Traditional Knowledge Indicators

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This document was prepared in October 2024 to support preparations for the CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia.

It is intended to be used as an introductory report, particularly for Indigenous Peoples, and is written from a human rights perspective.

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This information note will explain what the traditional knowledge indicators are, how they are relevant to the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), how they are relevant for negotiations at COP16, the role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in monitoring them, and how they are being included in the Monitoring Framework.

Traditional knowledge indicators and the Global Biodiversity Framework

The traditional knowledge indicators were primarily developed in the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions (WG8j) in response to the growing recognition of the roles of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

They were designed to measure the extent to which Indigenous Peoples and local communities' traditional knowledge, participation and associated rights were being realised in practice in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. They were designed and adopted by the COP at different times.

The four indicators are:

1 Trends in **linguistic diversity** and numbers of speakers of indigenous languages.

2 Trends in land-use change and **land tenure** in the traditional territories of indigenous and local communities.

3 Trends in the practice of **traditional occupations.**

4 Trends in the degree to which **traditional knowledge** and practices are respected through their full integration, safeguards and the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the national implementation of the Strategic Plan.

At COP16, the inclusion of the traditional knowledge indicators in the Monitoring Framework will be a key agenda item for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The traditional knowledge indicators correspond to internationally recognized rights of Indigenous Peoples and align with the GBF's commitment to carrying out a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to biodiversity conservation. The GBF explicitly requires the recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in Section C (paragraph 7) and again in multiple Goals and Targets both explicitly and implicitly. The traditional knowledge indicators can support monitoring of these commitments.

What is the monitoring framework?

The Monitoring Framework is a mechanism that keeps track of progress in the implementation of the GBF. Parties to the Convention will use the Monitoring Framework to check if efforts to protect, restore and sustainably use nature are working, and to identify the areas which need improvement.

Because it is not practical to keep track and measure everything related to biodiversity, indicators were selected to measure priority areas or to include data that already exists. Some of the indicators in the Monitoring Framework (the headline and binary indicators) are included in mandatory reporting, but others are seen as optional. All governments can also use their own national indicators to report against implementation of the GBF, as long as these are additional to the agreed mandatory set of indicators at the global level.

The Monitoring Framework was adopted at COP15 in Montreal, but it is incomplete and an updated text will be negotiated at COP16. This is an opportunity to ensure that the traditional knowledge indicators are further included.

What are the types of indicators?

Indicators in the GBF Monitoring Framework

Headline indicator

This is the highest level of indicator, aiming to capture the overall scope of a goal or target. It is mandatory for Parties to report on these indicators in their national reports.

These headline indicators can also be disaggregated (or divided into different categories) to provide more detail where needed.

Binary indicator

Global indicators that count the number of countries that have undertaken certain actions or activities. It is mandatory for Parties to use these indicators, which are based on yes, no or 'partially' responses, in the national reports.

Component indicator

More detailed indicators that aim to monitor each component of the GBF's goals and targets. They help provide advice for the implementation of the targets. These are not mandatory and Parties can select which ones to use.

Complementary indicator

Indicators that are used for in-depth analysis or particular themes of the GBF's goals and targets. These are not mandatory and Parties can select which ones to use.

Indicators have been developed both for the Goals of the Framework and for each of the Targets.

The complementary and component indicators include important questions but are not discussed in detail here as they are not mandatory for reporting. This briefing focuses on the headline and binary indicators and the ways in which they may be disaggregated, while recognising that component and complementary indicators can play an important role in tracking the implementation of the whole GBF.

Between COP15 and COP16

Since COP15, discussions have continued, including through the work of an Ad-Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Indicators, and through a Technical and Scientific Review of the Traditional Knowledge Indicators carried out as part of the WG8j.

Both were taken into account by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 26) in Nairobi (2024). As part of this process, some additional indicators were proposed to be added to the Monitoring Framework.

Critically for Indigenous Peoples and for local communities, the AHTEG recommended that the traditional knowledge indicator on land-use change and land tenure in the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples and local communities could meet the criteria required for a headline indicator and it has been proposed as a headline indicator for Target 22.

The updated and revised monitoring framework for discussion at COP16 includes:

- **27 headline indicators,**
- **14 binary indicators,**
- **52 component indicators, and**
- **257 complementary indicators.**

In addition to the proposed changes, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) also considered that the Monitoring Framework continues to have gaps, including:

- **Section C** (which contains important language on rights-based approaches, human rights generally, intergenerational justice, gender justice and on recognising the roles, rights and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities) is not sufficiently covered, and needs to be taken into full account in the further development of the Monitoring Framework

- There is a lack of guidance on the **identification and recognition of indigenous and traditional territories** although they are indicated multiple times as an important category of land tenure and land use for monitoring. It is expected that the new institutional arrangement for Article 8(j) and Related Provisions may develop guidance.

- **Targets 22 and 23,** both critical Targets to secure human rights outcomes, have binary indicators proposed that effectively cover structures and processes, but in neither case do the indicators track outcomes.

What discussions and decisions will take place during COP16?

In the text to be discussed at COP16 the traditional knowledge indicators are included in:

- Two headline indicators at the Target level (Targets 9 (Percentage of the population in traditional occupations) and 22 (Proposed inclusion of land tenure and land use change))
- As a suggested category of disaggregation in five headline indicators at the Goal level (Goal A in two indicators, Goal B in one, and Goal C in two) (see below for more detail)
- As a suggested category of disaggregation in five headline indicators Targets 2, 3, 9, 10 and 22 (see below for more detail)
- In two binary indicators (Target 9 and Target 22)
- Three component indicators (Targets 21 and 22), and
- Three complementary indicators (Targets 22 and 23).

Disaggregation of headline indicators

Some headline indicators that do not mention Indigenous Peoples and local communities explicitly are recommended to be reported on by categories, as noted above. These categories that are recommended for monitoring separately are:

- In **Goal A,** disaggregation of reporting by areas that are 'indigenous and traditional territories' for both headline indicators A.1 and A.2.
- In **Goal B,** disaggregation of reporting by areas that are 'indigenous and traditional territories' for the first headline indicator.
- For **Goal C**, disaggregation of the indicator on monetary benefits received (how much is received by IP and LCs), and disaggregation of the indicator on non-monetary benefits also by the quantity received by Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- In **Target 2,** the headline indicator on the area of lands restored should be disaggregated by indigenous and traditional territories
- In **Target 3**, the area conserved should be disaggregated in the same way
- In **Target 9,** the proportion of traditional occupations that belong to Indigenous Peoples and local communities should be reported separately
- In **Target 10**, areas with sustainable forest management should be disaggregated by indigenous and traditional territories,
- In **Target 22,** there are multiple ways in which the data is categorised to capture the situation specifically for Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Who will oversee monitoring?

The WG8j (or the new institutional arrangement for it), SBSTTA and SBI and The Joint Programme of Work on the Links between Biological Diversity and Cultural Diversity will all be involved in overseeing the use and further development of the traditional knowledge indicators. However, exactly how this will work is not yet defined.

Community-based monitoring

In practice, Indigenous Peoples and local communities will play a major role in using, gathering data and leading on the traditional knowledge indicators, within and beyond CBD processes.

Indigenous peoples and local communities have been holistically tracking the health of biological diversity and ecosystems, and the wellbeing of their communities for generations. A new bundle of monitoring approaches, referred to as community-based monitoring and information systems (CBMIS), builds on traditional knowledge systems and integrates digital and other technologies.

These community-led initiatives systematically generate data to inform local self-governance, support advocacy to assert rights, and provide true measures of progress of the implementation of GBF . CBMIS can include things like community surveys, participatory 3-D cultural mapping, and resource inventories, adapted for the priorities and needs of each community.

Locally based monitoring of the environment has been shown to be capable of delivering credible data independent of external experts. Monitoring performed by communities with accumulated knowledge and connection to the local area or ecosystem can be more flexible, timely, responsive and cost-effective. It is participatory, contributing to the implementation of Section C of the GBF and particularly those referring to the contributions and rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and to the whole-of-society approach.

While there is no established mechanism for the integration of CBMIS into global biodiversity monitoring systems, it is increasingly recognized by Parties. A significant step forward was the the COP15 decision adopting the Monitoring Framework (decision 15/5), inviting Parties and relevant organisations to "support community-based monitoring and information systems and citizen science and their contributions to the implementation of the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework"