

**Statement by David Cooper**  
**Acting Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

**High-level political forum on sustainable development 2023 – General debate “Building momentum towards the Sustainable Development Goals Summit”**  
*Morning / afternoon sessions between 17 and 20 July 2023, New York*

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*Excellencies*

*Distinguished delegates.*

At this halfway point in implementing the 2030 Agenda we know that we are seriously off-track in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We know also that the ongoing loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems jeopardizes further progress.

Biodiversity is essential for food security and good nutrition.

It provides clean water, reduces disease risk and protects us from natural disasters.

It is an essential contribution to climate action.

We urgently need to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity.

In December last year, at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the world community came together and adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

This is an ambitious agreement to take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and, by 2030, to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet.

It is founded on a human-rights based approach including the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

It calls for the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

The Framework includes four goals for 2050 and twenty-three action targets for 2030.

There are specific targets to address the drivers of biodiversity loss and to enhance the benefits people obtain from biodiversity. There are targets to engage all levels of government, business and finance, to ensure that indigenous peoples, women and young people have a voice in decision making, and to mobilize the necessary resources and build capacity to support implementation.

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The Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework requires action now to achieve results by 2030. And as is the case with the climate crisis and other challenges we know from the science that action must happen this decade.

This UN Decade of Action

This requires a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach.

And for that leadership is required. We need leadership to mobilize all sectors and all people and to put in place the policy measures and funding necessary to enact changes on the ground.

We need courageous leadership that challenges vested interests and ensures a just transition, leaving no one behind.

Together, we can build a future where we all live in harmony with nature.

I thank you

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