

First Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework

Statement on Agenda Item 5 – intervention on human rights thematic consultation

Thank you, Chair.

This is a statement on behalf of Natural Justice, the Malindi Rights Forum, Forest Peoples Programme, and Friends of the Earth International.

We support the interventions by IIFB and the ICCA Consortium and want to further highlight the necessity to include discussions on human rights in the work programme.

The IPBES global assessment clearly states that goals for conserving and sustainably using nature and achieving sustainability cannot be met by current trajectories, and that goals for 2030 and beyond may only be achieved through transformative changes. It also concludes that these transformations are more likely when efforts are directed at a few key leverage points, including addressing inequalities, justice and inclusion in conservation.

Human rights are essential to realise the vision of “living in harmony with nature”. At the same time, Human rights depend on biodiversity: the rights to food, water, health, culture and even life itself depend on thriving biodiversity and ecosystems. The human right to a clean and healthy environment is protected by the constitutions of over 100 states, and its implementation can be a key avenue for mainstreaming biodiversity.

If we truly want to commit to transformational change, rather than business as usual, we need to work hand in hand with indigenous peoples and local communities, whose territories represent over a quarter of the global land area and are facing increasing pressure from resource extraction. This can only be achieved by including targets to recognise and respect human rights, including land and resource rights, in the global biodiversity framework.

We therefore ask the co-chairs to include a thematic consultation on human rights in the work programme, to work with parties and other stakeholders to organise such an event, and to ensure that the conclusions are integrated into the preparatory documents of the post 2020-framework. This consultation should be accompanied by further inclusive and accessible consultation processes, including online fora and submissions.

Thank you, Chair.