Canada’s 2030 National Biodiversity Strategy - Milestone Document Summary

The document serves as a summary of the interim National Biodiversity Strategy, setting the framework for the final 2030 Strategy to be released in 2024, and invites feedback from various stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and effective biodiversity strategy for Canada.

Overview of Canada's 2030 National Biodiversity Strategy

Urgency of Action:
Canada acknowledges the critical need to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, aligning with the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). The document emphasizes Canada's role in the adoption of the KMGBF at COP15.

Shared Responsibility:
The strategy recognizes the collaborative effort required across various levels of government, Indigenous Peoples, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, and individuals.

Federal Government’s Role:
Responsibilities include management of migratory birds, endangered species, ocean management, fisheries, and pollution prevention.

Provincial and Territorial Contributions:
These governments are key in wildlife management, natural resource development, and land-use planning.

Municipal Involvement:
Municipalities play a significant role in connecting people with nature, land management, and urban planning.

Indigenous Leadership:

Indigenous Peoples are central to conservation efforts, bringing invaluable traditional knowledge and stewardship practices.

Diverse Sector Engagement:
Involvement from NGOs, the private sector, and philanthropy is crucial for biodiversity conservation.

Academic and Community Role:
Research, education, and community-driven conservation initiatives are vital components of the strategy.

Provincial/Territorial Strategies and Nature Agreements:
Integration of biodiversity considerations into broader policies, with specific Nature Agreements to support shared goals.

Challenges:
The document identifies key challenges such as government coordination, valuing nature, resource allocation, climate change impacts, and increasing public awareness and capacity.

Alignment with Other Efforts:
The strategy is designed to complement federal initiatives on climate change, pollution, sustainable development, and Indigenous rights.

Indigenous Science and Rights:
Emphasis on respecting Indigenous knowledge systems and rights, in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Guardians Program:
Recognizing the critical role of Indigenous Guardians in environmental stewardship.

Addressing Socio-Economic Inequality:
Acknowledging the need for additional support for Indigenous communities to participate effectively in biodiversity initiatives.

Global Commitments:

Alignment with international agreements and Canada's role in global biodiversity conservation.

Holistic and Inclusive Approach:
A comprehensive strategy that respects diverse perspectives and values, aiming for robust, equitable, and respectful conservation efforts.

Development Process

Engagement Activities: The federal government conducted various activities to ensure diverse Canadian perspectives are represented in the strategy. This included a national biodiversity symposium, online surveys, discussions with provinces and territories, bilateral engagements with Indigenous organizations, and focused sessions with key sectors.

Themes from Engagement: Main themes included integrated biodiversity and climate action, Indigenous science and leadership, policy coherence, public education, and new funding mechanisms. Challenges noted were balancing biodiversity with economic development and establishing a whole-of-government approach.

Ongoing Engagement: Additional conversations are planned for early 2024, particularly with Indigenous representatives. Feedback on the Milestone Document is encouraged until February 9, 2024.

Strategy Overview

Promise and Map: The 2030 Strategy is described as both a commitment to a just, nature-positive Canada and a guide for achieving the 2030 targets.

Long-Term Vision: By 2050, Canada aims for a healthy, thriving nature that enriches current and future generations, with all Canadians reconnecting with and fulfilling their responsibilities to nature.

2030 Mission: Urgent action for transformative change to halt and reverse biodiversity loss for the benefit of all living things.

Key Pillars: Recognizing Indigenous rights and advancing reconciliation; committing to urgent, ambitious action; ensuring a whole-of-government approach; fostering a whole-of-society approach; empowering local action; using the best available science; and applying an ecosystem approach.

Transformative Change: The strategy emphasizes the need for deep reevaluation of values, norms, and systems, including how nature is valued and used.

Inclusivity: Ensuring diverse communities and Indigenous rights holders are part of developing and implementing solutions.

Implementation of KMGBF Targets: The strategy will implement all 23 KMGBF targets, with specific actions outlined in draft target-specific implementation plans.

Measuring Progress: The Domestic Biodiversity Monitoring Framework (DBMF) will be used to track Canada's progress towards KMGBF goals and targets.

Integration with Other Federal Strategies: The 2030 Strategy aligns with other federal initiatives on climate change, sustainable development, and reconciliation.

Indigenous Leadership: Recognizing the critical role of Indigenous Peoples in conservation, including Indigenous science and guardianship programs.

Finalization of the Strategy: The final strategy, incorporating feedback from ongoing engagements, is scheduled for release in 2024.

Annex 1: Preliminary individual target implementation plans

Target 1: Spatial Planning and Effective Management

Objective: Implement spatial planning across Canada by 2030 to prevent biodiversity loss. This includes land and marine planning and other management processes. The planning should be participatory, integrate biodiversity, and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights. It supports other targets related to protected areas.

Importance: Helps in managing land and sea use changes, benefits wildlife and people, and recognizes biodiversity is not limited to protected areas.

Challenges: Existing plans often take decades to develop, and implementing participatory spatial planning across all areas by 2030 is challenging. This involves identifying uncovered areas, ensuring participatory processes, and resolving conflicts in shared jurisdictions.

Approaches: Utilizing current plans like the Nunavut Land Use Plan as models, identifying high biodiversity areas, using remote sensing and ecological modeling, and preparing for environmental changes and threats.

Target 2: Ecosystem Restoration

Objective: Restore 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030, improving them for biodiversity and ecological functions.

Importance: Restoration helps improve degraded ecosystems, supports biodiversity, and is critical for adapting to and mitigating climate impacts.

Approaches: Building on past efforts, partnerships, and government funding. Restoring ecosystems through collaborative efforts, scientific research, and proactive policies and regulations.

Target 3: Protected and Conserved Areas

Objective: By 2030, ensure 30% of terrestrial, inland water, and marine areas are effectively conserved and managed.

Importance: Protecting natural areas is essential for maintaining species diversity and ecosystem resilience.

Approaches: Leveraging existing programs, identifying key biodiversity areas, and ensuring effective management. Recognizing Indigenous-led conservation efforts and integrating these areas into broader conservation networks.

Target 4: Species Recovery

Objective: Implement measures to halt species loss and recover species at risk by 2030.

Importance: Maintaining species diversity is crucial for ecosystem stability and resilience.

Approaches: Using Nature Agreements, legislative tools, multi-species initiatives, and managing human-wildlife interactions. Emphasizing Indigenous leadership and collaboration across sectors.

Target 5: Sustainable Exploitation of Species

Objective: Ensure sustainable, safe, and legal use, harvesting, and trade of wild species by 2030.

Importance: Sustainable harvest is crucial for ecosystem health and Indigenous Peoples' ways of living.

Approaches: Implementing robust management practices, sustainable fisheries frameworks, migratory bird conservation, sustainable forest management, and a collaborative One Health approach.

Target 6: Invasive Alien Species

Objective: By 2030, significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species (IAS) by managing introduction pathways, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority IAS, and reducing rates of introduction and establishment by at least 50%.

Importance: IAS are a major threat to biodiversity, costing billions annually. They compete with native species, disrupt ecosystems, and can impact human health and economy.

Approaches: Enhance policies and partnerships to prevent entry and spread of IAS, collaborate internationally on measures to diminish risks, and implement legislation and regulations related to IAS management.

Target 7: Pollution and Biodiversity

Objective: Reduce pollution risks from all sources by 2030 to levels not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions, including halving risks from pesticides and chemicals, and significantly reducing plastic pollution and nutrient loss.

Importance: Pollution is a major driver of biodiversity loss, affecting ecosystem resilience and organism health.

Approaches: Develop and enforce regulatory and non-regulatory measures to prevent pollution, work internationally to address cross-border pollution, and focus on reducing

nutrients, pesticides, plastic pollution, and hazardous chemicals.

Target 8: Climate Change and Biodiversity

Objective: Minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity by 2030 through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction, including nature-based solutions.

Importance: Climate change and ocean acidification are critical threats to biodiversity, affecting ecosystem stability and function.

Approaches: Implement natural climate solutions and ecosystem-based approaches, support Indigenous-led climate action, and integrate climate and biodiversity programming.

Target 9: Sustainable Use and Management of Wild Species

Objective: Ensure sustainable management and use of wild species by 2030, providing benefits for people, especially those most dependent on biodiversity.

Importance: Wild species are crucial for nutrition, food security, medicines, and livelihoods, especially for Indigenous Peoples.

Approaches: Co-develop and implement robust monitoring and management systems, promote knowledge sharing, and ensure decisions are informed by various knowledge systems.

Target 10: Sustainable Management in Key Productive Sectors

Objective: Manage areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry sustainably by 2030, increasing biodiversity-friendly practices and contributing to resilience, productivity, and food security.

Importance: These sectors are vital for the economy, food security, and livelihoods but can negatively impact biodiversity if not managed sustainably.

Approaches: Implement sustainable practices in agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries, and continue to develop forestry management laws and policies that support biodiversity.

Target 11: Ecosystem Services and Functions

Objective: Restore, maintain, and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem services like air, water, climate regulation, soil health, and pollination, through nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches.

Importance: Ecosystem services are critical for human survival, supporting primary needs, economies, and quality of life. Biodiversity underpins ecosystem resilience and function.

Approaches: Implement national initiatives like the National Adaptation Strategy and Natural Climate Solutions Fund, and monitor and assess ecosystem conditions and services through government, NGOs, and Indigenous communities.

Target 12: Urban Green and Blue Spaces

Objective: Increase the area, quality, and connectivity of green and blue spaces in urban areas, incorporating biodiversity into urban planning to enhance native biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and human health and well-being.

Importance: Urbanization leads to habitat degradation and biodiversity loss. Enhancing urban green spaces can restore species populations, mitigate climate change effects, and improve mental health.

Approaches: Designate national urban parks, support nature-based solutions, improve Indigenous Peoples' access to urban green spaces, and encourage biodiversity-inclusive urban planning.

Target 13 / 15(c): Access and Benefit-sharing from the Utilization of Genetic Resources

Objective: Ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources, including traditional knowledge associated with these resources, and facilitate appropriate access.

Importance: Genetic resources are used in scientific and commercial applications, impacting health, agriculture, and the environment.

Approaches: Enhance existing ABS measures, engage in international discussions on DSI, and consider policy options for a national ABS framework in Canada.

Target 14: Mainstreaming of Biodiversity Values

Objective: Integrate biodiversity and its multiple values into all policies, regulations, planning, and development processes, across all levels of government and sectors.

Importance: Biodiversity is undervalued in policy decisions, affecting social and economic contributions and Indigenous Peoples' well-being.

Approaches: Develop tools for considering biodiversity values in decision-making, align biodiversity with other objectives, increase awareness, and identify causal links between policy, actions, and outcomes for biodiversity.

Target 15(a): Business' Role

Objective: Encourage businesses to monitor, assess, and disclose their impacts on biodiversity, and align their operations, supply chains, and portfolios with biodiversity goals.

Importance: Economic activities depend on nature, and biodiversity loss poses significant risks to the global economy. Businesses need to understand their relationship with biodiversity.

Approaches: Leverage international frameworks for environmental disclosure, engage businesses on biodiversity-related disclosure, and address barriers in assessing biodiversity risks and impacts.

Target 16 / 15(b): Sustainable Consumption

Objective: Encourage sustainable consumption choices through supportive frameworks, education, and access to information. By 2030, aim to halve global food waste, reduce overconsumption, and substantially reduce waste generation.

Importance: Current consumption patterns exceed the Earth's capacity, impacting biodiversity and distribution of benefits. Canada, with high per-capita consumption and waste rates, must address unsustainable consumption.

Approaches: Transition to a circular economy, demonstrate federal government leadership in sustainability, and improve environmental literacy.

Target 17: Biosafety/Biotechnology

Objective: Strengthen biosafety measures for living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from biotechnology as per the CBD, ensuring their safety and environmental stewardship.

Importance: Biosafety measures ensure that LMOs are safe and any risks are managed, especially given rapid biotechnological developments.

Approaches: Continue implementing robust biosafety regulations, engage in international biosafety discussions, and share information through platforms like the Biosafety Clearing House.

Target 18: Negative and Positive Incentives

Objective: Identify and reform incentives harmful to biodiversity by 2025, and substantially reduce them by at least $500 billion per year by 2030. Scale up positive incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Importance: Incentives often lead to biodiversity loss. Eliminating harmful incentives and promoting positive ones can redirect public funds towards sustainable practices.

Approaches: Develop a working definition of harmful and positive incentives, compile an inventory, and assess incentives to inform a plan to eliminate or reform them.

Target 19: Resource Mobilization – Financial Resources

Objective: Increase financial resources from all sources to at least $200 billion per year by 2030 for biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Importance: Support from developed countries is vital for conservation efforts in developing countries. Diverse funding sources are needed to fill the biodiversity financing gap.

Approaches: Leverage international contributions, scale up ambitions, and support from the private and philanthropic sectors. Implement national investments and innovative mechanisms.

Target 20: Capacity Building – Other Resources for Implementation

Objective: Strengthen capacity building, technology transfer, and scientific cooperation, particularly for developing countries, to support effective implementation of biodiversity conservation.

Importance: Developing countries often have high biodiversity but lack resources and technology for conservation. Developed countries can support by sharing knowledge and resources.

Approaches: Identify gaps in technical and scientific cooperation, engage in international forums, support initiatives like the GBFF, and transfer knowledge and resources to developing countries.

Target 21: Knowledge Sharing

Objective: Ensure accessibility to the best available data, information, and knowledge for decision-making and management of biodiversity, respecting Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and rights.

Importance: Access to diverse knowledge is crucial for evidence-based decision-making and effective biodiversity management. Incorporating Indigenous knowledge respects their cultural and historical contributions to biodiversity conservation.

Approaches: Mobilize data and knowledge, respect and engage with Indigenous science, and support implementation and reporting through the best available data.

Target 22: Inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, Women, and Youth in Decision-Making

Objective: Ensure full, equitable, and inclusive participation in biodiversity decision-making by Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, protecting environmental human rights defenders.

Importance: Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities bring unique perspectives and knowledge to biodiversity conservation. Inclusive decision-making processes are more effective and just.

Approaches: Engage Indigenous Peoples in co-management and co-development processes, integrate contributions from youth and persons with disabilities, and apply frameworks like Gender-based Analysis Plus.

Target 23: Gender Equality

Objective: Achieve gender equality in biodiversity implementation through a gender-responsive approach, ensuring equal rights and access to resources, and participation in decision-making for women and girls.

Importance: Gender equality is fundamental to effective biodiversity management. Equal participation ensures diverse perspectives and strengthens conservation efforts.

Approaches: Build on existing initiatives to advance gender equality, apply intersectional analysis tools, and support international efforts to empower women and girls in biodiversity conservation.

Annex 2: High-level overview of the Domestic Biodiversity Monitoring Framework

The Domestic Biodiversity Monitoring Framework (DBMF) is a tool developed to monitor Canada's progress in halting and reversing biodiversity loss. It's designed to account for actions committed to under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and to report the results achieved. Here's an overview:

1. **Purpose**: The DBMF signals whether biodiversity loss has halted and begun to reverse in Canada. It aims to link commitments, actions, and biodiversity outcomes, offering the chance to adapt and improve conservation efforts.
2. **Indicators**: The framework includes 26 mandatory headline indicators from the KMGBF and additional domestic indicators. These indicators provide insights into key elements of biodiversity, indicating trends or changes.
3. **Types of Indicators**: The DBMF contains a mix of direct indicators of biodiversity status, indicators of conservation actions, and performance indicators measuring the effectiveness of these actions.
4. **Scope and Limitations**: While the DBMF doesn't provide a comprehensive assessment of all biodiversity aspects, it offers valuable insights into the status of key biodiversity elements. It's noted that certain indicators could apply to multiple targets.
5. **Overarching Indicators**: These indicators assess the implementation of the biodiversity strategy, including inclusive participation of society, capacity and resources, safety of people and nature, and access to information for sustainable choices.

6. **Process-based Indicators**: Some indicators are process-based, focusing on mainstreaming actions across different societal and economic sectors to bring transformative change.
7. **Development Status**: Parts of the DBMF are still under development, pending further work on the international KMGBF Monitoring Framework. An Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) is currently developing methodologies for headline indicators.
8. **Inclusion of Diverse Programs**: The DBMF aims to be national in scope, encouraging the inclusion of provincial, territorial, Indigenous, or municipal programs to ensure a detailed biodiversity picture.

9. **Reporting Programs and Status**: The DBMF outlines the sources and current status of each indicator, noting areas where more work is required.
10. **Potential for Revisions**: The framework is subject to change based on the AHTEG's final report and evolving international standards.
11. **Intention and Future Development**: The DBMF is intended as a high-level summary, not an exhaustive list, of indicators. It may need expansion to better chart progress in halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

In summary, the DBMF represents a structured, evolving approach to monitoring biodiversity in Canada, incorporating a range of indicators to gauge the effectiveness of conservation efforts and inform decision-making processes.

Annex 3: What we heard: Engaging Canadians on Canada’s 2030 National Biodiversity Strategy

In 2023, Canada engaged in a comprehensive consultation process to develop its 2030 National Biodiversity Strategy in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Key points from the engagement activities, which included a National Biodiversity Symposium, an online survey, written submissions, and targeted engagement sessions, are summarized below:

Priorities Identified by Canadians

1. **Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Change Mitigation**: Emphasis on restoration, managing invasive species, increasing protected areas, and recognizing the interconnectedness of biodiversity action and climate change.
2. **Policy Coherence**: Need for legislative and regulatory consistency in biodiversity protection, with a focus on decision-making processes that prioritize nature.

3. **Whole-of-Society Approach**: Emphasizing the role of various societal sectors, including Indigenous Peoples, women, girls, and youth in biodiversity strategy development and implementation.

Key Challenges

1. **Valuing Biodiversity**: Recognizing the importance of prioritizing nature and sustainability in decision-making processes at all levels.
2. **Resources and Government Coordination**: Addressing resource constraints and fostering cooperation across government levels.
3. **Climate Change Exacerbation**: Acknowledging the compounding effects of climate change on biodiversity loss.

Key Features for Success

Integrating Nature's Value: Embedding the economic and intrinsic value of nature into decision-making and regional land-use planning.

Indigenous Leadership: Emphasizing the role of Indigenous communities and knowledge in conservation efforts.

Incentivizing Sustainable Practices: Encouraging sustainable practices in key productive sectors and exploring new financing models.

Accountability and Data Accessibility: Establishing strong accountability measures and ensuring access to relevant biodiversity data.

Education and Communication: Highlighting the importance of biodiversity education and effective communication strategies.

Ongoing Engagement: Stressing the need for continuous engagement with various stakeholders throughout the strategy's development and implementation.

Progress in Key Areas

Protected and Conserved Areas: Acknowledgment of progress, particularly in northern regions, but noting the need for more action in southern and populated areas.

Species at Risk Recovery: Recognizing efforts for habitat restoration but pointing out the need for more attention to lesser-known species.

Indigenous Leadership in Conservation: Valuing Indigenous-led conservation efforts while emphasizing the need for consistent funding.

Public Education and Outreach: Noting advancements in raising public awareness, especially among youth, about biodiversity's benefits.

Supplementary Information

- **Public Opinion Research Results**: The annex includes results from the online survey, which garnered 2,116 responses, offering insights into public perspectives on biodiversity strategy.