Essential Outcomes on Nature-based Solutions for the Global Stocktake

Jointly prepared by the Nature for Climate Coalition (N4C), this brief recommends draft text options that Parties can use to capture essential outcomes on nature-based solutions for the consideration of outputs component of the first global stocktake (GST-CO). Our recommendations help answer the GST-CO guiding questions.

Nature-based solutions (NbS) in terrestrial, coastal, and marine areas are critical tools to accelerate the transition to a nature-positive, net zero future, while providing climate adaptation benefits and driving positive impact at scale to conserve biodiversity and improve livelihoods.[i] We will not reach our global climate and biodiversity goals without halting and reversing nature loss by 2030, while rapidly phasing out the use of fossil fuels. Notably, **emissions from the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry sector must reach net zero *more quickly than any other sector* – by or shortly after 2030**.[ii] Moreover, delayed action will reduce the capacity of NbS to enhance the resilience of ecosystems and communities and to avert and minimize loss and damage, with some ecosystems already reaching their hard and soft limits for adaptation.[iii] **In short, the majority of NbS implementation must take place BEFORE the second GST, and this first GST is the best opportunity to guide the needed course corrections and acceleration.**

On collective progress, opportunities, and challenges toward achieving the Paris Agreement goals (guiding questions 1 and 2), *N4C recommends the GST outcome*:

- *Welcomes* the advancements in scientific understanding and evidence about the critical and cost-effective[iv] role of high-integrity NbS to achieve the Paris Agreement goals, and *recognizes* that NbS can deliver up to one-third of the mitigation needed by 2030[v], while strengthening ecosystems and communities' resilience to climate change, conserving biodiversity, and reducing the risk of climate change feedbacks and impacts.[vi]
- *Recognizes* the integral role that Indigenous peoples, local communities, women, youth, and ethnic minorities play in successful, locally led nature-based climate action, especially for avoiding maladaptation.[vii]
- *Recognizes* that transforming management practices across working landscapes, seascapes, and food systems is central to achieving the Paris Agreement goals, thus enabling Parties to implement NbS, delivering a just rural transition, and enhancing global food security.[viii]
- *Welcomes* the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)[ix] adopted at CBD COP15, which encourages action on NbS implementation in several key targets, and *recognizes* the need for increased collective action across the Rio conventions.
- *Welcomes* the increase in political momentum and collective action for NbS as a solution to the climate and biodiversity crises, such as the Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forests & Land Use, the Forest Climate Leaders Partnership, the ENACT Partnership[x], and the Belem Declaration[xi].
- *Expresses alarm* that terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems – including many high-carbon or "irrecoverable carbon" ecosystems – have continued to be rapidly degraded and converted, and that more than $1.8 trillion in annual subsidies drive this land-use change[xii], exacerbating the climate and biodiversity crises, impairing ecosystem functions and service provisioning, and pushing some ecosystems close to collapse.[xiii]
- *Notes with utmost concern* the significant climate financing gap for NbS, which is many times larger than for other climate solutions[xiv], and *stresses* that only 2.5% of mitigation funding goes to the agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) sector (an order of magnitude below its potential proportional contribution)[xv] and that ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) only receives one-fifth of global adaptation finance.[xvi]
- *Welcomes* the progress of Parties to include NbS in their NDCs, and *stresses* the numerous opportunities to close the ambition gap via NbS, including by broadening the scope to include more ecosystems[xvii] – especially grasslands, peatlands,[xviii] coastal and marine areas[xix] – and expanding quantitative NbS targets, especially for sustainable management in productive areas[xx].
- *Welcomes* the outcomes of the Ocean and Climate Dialogues, including the essential role of ocean and coastal NbS in ambitious climate mitigation and adaptation action, and the identified opportunities to fill gaps, build capacity and strengthen ocean-based climate action under the UNFCCC.

- *Welcomes* the outcomes of the Glasgow-Sharm El-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation, which enable accelerated progress on adaptation action, including prioritizing and scaling EbA.
- *Welcomes* the collective progress to fund REDD+ readiness, implementation, and results-based payments.
- *Recognizes the* significant gaps in capacity, policy, and institutional frameworks that must be addressed to enable and accelerate national and collective action to implement NbS.[xxi]
- *Recognizes* that current IPCC GHG accounting practices focusing on carbon flows may unintentionally obscure impacts of climate action on stable carbon sinks.
- *Notes with concern* the slow pace of progress to operationalize Article 6 mechanisms and the lack of funding to create enabling conditions in developing country Parties to implement Article 6 and ensure the transparency and environmental integrity of the market and non-market mechanisms.

On key political messages and next steps to achieve the Paris Agreement goals (questions 3 and 4), *N4C recommends the GST outcome:*

- *Calls on* all Parties to urgently protect, restore, and sustainably manage nature – especially irrecoverable, high carbon ecosystems, such as old-growth forests and blue carbon ecosystems – through implementing and scaling NbS in line with the GBF to deliver an integrated approach to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises, and *stresses* the need for effective and equitable conservation of approximately 30% to 50% of Earth's land, freshwater and ocean areas, including currently near-natural ecosystems, to maintain the resilience of biodiversity and ecosystem services at a global scale.[xxii]
- *Requests* all Parties to communicate new, enhanced NDCs and LT-LEDS and *encourages* Parties to include specific targets, policies, measures and actions that deploy high-integrity NbS to mitigate, adapt to, and avert, minimize and address loss and damage from climate change, including by accelerating transitions to low-carbon food systems, scaling nature-based ocean-climate action, and rapidly transforming energy systems, among others, ensuring alignment with scenarios for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5C, ensuring an adequate adaptation response, and their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- *Calls on* Parties and the international community to align global financial flows with halting the destruction and degradation of nature, such as through disclosure and due diligence regulations and phasing down harmful subsidies, and to fund and scale existing political ambition to drive implementation of NbS.
- *Strongly urges* Parties to at least quadruple annual domestic and international financing for AFOLU sector climate action by 2025, with a view to increasing annual finance flows to NbS by at least 10 times by 2030,[xxiii] through both traditional and innovative mechanisms, such as results-based payments for REDD+, Article 6 transactions, high-integrity carbon markets and carbon pricing, debt for nature swaps, and green bonds[xxiv], among others.
- *Calls upon* Parties to incentivize the transition to sustainable and regenerative agriculture and agroecological practices that reduce emissions and enhance soil and biogenic carbon stocks by 2030, while also enhancing food security, ecosystem health, biodiversity, and livelihoods.
- *Urges* Parties to scale and accelerate locally led approaches to achieve transformative EbA action to advance climate resilient development, sustainable livelihoods, human security, and ecological integrity.
- *Requests* Parties to implement rights-based approaches and apply environmental and social safeguards to climate action efforts across <u>all sectors</u> as integral elements of successful adaptation and mitigation action in critical ecosystems, landscapes, and seascapes to ensure they protect biodiversity and drive a just transition.[xxv]
- *Urges* all Parties to advance inclusive decision-making processes, multi-sectoral policies and governance systems needed to fast-track NbS implementation, especially by clarifying property rights and land tenure[xxvi], prioritizing and funding enforcement of existing regulations, developing economic incentives needed to diversify income sources in rural areas, and advancing measures to address the impact of commodity production on habitat loss.
- *Also calls upon* developed country Parties to urgently advance partnerships to build the capacity, MRV, technology and transparency systems needed in developing country Parties to improve knowledge transfer, accountability, and coordination mechanisms requisite for effective AFOLU sector governance.
- *Encourages* all Parties to adopt interoperable and transparent data systems to advance NbS across the Rio Conventions[xxvii], especially The UN 'System of Environmental Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounts' as an improved information base to guide ecosystem-based climate action.

N4C calls on the GST outcome to support this high-level ambition for the role of NbS and our proposed '10 critical no regrets actions to accelerate NbS'.

For further information, please contact:

James Lloyd, *Director*
Nature4Climate
James.Lloyd@Nature4Climate.org

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[xxvii] This includes alignment with the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (CBD/COP/DEC/15/5) adopted at CBD COP15, which will be used to track and report on the national implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). Indicators most relevant to advancing NbS across Rio Conventions include climate regulation services provided by ecosystems by ecosystem type (using UN SEEA methodology), and national GHG inventories for land use and land use change, as included in the GBF monitoring framework.