

Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius
Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

13 December 2022

Subject: EU position on 30x30 at CBD COP15

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

We are writing to you to express our deep concern regarding the protected areas element of the negotiations to agree a new global biodiversity framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The CBD Conference of the Parties in Montreal must deliver a global agreement that will translate into effective action to address the catastrophic loss of species and habitats. After much delay, and in light of the accelerating pace of biodiversity loss, we cannot miss this opportunity to turn the tide for nature.

Given the extent of the biodiversity crisis and the urgency for action, we welcome the significant effort you have personally invested to secure an ambitious global biodiversity framework. Your leadership has been essential in garnering support for the target to protect at least 30% of the global land and ocean by 2030 (the “30x30” target). Your continued championing of this target will be required to secure its adoption as part of the final agreement. This will be your legacy.

We see with increasing concern, however, the numerous attempts being made to weaken the target – both by those Parties who would wish to reduce its ambition in terms of geographical coverage, and by those who would seek to erase the necessary qualitative elements or to add references to “sustainable use” in a target focusing on conservation.

A merely numerical target will not suffice to turn the tide on the rampant and accelerating pace of biodiversity loss. We call on you to support the many Parties, including developing states in Africa, Latin America and the Pacific, who are actively resisting attempts to weaken the ambition of the Global Biodiversity Framework by ensuring that quality language from the protected area target stays in the negotiation text.

A meaningful 30x30 target must include qualitative elements that enshrine the need for a higher level of protection of a substantial proportion of protected areas designated. While the final formulation will necessarily be the result of extensive negotiations, we urge you to continue championing an ambitious Global Biodiversity Framework, by extending your active support to the retention of elements of quality in the text and by opposing references to “sustainable use” in Target 3.

Some may use the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities as a pretext to dilute the ambition of the global agreement. This would be a mistake. Indigenous peoples and local communities who depend on biodiversity for their livelihoods and on a healthy planet for their survival will not be well served by a weak agreement. Their rights must be respected, protected and fulfilled and their concerns must indeed be addressed, by including equitable governance and a strong human-rights based approach in the text – not by lowering the ambition level of the Global Biodiversity Framework, risking the continued decline of global biodiversity through further decades of inaction.

We remain at your full disposal to discuss these matters and to support you in your efforts to deliver an ambitious outcome.

Yours sincerely,



Pascale Moehrle
Executive Director, Oceana in Europe

On behalf of:

BirdLife Europe and Central Asia
Bloom
ClientEarth
Coalition Clean Baltic
Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
Dutch Elasmobranch Society
The Fisheries Secretariat
IFAW
Our Fish
Sciaena
Seas At Risk