



China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and
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Special Policy Study on
Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Conservation
2018 Policy Recommendation Report
(For Discussion)
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Part I: Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale

Biodiversity and its related ecosystem services are the foundation of human existence and development, but they are increasingly impaired by human activities. According to research findings, the rate of species extinction caused by human beings over the past hundreds of years is 1000 times more than that of natural extinction in the history of the earth (Pimm et al, 2014). Furthermore, it has been proven that for many groups of species (such as farmland birds and insects) abundances and numbers of individuals are decreasing rapidly.

The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) is an international convention protecting biological resources on the earth, which formally took effect on December 29, 1993 and has 196 contracting parties now. The Convention is signed to protect endangered species and ecosystems as well as diverse biological resources on the earth.

In view of the situation of a sharp decrease in global biodiversity, the 6th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD in 2002 in the Netherland approved the 2010 biodiversity target, namely, “to significantly reduce global, regional and national loss of biodiversity by 2010”. However, though the international community had done a lot of work, the 2010 biodiversity target failed to come true all over the world (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2010).

In order to determine the roadmap of global biodiversity conservation following 2010, the international community organized a series of discussions and negotiations, and finally approved the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020)* in the 10th COP in October 2010 in Japan. The Strategic Plan defines the 2020 global biodiversity target (hereinafter referred to as the 2020 target), determines the roadmap and schedule for global biodiversity conservation, provides a flexible framework for setting national targets and puts forward the 2050 long-range target that “by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people”.

The 15th COP will be held in 2020, which will focus on making a strategic framework for biodiversity conservation and defining the 2030 biodiversity conservation target. In the 13th COP held in Cancun, Mexico in 2016, China won the right to host the 15th COP in 2020. This will be the first time for China to host such conference.

Mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation is the fundamental base that can guarantee the achievement of protection results. World widely, the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations (2000-2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030) are the mainstreams, for which all actions and efforts shall support to realize those goals. Biodiversity is the material basis for sustainable development that is closely related to several protection goals/targets. Especially targets 14 and 15, which aim for planning conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity in the

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ocean and on the land. This shall be considered in developing biodiversity conservation goals for next decade.

In China, mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation is to integrate biodiversity consideration into the social-economic development plan, to support and promote ecological civilization. The Chinese concept of ecological civilization is consistent with the goals of sustainable development; however, the main difference between them is that ecological civilization inherits profound cultural meanings and is ensured by strong authority of execution. In recent years, China has achieved remarkable progress in promoting ecological civilization and top down framework has been formed. The Chinese experiences in biodiversity conservation could serve as a reference for international society and CBD parties. The biodiversity conservation under the guidance of ecological civilization thought and has made excellent progress and attempt in following aspects in China, which can contribute to global conservation practices:

- 1) Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation. Through overall planning of ecological civilization, national main function zoning, national ecological function zoning and ecological red line, biodiversity conservation has been integrated into state strategy and plan.
- 2) By developing and implementing environmental protection inspecting system, natural resource asset audit of outgoing officials and ecological compensation policy, biodiversity conservation have been ensured in Governance practices.
- 3) With natural protection system (e.g. in-situ natural protection area), ex-situ conservation system (e.g. botanical garden) and in vitro conservation system (e.g. germplasm pool), the biodiversity conservation has taken root in society. In addition, national park-dominated natural protection area system has been establishing to strengthen the biodiversity conservation system in China.
- 4) Through large-scale baseline survey, multi-period data accumulation by various monitoring systems and multidisciplinary in-depth studies, some basic questions on China biodiversity such as 'what we have', 'where they are' and 'how they are going', have been preliminarily answered. That information will provide scientific foundation for biodiversity conservation planning and action.

Use this information as the basis for identifying criteria for best practices cases in China; and for design of future biodiversity conservation. Some of the information can also be used to showcase China's efforts at the CBD COP15, and for informing other international activities, for example in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), South-South Cooperation, and on international partnerships for other specific sectoral activities.

The Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity of the United Nations will be held in Beijing, China in 2020. For China, it is an excellent opportunity to participate in global governance and also a platform to showcase China's achievements and compliances of the convention. China should play an active role in developing post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework. China may be uniquely placed to foster a powerful outcome and follow-up for the CBD COP-15.

1.2 Working framework

The work will be carried out under general guidance of TF1 Co-chairs Xie Zhenhua and Catherine McKenna. The title of TF1 is *Global Governance and Ecological Civilization*. In 2018 three SPSs are planned to be underway: SPS 1-1 China's Contribution to Global Climate Governance; SPS 1-2 Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Conservation; and SPS 1-3 Global Ocean Governance and Ecological Civilization. The work will continue until 2019, with a major report to be submitted during the 2018 CCICED AGM.

The work was planned to start along progressive lines of information gathering; consultations within China and internationally; to establish working relationships with the key international and Chinese agencies; to address innovative topics such as gender mainstreaming and biodiversity conservation, global, regional and national-to-local needs for improved biodiversity conservation actions; to identify needed global governance and other improvements in line with Ecological Civilization and SDG2030 and to build up a preliminary framework for post biodiversity conservation strategy and associated implementation mechanism. These efforts could be undertaken in 2018 and reported, with recommendations at the CCICED 2018 AGM. In order to meet with goal of the SPS, a number of key issues were proposed as priority areas for the SPS.

1.2.1 Progress review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and analysis of other related global process.

Analyze the problems in the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, track and review key global multilateral processes of governance such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Intergovernmental Conference on Science and Policy on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), review China experiences and cases of biodiversity conservation under the guidance of China ecological civilization thought, study on those domestic policies such as ecological civilization, main functional areas, and ecological protection red line, in order to provide experience and reference for the formulation of the "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*".

1.2.2 Draft proposal of "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*"

Based on the experiences and lessons of current conservation processes and efforts, analyze the potential key elements and important areas of "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*", to propose the draft of "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*".

1.2.3 Strengthen innovation supervision and accountability mechanisms to promote the implementation of "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*".

Identify and diagnose the main reasons for the lack of "collective contribution" of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and propose ways to strengthen the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

1.2.4 Recommendations in facing to "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*"

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Based on the considerations in formulating "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*", analyze global environment that international community would facing at when implementing "*Post-2020 biodiversity framework*", to propose strategy recommendation for global biodiversity conservation, especially the mechanism for government-led whole society's active participation.

1.2.5 Recommendations for successful hosting of COP15

Analyze domestic and international environment for China's host of COP15, take into consideration the experiences of past host countries of previous COPs, to propose recommendations to Chinese government in doing a good performance as a host country, well organizing of COP15.

This project involves multiple research subjects and is strong in political strategy that requires multiple participation mechanism to fulfill the planned tasks. For that reason, a strong team has been established including multitier roles of principal investigators (PIs), core experts, working specialists and consultation members. The international PIs of this project are Arthur Hanson (Distinguished Fellow and Former President, International Institute for Sustainable Development) and Li Lin (WWF China) and the Chinese PIs are Ma Keping (Professor, Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Sciences) and Jixi Gao (Professor, Nanjing Institute of Environmental Sciences of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment). International coordinator is Wu Qiong (WWF China) and the Chinese coordinator is Liu Yinan (Biodiversity Committee of the Chinese Academy of Sciences). Other project members are listed in the annex. All 4 PIs are working closely together, with specific responsibilities and focus as the following: Arthur Hanson is responsible for general management and coordination, Lin Li works on political engagement and synergies for CBD and among other environmental conventions, Ma Keping is leading the drafting of post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, Gao Jixi is responsible for reviewing experience for convention compliance and China's case studies under the Ecological Civilization framework.

1.3 Expected outcome

The anticipated outputs of this project will be concluded by review report and strategy proposals:

- 1) The review report, one important achievement of this project, will be a comprehensive summary of research results. It will contain the following contents (Preliminary outline): Background and actions conducted ; Reviews on the progress of implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and analyzing global/national experiences; Draft proposal on post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework; Strong innovative monitoring and accountability mechanisms to enhance the implementation of the post-2020 framework and Recommendations to Chinese Governments in the process in China and at global stage for and at CBD COP15 in 2020.
- 2) Strategy/policy output will include the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, the strategy for development and management of National Park in China, Successful

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case studies of biodiversity conservation in China, and action essentials for successful hosting the 15th conference of parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Beijing, China.

1.4 Main activities

The team was established in early April, 2018 and communicated with each other with the help of the secretariat of CCICED in April 2-5. A work plan was developed very soon in mid-April and implemented accordingly. The major activities for the implementation of the SPS-1-2 project were listed below.

Time	Activity	Location	Details
April 25	CCICED 2nd Chief Advisors and Secretariat Joint Working Meeting 2018	FECO	Reporting from SPS-1-2 by Gao Jixi a team leader from China side
April 28	Working group meeting	Swiss hotel Beijing	The two sides met face to face for the first time
May 3	Working group meeting	FECO	Discussion on how to implement the work plan
June 1	CCICED-Leaders meeting	FECO 205	Preparation of the inception meeting
June 3	Inception Meeting	Yuyang Hotel Beijing	Chaired by the 4 team leaders and participated by over 20 invited members of working group and advisory group mainly from China side.
June 21	CCICED round table meeting-Global governance and ecological civilization	Brussels	Four team leaders attended
June 21	SPS 1-2 working meeting	Brussels	Chaired by the team leaders and participated by the CBD executive secretary and other 8 international members
July 11	CCICED 3rd Chief Advisors and Secretariat Joint Working Meeting 2018	FECO 205	Report the progress of SPS-1-2 by Ma Keping a team leader from China side
July 30	40th Anniversary of the MAB Congress	National Convention Center	Ma Keping as an invited speaker to report on the Post 2020 biodiversity conservation framework
August 14-17	The 13th National Conference on Biodiversity Science and Conservation	Hohhot	600+ Participants , A plenary report entitled Post 2020

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			biodiversity conservation framework by Ma Keping
August 23	Discussion on the draft of the recommendations on National Parks development in China	IB-CAS 217	Discussion on the draft of Prof. Yang Rui a core member of SPS 1-2
August 24	IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Beyond Aichi Task Force Scientific Consultation meeting	IB-CAS 217	Organized by Ma Keping a team leader and Harvey Locke a core member of SPS 1-2
August 29	Bureau of Science & Technology for Development CAS	CAS 709 meeting room	Discussion on how to contribute to COP14 and COP 15
August 31	First draft-Proposed side event at CBD COP 14 in Egypt	Novotel Hotel	Art, Ma Keping and 3 other members
Sept. 3	Peter Bridgewater	Ma's office	Discussion on collaboration on SPS 1-2
Sept. 16	Team leaders meeting	IBCAS E202	12 participants
Sept. 17	Meeting of SPS to review progress and prepare interim progress report	IBCAS E202	20 participants
Sept. 20	CCICED 2nd Chief Advisors and Secretariat Joint Working Meeting 2018	FECO	Reporting from SPS-1-2 by Ma Keping a team leader from China side
Oct. 10	EU-China workshop in Beijing forum	Grand Skylight Catic Hotel	Exchanging ideas on post 2020 biodiversity conservation framework

Experts from China side

Group	No.	Name	Institute/Organization
Core experts	1	Ma Keping (team leader)	Institute of Botany, CAS/Biodiversity Committee, CAS
	2	Gao Jixi (team leader)	Satellite Environment Center, MEP
	3	Lv Zhi	Peking University
	4	Yang Rui	Tsinghua University
	5	Xu Jing	Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, CRAES
Working group	6	Wei Wei	Institute of Botany, CAS
	7	Liu Yinan (Coordinator)	Biodiversity Committee, CAS
	8	Zou Changxin	Nanjing Institute of Environmental Sciences, MEP
	9	Qiao Qing	Beijing Municipal Research Institute of Environmental Protection
	10	Zheng Hua	Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, CAS
	11	Wang Wei	Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences
	12	Shen Xiaoli	Institute of Botany, CAS
	13	Alice C. Hughes	Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, CAS
	14	Li Nan	WWF China
	15	Wang Binbin	Research Center for International Organization, Peking University
	16	Wu Qiong (Coordinator)	WWF China
Advisory Experts	17	Feng Chaoyang	Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences, CRAES
	18	John MacKinnon	Conservation Biologist
	19	Zhang Haiwen	China Institute for Marine Affairs (CIMA)
	20	Wei Fuwen	Institute of Zoology, CAS
	21	Xue Dayuan	College of Life and Environmental Sciences, Minzu University of China
	22	Pan Jiahua	Institute for Urban & Env. Studies (IUE/CASS)
	23	Han Qunli	IRDR International Programme/Radi, CAS
	24	Zhu Chunquan	IUCN China Office

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International Experts

Group	No.	Name	Institute/Organization
Leader	1	Arthur Hanson (team leader)	International Chief Advisor of CCICED, Distinguished Fellow and Former President, International Institute for Sustainable Development
Leader	2	Li Lin (team leader)	WWF International
Core expert	3	Beate Jessel	German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
Core expert	4	Harvey Locke	IUCN WCPA Beyond the Aichi Targets Task Force
Core expert	5	Dominic Waughray	World Economic Forum Centre for Global Public Goods
Adviser	6	Cristiana Palmer	Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity
Supporting expert	7	Lennart Kuemper- Schlake	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation Division of International Nature Conservation (I 2.3)
Advisory expert	8	TBA	Mexican former environment minister (female) Art to follow up
	9	TBA	UNE to nominate someone from global south, Art to follow up
	10	TBA	WWF International Board member, Lin will follow up
TBC	11	Monique Barbut	CCD ES, Lin will follow up
TBC	12	Christiana Figueres	FCCC ES, Lin will follow up
TBC	13	Naoko Ishii	GEF CEO, Lin will follow up
TBC	14	Isabel Hilton	China Dialogue CEO, Lin has invited her to the CBD COP14 SPS side event
TBC	15	Gretchen Daily	Stanford University, Natural Capital
TBC	16	Peter Bakker	CEO of WBCSD
TBC	17	Jeff Seabright	Chief Sustainability Officer at Unilever
TBC	18	Jane Smart	IUCN
TBC	19	Javed Jabbar	IUCN Pakistan

Reference

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2. Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. 2010. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 3*. Montreal
3. Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Environmental Protection. 2011. *Protect the life system which human beings depend on: Review and Outlook of the Convention on Biological Diversity*. Beijing: Science Press, 152-154

(Authors: Ma Keping, Wei Wei and Liu Yinan)

Part II: Post 2020 Biodiversity Conservation framework

2.1 Progress review

The 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) will be held in Beijing in 2020. For China, the host of the conference, this conference is both an opportunity to participate in global governance and a platform to demonstrate China's commitments and achievements. The COP 15 is a very important conference, at which the progress and problems for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (i.e., the Aichi Targets) will be summarized and assessed, and a global biodiversity conservation strategy framework will be proposed for the next decade (2020-2030). China should play an active role in developing this biodiversity conservation framework. Moreover, it is necessary to sum up the case studies and experiences in biodiversity conservation under the guidance of "Ecological Civilization" in China that can be used as references of reconciling conservation and development for other Parties, especially for developing countries.

To develop a post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework/strategy is extremely critical. The parties had committed to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2002. *Global Biodiversity Outlook 3*, the assessment report organized by the Secretariat of CBD, however, states that none of the 20 targets by 2010 have been achieved globally for certain, although a few have been achieved in some regions. At the national level, no government has fully realized all the biodiversity targets, and about one-fifth of the countries have clearly stated that they have failed to achieve their goals. Ten out of the 15 major targets set by CBD have showed a trend that is adverse to biodiversity. Globally, the anticipated conservation goals have not been met for 44% of the terrestrial ecoregions and 82% of marine ecoregions, including most biodiversity conservation priority areas (www.cbd.int). The goal of the Strategic

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Biodiversity Plan for 2011-2010 (Aichi targets, including 20 targets) is to prevent further loss of biodiversity. Many signs show that the degree of achievements of the Aichi target is lower than that of 2010 target. In the context of “repeated failures”, how to build a post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework requires the joint efforts of parties and relevant organizations. China, as the host country of the COP 15 that will approve the framework, shall play a much active and positive role and show higher ambitions.

The Secretariat of CBD had issued a notification to the parties on June 15 2017 to call for suggestions to the development of the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework, and proposed several points that should be considered:

- 1) The content of the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework shall be consistent with the 2050 vision of biodiversity conservation;
- 2) Shall support the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and related international agendas;
- 3) Shall refer to the progress of the implementation of the 2011-2020 strategy plan;
- 4) Shall respond to potential changes in the future.

The Convention on Biological Diversity established Aichi Target 11 to protect 17% of global terrestrial land and inland water areas by 2020. However, protecting this 17% is inadequate to effectively represent all species and 50% might be scientifically defensible as a global target (Noss et al., 2012). Odum and Odum (1972) pointed to the need to conserve half of the land to maintain ecosystem function for the benefit of humans and ecosystem services also need more space to maintain (Perrings et al., 2010). Some biologists now advocate half-earth protection through networked PAs to halt biodiversity loss and prevent species extinction (Harvey, 2015; Wilson, 2016). Büscher et al. (2017) argue that half-earth protection is impractical and would have negative impacts on humans in underdeveloped countries, but Dinerstein et al. (2017) assert its achievability through habitat protection and restoration. A global study now reveals that, in many ecoregions, enough habitat exists to reach this goal and a realistic half-earth could be protected based on desirability, feasibility, and Eco regional representation of protected areas (Watson and Venter, 2017). Based on an analysis on plants, 85% of species occur entirely within just over a third of the Earth’s land surface, carefully optimized to maximize the species captured and Well-known vertebrate taxa show similar patterns (Pimm et al, 2018). So, achieving the half earth target was proposed as the goal in 2050 and 30% for 2030. Baily and Zhang (2018) argued that given the evidence to date and the implications of an underestimate, we encourage governments to set minimum targets of 30% of the oceans and land protected by 2030, with a focus on areas of high biodiversity and/or productivity, and to aim to secure 50% by 2050.

Despite the bias in establishing large protected areas in wild places to date, numerous small protected areas are in biodiverse places. They at least partially protect significant fractions of especially small-ranged species. So, while a preoccupation with protecting large areas for the sake of getting half of Earth might achieve little for biodiversity.

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Continuing to prioritize the right parts of Earth, not just the total area protected, is what matters for biodiversity (Pimm et al, 2018).

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) is actively involved in the process of developing post-2020 Biodiversity Framework as a leader in nature conservation. IUCN had specifically mentioned, in their position paper submitted to the 21st meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2017, that the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework must not only be consistent with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, but also systematically elaborate how to contribute to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, that the post-2020 biodiversity conservation goals shall be science-based, ambitious, measurable and well in pertinence, and that shall fully learn from the lessons of the implementation of the current goals, as well as successful experiences of other international processes, such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In the meanwhile, it is recommended that China and France shall cooperate to establish a positive interaction between the COP15 in Beijing and the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille in 2020. Currently two teams are known working on the development of post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework. One is the project “Biodiversity Strategy for 2021-2030” funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), undertaken by the Biodiversity Institute. Launched in August 2017, this project planned to submit a discussion paper on the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework at the COP 14. This project has organized two workshops in December 2017 and the end of June 2018, respectively (www.biodiv.de). Another team, led by the French Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, is also actively reviewing the status and conducting researches that focus on the framework for overall conservation goals and specific targets, as well as the implementation mechanisms and related laws and regulations, especially broad participation mechanism (www.iddri.org).

China must not only well protect its biodiversity, to fulfill its international obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and promote China's ecological civilization, but also take the opportunity of hosting COP15 and actively participate in global governance.

2.2 The roadmap for creating a post 2020 biodiversity conservation framework

It is a significant and challenged task to develop post-2020 Biodiversity Framework. First of all, we will refer to the conclusions in Global Biodiversity Outlook (4) that was organized by the Secretariat of CBD, to understand the implementation progress of the 20 targets of the biodiversity strategic plan. The results of this report have shown that almost all targets are not able to achieve in time, except target 16 (the protocol on ABS comes into force). The progress of seven targets (target no. 1, 7, 11, 17, 18, 19 and 20) among them is getting slowly and significantly delayed. In addition there are seven targets (target 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 13 and 15) that do not make significant progress.

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Even the other five targets (no. 5, 8, 10, 12 and 14) deviate from the goals (www.cbd.int). In general, there is large gap existed the current progress and the final goal.

It is useful to look into the compliance report of each party and other related literatures, which will facilitate the evaluation on current progress of conservation targets and the reviewing of lessons and experiences (Ulloa et al, 2018). In addition, the evaluation report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) that is guided by the SDGs of UN and related global agenda shall be also an important information source for drafting post-2020 Biodiversity Framework. The plenary meeting of IPBES had past four regional evaluation reports and drawn the following conclusions:

- 1) Few of the Aichi targets are likely to be met. Some progress towards many of the Aichi targets appears being made in most regions, but this progress appears often too slow, and for a number of targets absent or worse, there is movement away from the targets.
- 2) Biodiversity loss is going on in all regions and the spatial extent and biodiversity status of natural ecosystems has declined in all regions;
- 3) Extinction risk is increasing in terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater habitats due to anthropogenic drivers in all regions. The situation has become markedly worse in all regions during the last 20 years; about 20% species per region in the IUCN Red List are either extinct, extinct in the wild, or threatened, for endemic species this proportion is about 25%; Key emblematic wildlife is generally declining.
- 4) Invasive alien species have increased in number and abundance.
- 5) Some targeted interventions also caused positive trends, such as local increases in forest cover or in populations of some large mammals.
- 6) Bright spots in all regions include an increase in the number and area of both terrestrial and marine protected areas, and the restoration of some degraded areas. For Africa: 14% of land and 2.6% of marine areas (within Exclusive Economic Zones) protected; For Americas: 18% and 9%; For Asia and the Pacific: 13.3% and 15.3%, respectively (however, only 4% of marine area outside of Oceania); and For Europe and Central Asia: 13.5% and 5.2%. However, many of the most important areas of biodiversity are not being protected, and not all protected areas are effectively managed. The number of Key Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites increased, currently 28% of IBAs are completely covered by protected areas, and 22% of AZE sites.

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018 highlights progress being made in many areas of the 2030 Agenda. However, the report also shows that, in some areas, progress is insufficient to meet the Agenda's goals and targets by 2030. For Goal 14, as of January 2018, 16 per cent (or over 22 million square kilometers) of marine

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waters under national jurisdiction that is, 0 to 200 nautical miles from shore-were covered by protected areas. This is more than double the 2010 coverage level. The mean coverage of marine key biodiversity areas (KBAs) that are protected has also increased-from 30 per cent in 2000 to 44 per cent in 2018. However, advancing the sustainable use and conservation of the oceans continues to require effective strategies and management to combat the adverse effects of overfishing, growing ocean acidification and worsening coastal eutrophication. The expansion of protected areas for marine biodiversity, intensification of research capacity and increases in ocean science funding remain critically important to preserve marine resources. For Goal 15, protection of forest and terrestrial ecosystems is on the rise, and forest loss has slowed. However, since 1993, the global Red List Index of threatened species has fallen from 0.82 to 0.74, indicating an alarming trend in the decline of mammals, birds, amphibians, corals and cycads. The primary drivers of this assault on biodiversity are habitat loss from unsustainable agriculture, deforestation, unsustainable harvest and trade, and invasive alien species. That said, terrestrial conservation continues to demand accelerated action to protect biodiversity, land productivity and genetic resources and to curtail the loss of species.

Based on the evaluation of progress above, we propose a composite framework as given below. The preliminary post-2020 Biodiversity Framework here is proposed after carefully analyzing the 20 Aichi targets. Within this framework, five points are emphasized:

- 1) The perspective vision shall be attractive that enables a feeling of affinity and has relevance to stakeholders, which is expressed as Healthy Planet, Healthy people, shortly double HP.
- 2) The midterm protection goals could be related to the half-earth concept, the latter can be set as the goal of 2050.
- 3) The half-earth concept here is different from others, which emphasizes “three conditions”. They are could be categorized as follows. The crowded, fertile, and developed areas: endangered species, high-biodiversity, save all the fragments, assisted migration, ecological restoration (low percentages); The open landscape: “ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and integrated into the wider landscape” (Aichi Target 11); ecological processes restored and maintained, connectivity (range of half); The wild places: Large, Roadless, interconnected protected areas; a few nodes of intense industrial development enveloped in a largely wild matrix; ecological processes are the priority (more than half).
- 4) The advanced and positive experiences in the top level design and planning under the guidance of ecological civilization ideology can be integrated into the design of protection goals. For example, the national ecological function zoning has been divided into ecological space, production space and living space, which reflects a gradient of impact by human activities. It is appropriate to set up protection goals of different intervention degree for various territory spaces.
- 5) The design of Aichi targets has its merit in general, thus the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework shall try to absorb its principles and specific targets. In particular, the experiences and lessons learned from the implementation of the Aichi target.

2.3 A state-set-goal-centric implementation mechanism

To develop effective mechanisms for compliance of the convention is the key for timely achievement of the strategy protection goals. It is recommended to take the following three points into consideration:

- 1) Shall be government-led. The core of the compliance mechanism for CBD is the legally binding of state level action other than the convention itself. The government-led compliance effort is essential for ensuring successful biodiversity conservation and achieving phased targets. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change had set up a good example in this aspect, which the CBD shall fully learn from. It is extremely necessary to establish a legally binding compliance mechanism that enables positively active participation of all parties and common but differentiated responsibilities.
- 2) The participation of the whole community is crucial important, not only the non-government forces can significantly contribute to the protection goals in this way, but also push forward the government compliance of the convention through multiple channels.
- 3) Shall fully communicate with other related global agenda to establish a join-action mechanism of synergy.

Compared to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the main problems existed for the Convention on Biological Diversity is the weak strength of action in compliance. As a consequence the best appropriately protection can be failed to realize in time. Therefore, we propose to strengthen the development of compliance mechanism for the convention and to form a new mechanism of parties-led, synergy with other related international agreements, and broad participation. This include following seven aspects:

- 1) A state-set-goal namely Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) is the key approach to enhance the compliance of parties for the convention. The previously requested national biodiversity conservation strategy plan, conservation action plan and national report have significant meanings for parties in the compliance of convention that have made a positive impact. However, the binding ability is far from enough that needs to be further strengthened. The NDC guidelines for parties should be prepared under the leadership of CBD Secretariat. The exercise of the NDCs can advance national biodiversity conservation policy-making and require parties to regularly review, update and strengthen these actions.
- 2) To effectively exert general impact of all parties in biodiversity conservation, it is necessary to plan as a whole and consider all the aspects of global biodiversity conservation priority, conservation gap and stress factors etc. to get fundamental support information and data. For that purpose, we propose to form a global biodiversity information service platform (CBD service) and integrate the information resource of current institutions and organizations and experts, such as

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IUCN, WWF, GBIF, etc. and to map biodiversity and ecosystem service, in order to facilitate each party to determine their own conservation priority and specific targets of NDC. In addition, this platform can perform big data management and analysis, and the training of methodology and technology for NDC development, which will help parties, especially developing countries, to enhance their capability in order to make NDC of high quality.

- 3) To establish and improve self-evaluation and the way to combine with third party evaluation, which will be helpful to urge parties to fulfill their compliance commitments according to NDC. It is possible for parties to adjust their NDC by newly emerged situation and necessity during monitoring and evaluation, in order to better serve their conservation obligation defined by the CBD.
- 4) The implementation of NDC shall be ensured by enough funds, which is essentially important for developing countries. The fundraising for biodiversity conservation shall take multiple approaches. First of all, the CBD itself shall set up effective fund mechanisms. In addition, governments, international society and private enterprises can directly contribute fund for a certain party.
- 5) To establish an innovation mechanism of broad participation for biodiversity conservation, especially attach importance to the fully participation of women and native communities.
- 6) The biodiversity conservation is related to several international agreements, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) etc. It is necessary to establish effective mechanism for cooperation to achieve synergies.
- 7) The Secretariat of CBD has been authorized by the Conference of Parties to organize the writing of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO), and parties have been requested to submit their National Report of compliance. All those approaches can timely review the progress of conservation and the achievement of protection goals and promptly report to the Convention of Parties after in time composite analysis and propose solution, in order to realize the anticipated protection goals of biodiversity conservation.

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Part III: Political Engagement¹

In 2020, China will host the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), with a 2050 goal of Living in Harmony with Nature. China is well-positioned at home and internationally to be a leading country in setting objectives that achieve “Living in Harmony with Nature” goal set out collectively by the parties of CBD. China can also play a leadership role in bringing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the CBD into alignment to achieve synergies and avoid policies under one convention that work to the detriment of the other. Hosting the CBD is an opportunity to highlight the construction of Ecological Civilization, the Ecological Red Lining and the National Park-Centric nature protection system that China is creating.

The Convention on Biodiversity Conservation went into effect in 1993, as one of the three Rio Conventions right after the Rio Environment and Development Conference in 1992. Over the past 25 years, there have been two 10-year frameworks: the 2002-2010 Strategic Plan² and the 2010-2020 Strategic Plan, including the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets³. Although Parties have adopted national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in line with the CBD provisions, current progress and commitments are insufficient to achieve the Targets by 2020.

Biodiversity is at the center and is the foundation of many economic activities, particularly those related to crop and livestock agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Healthy nature underpins our health, wealth, food and security. Globally, nearly half of the human population directly depend on natural resources for its livelihood, and many of the most vulnerable people depend directly on biodiversity to fulfil their daily subsistence needs. Well preserved nature, rich in biodiversity, integral ecosystems and services the nature provides to people and economy are core to our existence, not just a ‘nice to have’. Nature conservation is not a target in itself, but serves the benefits of the society as a whole.

Biodiversity and ecosystem services are in rapid decline and with it the natural assets of the planet that underpin economic prosperity and human well-being. Our food, water, air and livelihoods are at risk as current practices degrade soils, log forests unsustainably, decimate biodiversity and pollute waterways and oceans, compounded with the impact of climate change, thereby jeopardizing human life and preventing the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the Living Planet Index has shown that from 1970 to 2012, there was a 58% overall decline in the abundance of vertebrate populations⁴. If this downward trend continues, we will

¹ This is only the part on Political Engagement. In the future (interim) report, the next session on Synergies will be prepared and presented

² <https://www.cbd.int/sp/2010/>

³ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/2011-2020/Aichi-Targets-EN.pdf>

⁴ WWF Living Planet Report, 2016 http://wwf.panda.org/knowledge_hub/all_publications/lpr_2016/

radically damage around US\$125 trillion worth of services annually provided by nature to our economic and social systems⁵.

3.1. Challenges

Looking back to the past decades of global efforts to conserve nature, there are a few key factors worth exploring.

1. The political relevance of nature remains low in too many countries, and the link between nature and social and economic development and risks is poorly appreciated and addressed. In many countries, the political power of environment ministries is marginalized, whereas reversing the decline of species and ecosystem services is not only the responsibilities of the environment sector but also of other ministries. Environmental conservation efforts are often perceived as slowing down or blocking development. With a few exceptions, the values and benefits that provided by integrated and healthy ecosystems to people and economy are not recognized as the foundation for the achievement of sustainable development goals in many parts of the world. There is an urgent need to escalate the political relevance of nature to the highest national level, i.e. to the level of Heads of State, so that ecological and environmental issues will, in a cross department/ministry way, become the concern for the entire government rather than just for the ministry of environment.

At present, global efforts to reverse nature loss lack political urgency, ambitious and concrete commitments, and effective delivery. Nature will need to become a politically relevant issue, understood and addressed by high-level public and private decision-makers, as well as embraced and supported by a large proportion of the public.

2. Key elements of nature that are completely inter-related, such as climate change, land-use change and biodiversity loss, are addressed separately with different multilateral mechanisms (e.g. UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD). The implementation of each of these conventions is advancing at different rates and suffers from a lack of cohesiveness and necessary interrelationships. Current efforts from state and non-state actors are too fragmented to bring the changes required to curb climate change, reverse nature loss and eventually to restore nature. There is a need to improve synergies between conventions to deliver the collective efforts to restore nature.

Business as usual is not an option. Driving transformational change, reversing trends in nature loss by 2030 and setting a path towards restoration by 2050 requires an urgent, coherent and integrated response at local, national and global levels by 2020.

⁵ Costanza, R. et al. Changes in the global value of ecosystem services. *Global Environmental Change* 26: 152-158, doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2014.04.002 (2014).

3.2. Opportunities

We are rapidly approaching an exceptional opportunity to change direction, stop nature loss and restore our planet. The window of opportunity is closing fast. At the global level, the next five years (2018-2022) provide opportunities to radically escalate the political relevance of nature and galvanize a cohesive movement and global actions to reverse the loss of nature by 2030 and restore it by 2050.

Year 2020 in particular provides an opportunity for governments to assess progress, redefine targets, and commit to a new set of action plans. In 2020, world leaders will take important decisions on the environment, climate and sustainable development that will set the agenda for the next decade. That year will be a critical moment for key international processes, including the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It will also see countries set national Land Degradation Neutrality targets under the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The Paris Agreement under UNFCCC will have a milestone moment in 2020. Governments will have the opportunity to increase the ambition outlined in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) towards keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees. The recent IPCC report on 1.5 degrees⁶ shows clearly the urgency for rapid emission reduction, including nature-based solutions on land use, forests, agriculture and nature conservation. Many efforts by state and non-state actors alike - from the Global Climate Action Summit last month to the Talanoa Dialogue and facilitative dialogue at UNFCCC COP in 2018 and the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit in 2019 - are driving countries to step up climate action ahead of 2020.

In 2019, two high level political fora on the SDGs will be held, the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The HLPF under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, with the theme of *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*, will be held in July. Sustainable Development Goals 4 (quality education), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 13 (climate action), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships) will be reviewed. The HLPF meeting under the auspices of the UN General Assembly will take place in September. In accordance with resolution 70/299, which clarifies various elements related to follow-up and review functions of the HLPF, the progress of the HLPF's implementation will be reviewed at the General Assembly "to benefit from lessons learned in the first cycle" of the HLPF. This all provided great opportunities to show case the importance of nature.

Most importantly, in 2020, the Aichi Targets (adopted by the CBD COP in Aichi, Japan in 2010) and the environment targets under the SDGs will expire. Therefore, also in 2020, the 196 parties of the CBD will need to agree on the next (10 year) strategic framework for biodiversity conservation during its COP15 in Beijing.

Year 2020 is also a crucial moment for China to inform the world on the progress of realizing its first "Two Centenaries" goal-a full Xiaokang society. Together with the

⁶ <http://www.ipcc.ch/report/sr15/>

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progress of CBD in realizing the 2050 vision, year 2050 will be a point of time in history for China to reach the second “Two Centenaries” goal – to be a strong, democratic, civilized, harmonious, and modern socialist country. The intake and success of CBD is intrinsically linked to the realization of Chinese Dream and as a channel to reposition China at global geopolitical landscape.

In 2020, the UN will celebrate its 75th anniversary. In light of the calling for the UN reform, it is also a time to refocus and redefine its role in the delivery of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. This will create an opportunity for the role of nature to be prominently recognized as the foundation for the achievement of SDGs and the healthy nature to become a more central issue for healthy people and planet.

In 2022, it will be 30 years after the Rio Environment and Development Conference and 50-year anniversary of United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm. It will be the time when the world will need to know how we are delivering against the commitments that we collectively made 50 and 30 years ago.

These events will provide the perfect opportunity for world leaders, governments, business and civil society to come together to align ambitious environmental targets for the coming decade and shape the future of biodiversity for our planet. But we must act now. We have the science, we have the pathway to success and we now require the catalyst to turn theory into action.

It is time to make key decisions in these processes by showing that it is no longer acceptable to continue to destroy our natural world. We can take a different, better path toward well-being, prosperity and security. Together, we need to be smarter about how we use our oceans, our freshwater and our land, and how we produce energy, food and other resources. A healthy planet is where humanity and nature can thrive together.

3.3. Responses

The world will need to agree on commitments and actions in 2020 so that we can halt and start to reverse the decline in nature by 2030.

In order to achieve this objective, we will need to

- 1) Radically escalate the political relevance of nature, to the Heads of State level
- 2) Galvanize cohesiveness and synergies across Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs), and
- 3) Secure ambitious commitments and strong accountability mechanisms for the post 2020 global biodiversity framework.

We need to address these challenges from two angles: political engagement and actions to improve synergies between various MEAs.

3.4. Political Engagement

Political analysis

The political environment is ripe to move the nature agenda to the highest level in countries and collectively at the global stage. Several countries are taking more advanced approaches towards nature.

With the success of the Paris Agreement, the French government has continued to show leadership on nature by tabling the Global Pact for Environment at the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2017, calling for a cohesive and integrated approach to the environment. President Macron initiated the One Planet Summit in 2016. France has made a bold move to put biodiversity in its Constitution in July 2018. France will also host the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2020. The congress will bring together leaders from government, civil society, indigenous peoples, business and academia in a focus on good environmental governance. Although the French Environment Minister Hulot recently resigned because of disappointment in President Macron's commitment to the environment, the President still appears to be spearheading environmental issues. In March 2018, speaking to French citizens to join the *Earth Hour*, President Macron stated that "we are losing not only our battle against climate change, but also our battle against the collapse of biodiversity." He called for leaders and public to "join the fight for nature".

Focusing on delivering Ecological Civilization across economic, political, cultural and social sectors, China is ready to showcase to the world its impressive achievements towards its first 100-year goal. This goal is to make China a moderately well-off society by 2021, which is 100 years after the establishment of the Chinese Communist Party. China has spearheaded in putting Ecological Civilization into the Constitution. China's practice in finding a development path that are within the limits of ecological systems will provide a show case to the world for achieving SDGs. With growing prominence at the global stage, China can seek to reposition as a global geopolitical leader, leading on securing the global commons, the healthy nature that the whole humanity is relied on. Implementing the vision of Ecological Civilization and calling for global actions to conserve nature will give China the moral high ground in a changing geopolitical landscape. China can make the CBD COP15 in 2020 a success. It will be a major event for nature, in the same way that the Paris Agreement was a turning point for Climate Change.

In addition, 2018 is the Sino-French Environment Year. It is a great opportunity for the leaders of France and China to forge a "Coalition of Champions for Nature" to pave the way 'from Paris to Beijing', to link Climate Change and Biodiversity. France and China can play a leadership role in building a broad coalition of states to generate the momentum for the adoption of the '2020 Global Deal for Nature and People' as the turning point for nature.

This momentum presents an opportunity for progressive leaders in other key countries to deliver political leadership and ambition for action on nature at national and global levels.

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Some other countries can also play a strategic role and join the “Coalition of Champions for Nature” with French-Chinese leadership. The following is just an initial analysis of a number of countries, their domestic situations and inner drives to potentially join the coalition.

Germany will hold the presidency of the EU during the second half of 2020 when the CBD COP15 takes place in Beijing. Germany has been very generous with Overseas Development Assistance for nature conservation and has a nature-loving population. Germany government has also invested in many large-scale CBD related projects. There is a potential for Germany to show leadership not only as a country but also as the leader of EU.

The UK, with Brexit likely to happen in early 2019, will need to seek a new identity in the geopolitical landscape. Building on its important and positive role in working with China to ban the ivory trade, the UK is likely to continue engage with China and extend its leadership to broader environment and ecological issues.

Canada, as the host of the CBD Secretariat, and as the biggest donor to CCICED in the past decades, can be a strong ally of China. Canada recently committed 6.5 billion RMB to nature conservation to meet the 2020 Targets set under the CBD. As another large country that is both developed and with rich biodiversity, Canada could work with China in tapping into new opportunities. The two countries are already working on national park development together.

Other countries will also have the motive to step up their efforts in nature protection or join forces at global stage, potentially with the Chinese-French leadership⁷. In addition, China can call on the heads of states and countries of its allies to become part of the Coalition of Champions for Nature. These leaders can include, but are not limited to, the Heads of States attending the Boao Forum, the BRI Summit, the FOCAC Summit, and etc.

There are quite some efforts now trying to put nature into the Heads of State’s agenda. The Heads of State can issue a Declaration for Nature, or some agreement to that sort, to express their commitment and determination to restore nature. The core HoS leadership could start from the Coalition of Champions for Nature.

In 2020, a global movement for nature can be convened in high-level, defining moments, with President Macron of France and President Xi of China leading a coalition of champions for nature at key platforms such as the UN General Assembly in New York, the One Planet Summit and the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille, and the CBD COP15 in Beijing. Non-state players are also calling for Champions for Nature to strike a Global Deal for Nature and People in 2020. This will

⁷ Egypt, as the host of CBD COP14, may have the interest to secure its legacy; Rwanda, with its President as the Chairman of AU, can and should be willing to play a leadership role from Africa. For Brazil and Mexico, both mega-biodiversity countries, leadership on biodiversity will bring benefits domestically as well as internationally. Other countries such as Colombia, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Kenya, Seychelles, and Norway, etc. all have reasons or willingness to join global efforts, either due to their domestic conservation results or expression by its leaders at various occasions.

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provide strong public support to the Heads of State to put nature higher on national political agendas.

The parties to the CBD, in their Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) recommendation 2/19⁸ in July 2018, invited the UN General Assembly to convene a high-level biodiversity summit at the level of Heads of State/Heads of Government in 2020. This is a unique opportunity to put biodiversity and nature at HoS level. This summit would serve to raise the political visibility of nature and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda, and as an important stepping stone for the development of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity framework. To take this invitation forward, it would mean a member state sponsors a resolution calling for the HoS summit for nature and rallying other member states to co-sponsor it. The countries mentioned before can be a joint force to put the resolution forward. Once adopted, this would set in motion the organizational processes for the summit.

All these efforts together will generate increased, and urgently needed momentum that will drive a powerful outcome and create a turning point for nature and people.

Role of China

China has a unique role to play in this historical movement. Learning from its positive role in reaching the Paris Agreement for Climate Change, China can play an even more prominent role in mobilizing global leaders to build the Coalition of Champions for Nature, bring nature to the Heads of State level, and win the global battle for humanity's survival at home base.

There are five types of roles that China can play in this critical historical moment.

1. Develop a robust domestic Framework for biodiversity conservation that supports eco-civilization and that could be for use by all parties to the CBD;
2. Lead the formation of a high-level Coalition of Champions for Nature;
3. Sponsor a UNGA Resolution on the HoS Summit for Biodiversity in 2020 and participate actively at highest level to show strong political will and leadership;
4. President Xi calls for a Heads of State level CBD COP15 and to invite Heads of States to come to Beijing to demonstrate their commitment and willingness, and provide guidance and direction to take actions to reverse nature loss and restore nature;
5. Play a leadership role, other than just a hosting role, in achieving positive outcomes at COP15 through proactive diplomacy.

Joining efforts with like-minded countries and players, the desired outcomes of CBD COP in Beijing in 2020 for nature could include:

⁸ Proposals for a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

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- a. Parties agree on a post 2020 global biodiversity framework with ambitious and measurable targets, enabling conditions and implementation mechanisms, periodic review and ratcheting instruments to continuously increase ambitions, with Nationally Determined Contributions for nature;
- b. Above and beyond the negotiated agreement, a group of progressive 'Champions of Nature' countries put forward their national commitments and actions as their Gift to the Planet;
- c. Parties commit to reverse the decline of key biodiversity indicators by 2030, including, but not exclusively, making a commitment to ambitious area-based targets;
- d. Parties clearly address the drivers of biodiversity loss, in particular food production, land use, trade and consumption;
- e. Strategic alignment between major multilateral agreements are optimized, with maximized nature contributions to climate change and SDGs, and vice versa;
- f. Non-state actors commit actions and targets that are aligned with an ambitious multilateral agenda for nature;
- g. Agreed measurable 'NDCs for Nature' allow for clear accountability and the gap between national actions and global ambitions are assessed and addressed;
- h. Importantly, the efforts will not be confined domestically but also report on countries international environmental footprint related to its trade and investment activities.

These outcomes will require numerous actions and outcomes at both national and regional levels, as well as in various global fora. China can play a critical role in all these great efforts.

3.5. Next Steps

In order to gain political momentum, China can consider the following immediate key steps. With the fast-evolving external context, the SPS can later provide more suggestions.

- Conducting a 'power analysis' to identify which specific decision-makers can shape and deliver the changes and decisions that China wants to see, for both the HoS Summit and for the CBD negotiations and mobilization, and including how China can influence them;
- On the basis of the power analysis, prioritizing and focusing on key players for key outcomes;
- Domestically, learning thoroughly from the leadership and success of the climate change negotiations to prepare for the CBD organization and negotiations;

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- Start political diplomacy, both through formal channels and through Track 1.5 or Track 2 diplomacy to scope the political ground and build understanding for a success COP 15 in Beijing.

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Part IV: Good Practices on Biodiversity Conservation in China

Biodiversity is the basis for human survival and sustainable economic and social development. At present, the overall trend of China's biodiversity decline has not been effectively curbed. Excessive use of resources, engineering construction and climate change have seriously affected the survival of species and the sustainable use of biological resources. And the situation of serious loss of biological species resources has not been fundamentally changed. In order to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity and effectively address the new problems and challenges facing China's biodiversity conservation, the Chinese government has taken a series of important measures and achieved remarkable results in construction of institutional mechanisms, policy systems, ecological protection and restoration measures. The accumulated experiences have important reference significance for international biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.

4.1 Mainstreaming with national zoning/planning

4.1.1 Included in the national major strategy and planning plan

1) China Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan

In 2010, the State Council issued the “China Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030)”. The action plan defined the strategic objectives, strategic tasks, and priority action plans. At the same time, the action plan was first proposed in China. Biodiversity conservation priority areas with clear boundaries have identified 32 inland and three marine biodiversity conservation priority areas in China, of which 32 inland biodiversity conservation priority areas involve 885 areas in 27 provinces. The total area is 232.15 square kilometers, accounting for about 24% of the country's land area.

2) National main functional area planning

In 2010, the State Council issued the “National Main Functional Area Plan”, which divided the national land space into four categories: optimized development, key development, restricted development and prohibited development. The prohibited development areas refer to representative natural ecosystems, natural concentrated distribution of rare and endangered wildlife species, natural heritage sites with special values, and cultural sites. The country banned the development of a total of 1,443 areas, with a total area of about 1.2 million square kilometers, accounting for 12.5% of the country's land area. At the same time, the “National Main Functional Area Plan” has identified 25 key ecological functional areas with a total area of 3.86 million square kilometers, accounting for 40.2% of the national land area. The national key ecological functions are divided into four types: water conservation, soil and water conservation, wind and sand fixation, and biodiversity

conservation. Among them, there are 7 key ecological functional areas of biodiversity conservation types.

3) One Belt and One Road (National Top Level Cooperation Initiative)

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is the abbreviation of “Silk Road Economic Belt” and “21st Century Maritime Silk Road”. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the “One Belt, One Road” cooperation initiative. In 2017, the Ministry of Environmental Protection issued the “One Belt and One Road” Ecological Environmental Protection Cooperation Plan. The “Planning” aims to promote cooperation among countries along the “Belt and Road” in the field of ecological and environmental protection, and strengthen cooperation mechanisms for environmental protection and environmental protection information sharing. Platform construction will promote the implementation cooperation of relevant countries in multilateral environmental conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

4) Outline of the Development Plan of the Yangtze River Economic Belt

In 2016, the state issued the “Outline of the Development Plan for the Yangtze River Economic Belt”. The “Outline” is the first to put the improvement of the ecological environment into the development strategy of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, emphasizing the restoration of the Yangtze River ecological environment, respecting the laws of nature and the evolution of rivers, and protecting and improving the ecological service functions of the basin, requiring water to be realized in 2030. The environmental and aquatic ecological quality has been comprehensively improved, and the specific targets for ecological construction such as excellent water quality (achieving or better than Class III) (more than 75% in 2020) and forest coverage (43% in 2020) have been proposed.

4.1.2 Promote biodiversity conservation with ecological civilization construction

For the first time, the report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has incorporated ecological civilization into the “five in one” strategic pattern, and clearly put forward the key tasks of ecological civilization construction. One of the key tasks is to strengthen protection of natural ecosystems, expand the area of forests, grasslands, wetlands, and protect biodiversity. Then at the 19th National Congress, the grand goal of “accelerating the reform of the ecological civilization system and building a beautiful China” was put forward. The main tasks to achieve this goal include: implementing important ecosystem protection and restoration of major projects, optimizing the ecological security barrier system, building an ecological corridor and biodiversity conservation network, enhancing the quality and stability of the ecosystem and establishing a natural protection system based on national parks.

In terms of ecological environment protection, the Chinese government has always adhered to the concept of harmonious coexistence between man and nature, and established and practiced the concept of “Green Mountain Green Mountain is Jinshan Yinshan”, as well as coordinated the management of landscape and forest lake grass systems, in order to contribute to global ecological security. In 2016, the Chinese government issued the “Notice on Promoting the Ecological Protection and Restoration of Mountains, Rivers, Forests, Farmland and Lakes”, which comprehensively launched

the major project of ecological protection and restoration of mountains, rivers, forests, farmland and lakes, and specifically incorporated biodiversity conservation into the key content of ecological protection of mountains, rivers, forests, farmland and lakes. It is necessary to speed up the ecological protection and restoration of habitat for rare or endangered animals and plants, restore the damaged trans-regional ecological corridors, ensure connectivity and integrity, build a biodiversity conservation network, and promote the overall restoration and promotion of ecological space in order to improved ecosystem function.

4.2 Implementation with institutional and administrative approach

4.2.1 Establishing National Committee for Biodiversity Conservation

In 2010, the UN General Assembly identified the year of 2011-2020 as the “United Nations Decade on Biodiversity”. For this reason, China State Council established the “China National Committee for 2010 International Year of Biodiversity” and convened a meeting to review and adopt the “International Year of Biodiversity China Action Plan” and the “China Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030)”. In 2011, the State Council approved the establishment of China National Committee for Biodiversity Conservation. Li Keqiang is the first chairman. The current chairman is Zhang Gaoli. The committee consists of 25 ministries and units including the Central Propaganda Department and the National Development and Reform Commission. The National Committee coordinated the work of biodiversity conservation, guided the “China Action for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity”, and reviewed and approved the “National Work Program for Strengthening the Management of Biological Genetic Resources” and the “Implementation Plan for Major Projects for Biodiversity Conservation”.

4.2.2 Reform institutions are conducive to biodiversity conservation

Due to historical reasons, the construction of China's ecosystem management system lagged behind environmental pollution control. The government's ecological protection management functions were scattered in various departments. The departmental management model based on the division of labor between ecological and resource elements lacked a strong and unified ecological protection supervision and management mechanism. It was not conducive to biodiversity conservation. In order to unify the duties of all natural resource asset owners of the whole people, coordinate the management of landscape and forest lake grass systems, and uniformly exercise all land space use control and ecological protection and restoration responsibilities, and focus on solving problems such as inadequate natural resource owners and overlapping spatial planning, 2018 The Chinese government issued the "Deepening Party and State Institutional Reform Plan", in which the newly formed Ministry of Natural Resources unified management of the exploitation and utilization of natural resources and established a system of paid use of natural resources. The National Forestry and Grassland Bureau integrates the management responsibilities of nature reserves, scenic spots, natural heritage, and geological parks previously managed by

various departments, and attaches the National Park Administration brand to establish a natural reserve system with national parks as the main body. The reform of the above-mentioned institutional functions has laid an important foundation for strengthening the protection of biodiversity.

4.2.3 Establishing natural resources balance sheet system

China's National Bureau of Statistics is joining the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Ecological Environment, the Ministry of Water Resources and other departments to develop a natural resources balance sheet and establish a unified natural resources balance sheet system. According to the overall objective of the natural resources balance sheet, the objective, method and content of the physical quantity (land resources assets, forest resources assets, water resources assets, ecological products resources assets, etc.) and the value quantity are determined, and the general accounting table of the physical quantity is designed to clarify the data sources and related requirements of the physical quantity accounting.

Natural resources balance sheet, macroscopically, adopts the method of national balance sheet to classify and aggregate all the natural resources assets of the whole country or a region to form a statement, showing the "family background" of natural resources assets at a certain point, reflecting the changes in the stock of natural resources assets over a certain period of time. On the micro level, it makes use of the balance sheet tool in accounting to present the assets, consumption, damage and balance of various resources by reflecting the natural resources status of a specific area on a specific date, and objectively and comprehensively reflects the exploitation and use of natural resources assets of the subject of ecological responsibility at a certain point. And the destruction of ecological environment and the degree of protection. The accounting scope of the natural resources balance sheet should include not only the natural resources available to the economic system within the accounting area, but also the contents related to the ecological environment. Natural resources balance sheet, macroscopically, adopts the method of national balance sheet to classify and aggregate all the natural resources assets of the whole country or a region to form a statement, showing the "family background" of natural resources assets at a certain point, reflecting the changes in the stock of natural resources assets over a certain period of time. On the micro level, it makes use of the balance sheet tool in accounting to present the assets, consumption, damage and balance of various resources by reflecting the natural resources status of a specific area on a specific date, and objectively and comprehensively reflects the exploitation and use of natural resources assets of the subject of ecological responsibility at a certain point. And the destruction of ecological environment and the degree of protection. The accounting scope of the natural resources balance sheet should include not only the natural resources available to the economic system within the accounting area, but also the contents related to the ecological environment. In 2015, the General Office of the State Council promulgated "National Development Program for Preparing Natural Resources Balance Sheet (2015) 82", and carried out the pilot work of Hulunbeier City, Huzhou City, Loudi City, Chishui City, and Yan'an City.

Biodiversity is an important part of ecological environmental protection. It is of great significance to embody biodiversity protection in the natural resources balance sheet.

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In the natural resources balance sheet, biodiversity conservation is mainly reflected in the protection of ecosystem diversity. The basis of biodiversity protection is the protection of the living environment of animals and plants. In view of the improvement of habitat quality, there are mainly natural forest, lake and river accounting in the natural resources balance sheet.

4.2.4 Establishment of auditing system of natural resources assets for Off-Office cadres

At present, 10 provinces including Inner Mongolia, Hunan, Shaanxi, Hubei, Sichuan, Guangdong, Fujian, Shandong, Yunnan and Jiangsu have carried out exploratory experiments on the audit of the natural resources' assets of Off-Office cadres. This audit program refers to the audit department accounting for land, water, forest and other natural resources assets in the areas under their jurisdiction during their term of office. The purpose of this audit is to prevent the cadres from paying attention to economic development but not to environmental protection. The purpose is to promote the leading cadres to better fulfill the responsibility of natural resources assets management and ecological environmental protection. Implementing the ecological audit system of cadres leaving their posts, correcting their views on political achievements from the system level, and forcing them to enhance their enthusiasm and initiative in ecological construction.

4.3 Infrastructure development

4.3.1 Ecological conservation redline (ECR)

The delineation of ecological conservation redline (ECR) is a major decision made by the China government under the overall situation that the ecological environment in China is still relatively fragile and the ecological security situation is very serious.

In February 2017, the general office of the CPC Central Committee and the general office of State Council issued "Several Opinions", clarifying the overall requirements and specific tasks of China's Ecological conservation redline. The overall goal is: Before the end of 2017, the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, the provinces (municipalities) along the Yangtze River Economic Zone will delineate the ECR; By the end of 2018, the other provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities) will delineate the ECR; By the end of 2020, complete China's ECR delineation, demarcation, basically establish ECR institution, the land ecological space is optimized and effectively protected, ecological functions remain stable, the national ecological security pattern is more perfect. At the same time, in June 2018, "opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on strengthening ecological environmental protection and resolutely fighting pollution prevention and control battle" further proposed the target that China's ECR area accounted for about 25%.

According to the division of labor and the task requirements of "Several Opinions", the following progress has been made in the delineation of China's ECR: First, the establishment of a coordination working mechanism. The Ministry of Ecology and Environment has led the establishment of 12 departments and units to participate in

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the ECR inter-ministerial coordination leadership group. Local governments have also established inter-departmental coordination mechanisms led by the government's main or in charge of the leadership, providing organizational guarantee for the promotion of the ECR. Second, the development of guidance documents. Successively promulgated the "Guidelines for the delineation of ECR", "provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities) ECR distribution advice", "ECR prospecting demarcation technical regulations (pilot trial)" and other documents, guiding the orderly advancement of ECR delineation all over the country. Third, to start the construction of national ECR supervision platform. The total construction area is about 10,000 square meters and will be fully completed by the end of 2020. Organized and launched the trial operation of national ECR supervision platform.

At present, the progress of ECR delineation in various places is as follows: First, fifteen provinces such as Beijing have been finalized and released. In February 2018, the State Council approved the ECR scheme for 15 provinces (municipalities) including Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei, the Yangtze River Economic Belt provinces and Ningxia province. At present, 15 provinces have issued the ECR. The proportion of ECR in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region is 20.43%, the proportion of ECR in Yangtze River Economic Belt is 25.47%, and proportion of ECR in Ningxia is 24.76%. The total area of ECR in 15 provinces accounts for 24.98% of the total land area of these provinces. The 15 provinces are conducting a pilot work on the demarcation of prospecting. Second, other 16 provinces such as Shanxi are promoting the delineation of ECR. All 16 provinces have formed ECR delineation schemes, completed expert argumentation and reported to the provincial government for review, and will approve the procedures as soon as possible. In the next step, the Chinese government will formulate the "ECR management measures", which will clarify the management principles of the ecological protection red line, human activity management and control, protection and restoration, ecological compensation, regulatory assessment and other requirements.

4.3.2 National Park

At present, there are more than 100 countries in the world that have established nearly 10,000 national parks in total, but the definitions of national parks vary from country to country. China's national parks refer to specific terrestrial or marine areas that are approved by the state to establish and manage with clear boundaries to protect large-area natural ecosystems with national representation and to achieve scientific conservation and rational use of natural resources. National parks are one of the most important types of nature reserves in China. They belong to the prohibited development areas in the national main functional area planning, and are included in ecological conservation redline where the most stringent protection is implemented. Compared with the general nature reserve, the national park has a larger scope, a more complete ecosystem, stronger originality, higher management level and stricter protection. It has a dominant position in the natural protection system.

China's national parks adhere to the principle of ecological protection first, and protect the most important areas, in order to leave precious natural heritage for future generations; adhere to the principle of national representation, and take national interests as the leading factor, which have a national symbol and represent the country

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image to show Chinese civilization; adhere to the public welfare for the whole people, which means the sharing of the whole people, and focus on improving the function of ecosystem services, carry out natural environment education, and provide the public with opportunities to enjoy nature, experience nature, understand nature. According to the "Overall Plan for Establishing a National Park System", by 2020, the pilot program for the establishment of a national park system in China will be basically completed, and a number of national parks will be integrated and established. The hierarchical and unified management system will be basically established, and the overall layout of the national park will be initially formed.

Up to now, China has established 10 national park system pilots, namely Sanjiangyuan, Northeast Tiger Leopard, Giant Panda, Qilian Mountain, Hubei Shennongjia, Fujian Wuyishan, Zhejiang Qianjiangyuan, Hunan Nanshan, Beijing Great Wall and Yunnan Pudacuo national park pilot. At present, the national park pilots have gradually formulated and implemented management regulations or management measures, and initially established the national park ecological environmental protection system, the investigation of ecological environmental damage responsibility, and the leading cadre natural resource asset auditing system. Starting from the integrity of the ecosystem, the management institutions and management areas of various types of protected areas such as the original nature reserves, geological parks, forest parks, and scenic spots were integrated and unified, and the goal of "a protected place, a brand, and a management agency" was initially achieved. Positive progress has been made in the construction and management of national parks.

(Authors: Gao Jixi, Zou Changxin, Xu Jing, Feng Chaoyang and Qiao Qing)

Part V: Recommendations

5.1 Play a strong leadership role in developing effective post-2020 global biodiversity conservation goals under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Global Convention on Biological Diversity has failed to meet conservation targets set in 2002 and 2010. As in the case of climate change, the window of opportunity to stem major biodiversity and ecological service losses is rapidly closing. The 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) will be hosted by China in 2020. By joining efforts with like-minded countries and organizations/partners, China can help to set revised goals covering the period to 2030 and beyond. This event is a major opportunity to set a new course in global green governance, and a platform to demonstrate China's commitments and achievements towards becoming an ecological civilization.

To fulfill its international obligations under the CBD, China must not only protect its biodiversity and related ecosystem service, but also actively participate in biodiversity and ecosystem global governance. By joining efforts with like-minded countries and organizations/partners, the desired outcome would be to dramatically reduce biodiversity losses in all parts of the world. COP 15 is a unique opportunity to accomplish four objectives noted below. These recommendations are preliminary and will be followed up by CCICED at various times in 2019 and early 2020.

1. Make a positive contribution to the development of a robust post-2020 global biodiversity conservation framework by creating an enhanced enabling framework for the implementation of the new targets building on a joint understanding why past CBD goals have not been met. Parties will need to agree on a post 2020 global biodiversity framework with ambitious and measurable targets, enabling conditions and implementation mechanisms, periodic review and ratcheting instruments to continuously increase ambitions, and with Nationally Determined Contributions for nature. Consultations with stakeholders, including those not traditionally involved with conservation, for example digital economy business leaders, and others involved in the development and implementation of market mechanisms for ecological services and biodiversity conservation, must be carried out.
2. Establish an effective mechanism to ensure that the CBD strategic goals can be achieved on schedule. Focus should be on state-set goals (e.g. something like NDCs) rather than the power of the convention itself as the key for the successful implementation of conservation goals. The active participation of the whole society is very important. Also, a need to communicate and set up synergy with relevant international agendas.

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3. Showcase China's experience in biodiversity conservation for reference of the international community and engaged Parties. Focus on China's domestic and global initiatives in dialogue and engagement with other governments, including but not limited to Eco-Civilization, Redlining, the Greening of the BRI, Green Finance, Natural Resource Assets Accounting and Auditing, National Park-centric Nature Conservation Systems. Better cross-sectoral relations between these initiatives should be established to foster synergies.
4. Build successful and on-going engagement involving heads of state. There is a need for proactive outreach linked to a proposed Heads of State Summit at the UNGA in 2020; and to build a momentum of support for the significance of the COP15 event similar to what occurred in the Paris Climate Change COP held in 2015. Steps could involve the following elements:
 - a) Engage with the CBD Secretariat to provide a positive signal and to begin the preparations of the Summit at UNGA 2020.
 - b) Respond or proactively reach out to various heads of state of countries that could potentially form a "Coalition of Champions for Nature" together with China.
 - c) Prepare a series of nature, environment and biodiversity related events in China and at the global stage in and leading up to 2020 to set up springboards and milestones leading up to the COP15.
 - d) Pay special attention to the links between the CBD and the SDG2030 objectives, especially those related to social development and various aspects of gender mainstreaming.
 - e) Recognize that leadership actions abroad will come from many different players, including international bodies, non-state, non-party actors such as business, financial institutions, civil society, and the general public. Increase efforts in the communication and exchange with international communities.
 - f) Increase efforts in the communication and exchange with international communities:
 - Be aware and respectful of differences with dialogue partners or countries on i) value systems, ii) ways of message delivery and uptake, iii) differences and gaps in history and culture and therefore in understanding;
 - Be open and honest on challenges and successes, on issues and solutions;
 - Take a non-propaganda approach in communications and exchanges;
 - Cultivate specialized capacities with technical expertise, language skills, and a global view, to carry the message from China to the world and vice versa in a way that the world can understand and accept;
 - Encourage the council members to become the bridges between the world and China on the battle for nature and biodiversity;
 - Build alliances and look for common grounds, languages, and narratives for wider acceptance.

5.2 Recommendations on “Establishing a National-Park-Centric Protected Area System in China”

In November 2013, the 3rd Plenum of the 18th CPC Central Committee proposed for the first time “the establishment of a national park system”, making pilot of the national park system an important part of China’s ecological civilization system development. In November 2017, the report delivered at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward “the establishment of a national-park-centric protected area system”. In less than five years, China has taken the opportunity of the national park system development and made significant milestone progress in comprehensively deepening the reform of the protected area system, laying a solid foundation for the realization of ecological civilization and the national strategy of building a Beautiful China.

In September 2017, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the Overall Plan for Establishing a National Park System, which, based on a clear definition of the concept of national park, provides explicit description on how to build China’s national parks from seven aspects, namely, overall requirements, scientific definition of the content of national parks, establishing a unified administrative power and tiered management system, establishing a system of funding guarantee, improving the system of natural ecosystem protection, building a coordinated community-development system and implementation support. National parks refer to state approved and managed specific terrestrial or marine areas that have clear boundaries with an aim primarily to protect nationally representative, large-area natural ecosystems and to achieve scientific conservation and rational use of natural resources. National parks’ primary aim is to protect large-area ecosystems and large-scale ecological processes, underlining the preservation of the authenticity and integrity of ecosystems. They are clearly categorized as development prohibited zones in the national main functional area planning to achieve ecological red line management and the strictest protection. National parks adhere to the features of national representation and inheritance from generation to generation, inspire national pride, and leave precious natural legacy for future generations; they adhere to public welfare of the whole people, provide environmental education and recreation opportunities for the citizens, and encourage the sense of identification for the protection of nature among the people.

As academics from home and abroad who have long been engaged in nature protection, we feel profoundly inspired by these initiatives. In order to better implement the guidelines of “establishing a national-park-centric protected area system”, we sincerely put forward six recommendations as follows:

- 1) Solidifying the three cornerstones of “ecological protection first, national representation, and public welfare for the people” to achieve the core status of national parks in the system of protected areas by having the central government

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exercise the administrative power of national parks, while strictly controlling the access threshold and the total number of national parks.

- 2) Establishing a wilderness conservation system in China and demarcating wilderness conservation areas within various protected areas such as national parks to carry out rescue protection of the national heritage of the country with the highest authenticity.
- 3) Building a faceted and multi-level protected area system according to the characteristics of the target of protection and the difference in the level of protection, establishing the legal framework of the “national-park-centric protected area system”, and formulating management policies for different types of protected areas.
- 4) Paying full attention to the complexity of land ownership and the arduousness of community management. Developing special management policies based on the characteristics, problems, difficulties and root causes of land, population and community in the development of national parks in different regions to prevent possible long-term hidden dangers caused by one-size-fits-all policies;
- 5) Giving full play to the unique role of scientific research and the community of scientists in the development of national parks, and use science as the criteria to achieve "the strictest protection";
- 6) Selecting one province or autonomous region each in the eastern, central, western, northwestern and autonomous regions for ethnic minorities, for prompt kick-off of province-level pilot activity to establish “a national-park-centric protected area system”, and exploring the ways and means and feasible paths for a “five in one” development of ecological civilization, economy, politics, culture and society in different regions taking advantage of the development of national parks, to activate holistic natural conservation.

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