions to a green economy.⁶ These frameworks highlight four generic enabling conditions:

1. Social justice within secure forest stewardship arrangements: Just and secure forest rights and human wellbeing through equitable forest governance and integrated development planning.
2. Fair, accessible and responsible market systems: Inclusive economic opportunity and resource efficiency for all forest products and services, influenced by sustainable lifestyles.
3. Capabilities to manage multi-functional landscapes: Capacities and practices that enhance the quality and quantity of ecosystem services, sustainable use options and disaster preparedness.

² Milledge, S et al (2014) Sustainable Development Goals: a forest module for a transformative agenda. IIED Briefing Paper. <http://pubs.iied.org/17248IIED.html>

³ Ramesteiner, E. and Simula M. (2003) Forest certification—an instrument to promote sustainable forest management? *Journal of Environmental Management* 67: 87–98.

⁴ Sayers, J., Sunderland, T., Ghazoul, J., Pfund, J-L., Sheil, D., Meijaard E., Ventera, M., Boedhihartonoa, A.K., Day, M., Garcia, C., van Oostenj, C., and Buck L.E. (2012). Ten principles for a landscape approach to reconciling agriculture, conservation, and other competing land uses. *PNAS* Special edition. Available at: www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1210595110

⁵ Macqueen, D.J., Buss, C., and Sarroca, T. (2012). *TFD Review: Investing in Locally Controlled Forestry*. The Forest Dialogue, New Haven, USA.

⁶ Prins, K. (2013). Measuring progress of the forest sector towards a green economy: some proposals. Presented at the Joint meeting of the ECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the FAO European Forestry Commission, December 2003, Rovaniemi, Finland.

4. Incentives and practical metrics: Incentives that build awareness of responsibilities and encourage implementation backed by effective national and international metrics.

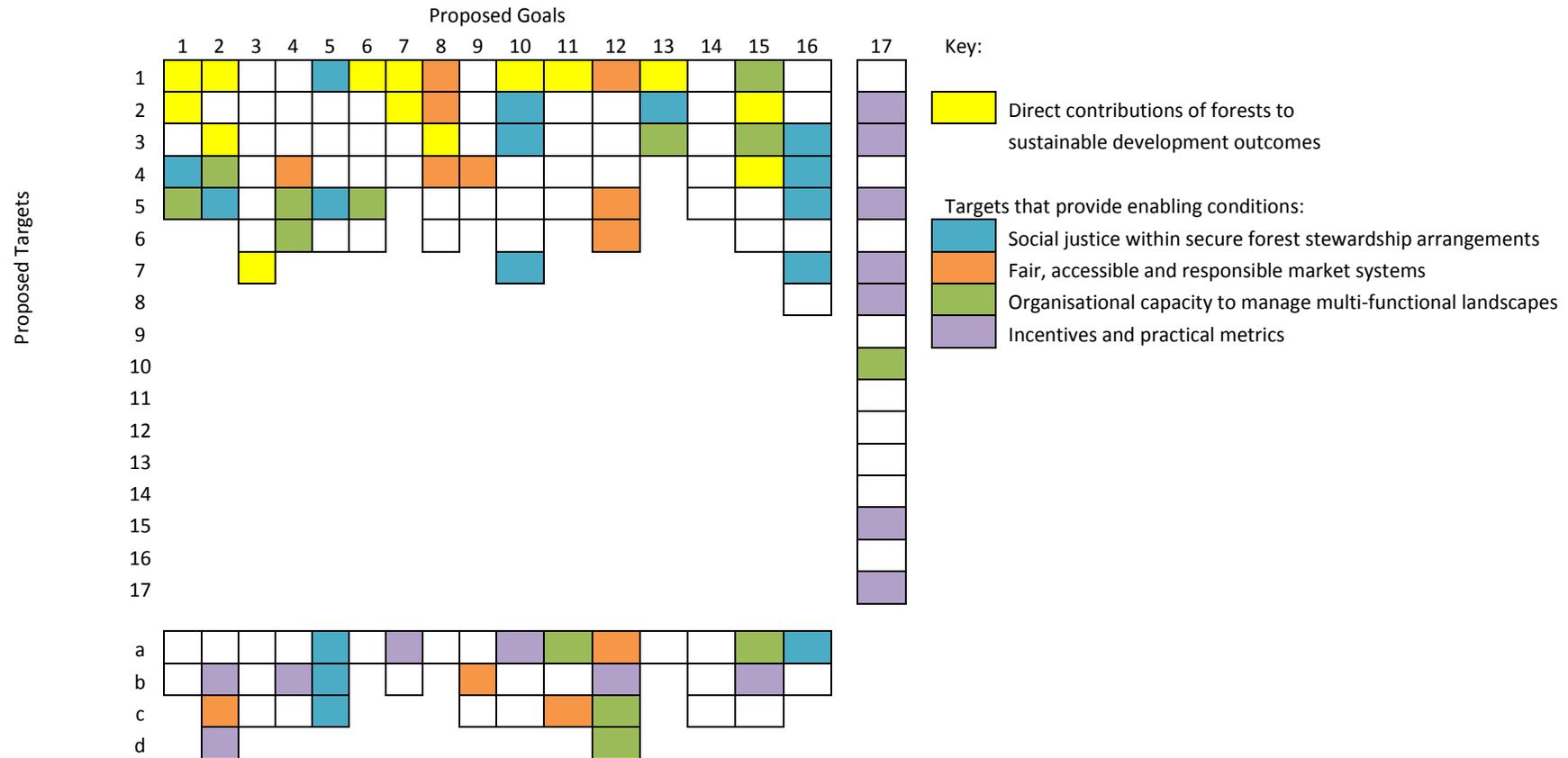
The 'forest module' considers the combination of targets formulated under diverse goal areas that both relates to sustainable development outcomes, and are considered essential in delivering these four enabling conditions (Figure 1). The approach can be assessed according to three core concepts that have emerged in dialogue⁷ on the SDGs:

- Contributions towards **transformative** change in support of a rights-based, equitable and inclusive approach to sustainability, in particular by overcoming barriers.
- Ensuring **universality** by being global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national circumstances.
- Addressing **integration** by incorporating in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and promotion of inter-linkages across sectors.

Making progress in developing an appropriate framework for sustainable development needs much more than just assessing the suitability of sectoral targets on the basis of costs incurred and benefits delivered. Looking at biodiversity and deforestation in the Post 2015 framework in this way – rather than as targets to be assessed individually - reveals where changes are needed to other goals and targets if we want to achieve real sustainable development. It is those additional costs and benefits that should be the focus of assessment.

⁷ IRF 2015. (2014). *The OWG-11 'focus areas' paper: an IRF2015 review*. Report by the Independent Research Forum.

Figure 1 - The modular approach considers contribution of forests towards diverse development outcomes and required enabling conditions



This paper was written by Dilys Roe, Biodiversity Team Leader and by Simon Milledge, Forest Team Leader both at IIED. The project brings together 62 teams of economists with NGOs, international agencies and businesses to identify the targets with the greatest benefit-to-cost ratio for the UN's post-2015 development goals.

For more information visit post2015consensus

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