

Synergy between UNFCCC and CBD

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The Global Climate Crisis:
Finding Common Ground
through **International Law**

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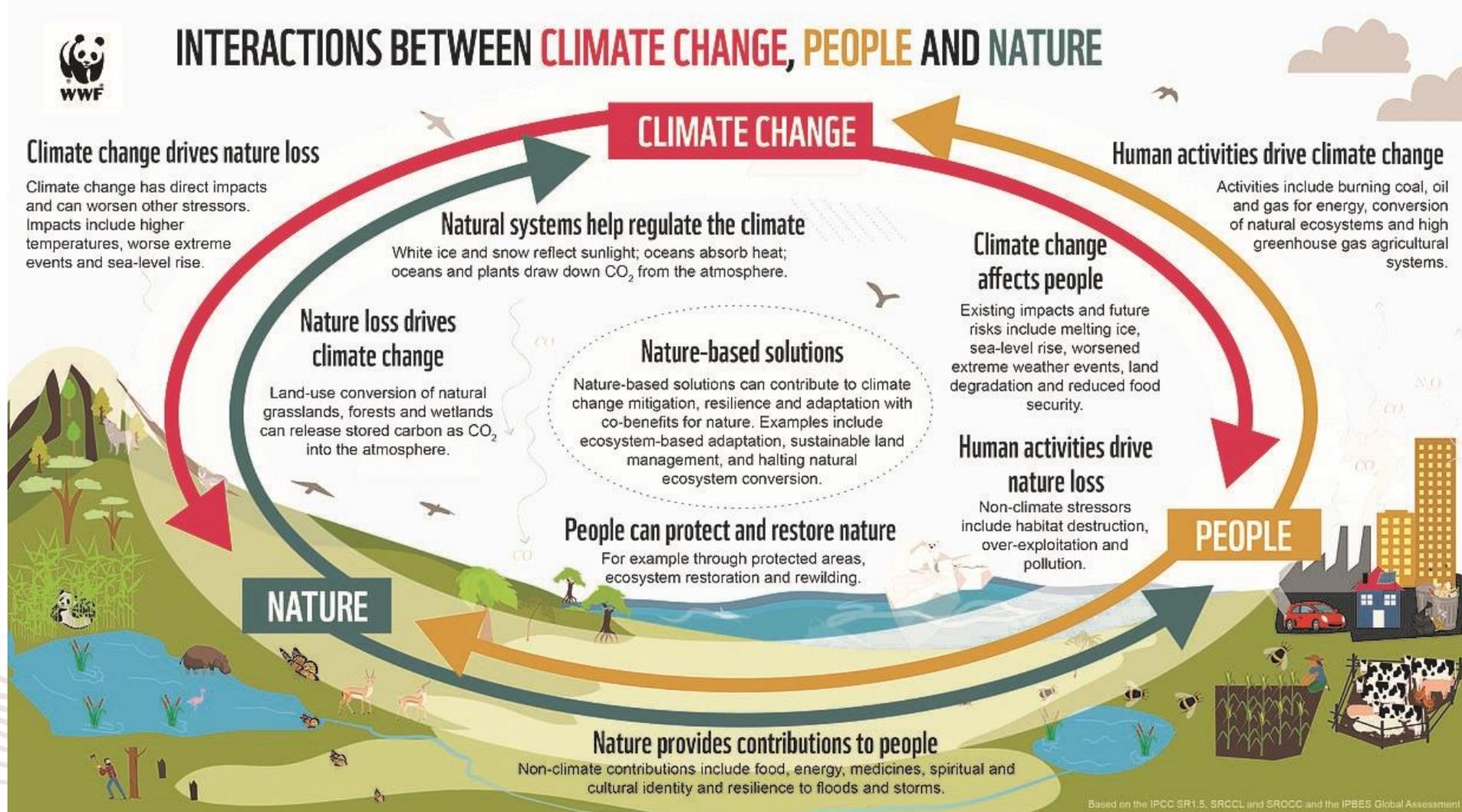
5. Future Development in the View of International Law

1. Foreword

- The just concluded COP 27 of UNFCCC mentioned the CBD, which hopes the upcoming COP15 will deliver an ambitious and transformative target of 3030.
- This actually reconfirms a connection between the two conventions and pursues synergy between them.
- The two conventions need to be looked at as being on the same wavelength.



2. Scientific Basis for Synergy



Climate change has impact on biodiversity in two ways:

As one of the **important driving factors behind the loss of biodiversity**, climate change affects the number of species, alters the distribution of species, exacerbates habitat loss and fragmentation, etc.

Mitigation and adaptation measures to address climate change have a **positive impact** on biodiversity. Ecosystem conservation and restoration by increasing carbon sinks can provide a more solid foundation for biodiversity conservation.



Biodiversity can in turn affect climate change in two ways:

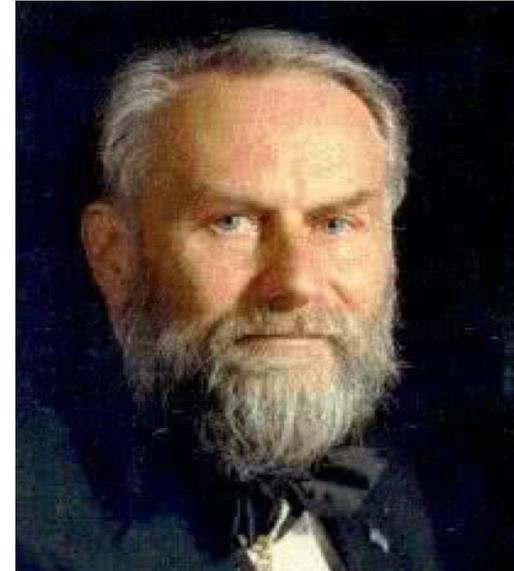
The improvement of environmental quality to curb the loss of biodiversity can maintain and enhance the **carbon sink** function of the system, thereby mitigating climate change.

The reduction of activities that have an adverse impact on biodiversity can help to improve the ability of climate change **adaptation**.



2. Scientific Basis for 'Synergy'

- Originally a physical and chemical phenomenon (1971, Hermann Hacken)
- Two or more components are added or mixed together to produce a greater effect than the sum of the effects of various components when used alone ($1+1>2$)
- Synergy theory holds that there is a mutual influence and cooperation relationship between various systems in the entire environment.
- Reasons to choose Synergy:
 - Saving cost & adding income



'Hard' and 'Soft' Synergy

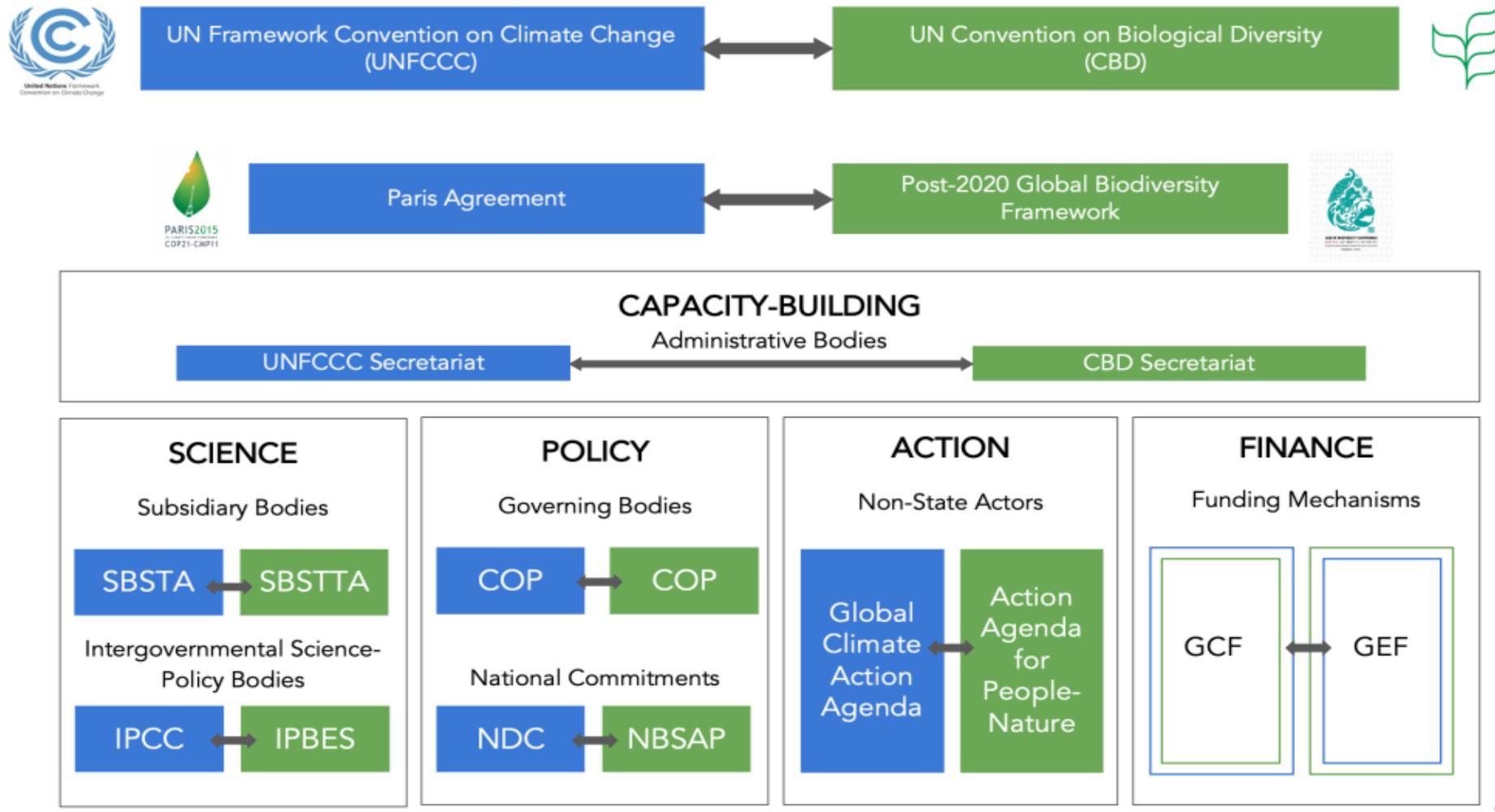
- 'Hard' synergies are achieved through policy coherence and are slower to accomplish, as they require intergovernmental negotiations within different bodies with differing mandates.
- Additional difficulties stem from the increasingly complex arrangements governing global environmental problems, such as climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Such governance arrangements include an array of legal, institutional, and financial mechanisms involving various governmental and non-governmental actors, on top of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).
- Responsibility for creating rules is thus shared among multiple organisations with diverse memberships operating at different scales.

'Hard' and 'Soft' Synergy

- 'Soft' collaboration mechanisms at the international level include institutional coordination and knowledge exchange through collaboration between secretariats and scientific bodies, as well as joint communication activities in relevant forums.
- Inter-agency cooperation could be stimulated at the level of secretariats. Such 'soft' synergies have the potential to build bridges between institutions and delegates, with a potential spillover effect to the domestic level. They can thus promote the development of synergistic domestic legislation and policy.



3. Mechanisms of the Synergy



Role of the Secretariats

- Improving coordination between and through the secretariats is routinely mentioned as a way to increase synergies among the Rio Conventions.
- The Joint Liaison Group (JLG) between the Rio Conventions can support this cooperation.



Science: Supporting Science-Based and Evidence-Based Decision-Making

- Climate and Biodiversity Conventions are both supported by Subsidiary Bodies (SB) to provide information and advice related to implementation of the Conventions, namely Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA). To that end, SBSTA and SBSTTA could define a joint long-term work process to deliberate on crucial mitigation and adaptation issues related to nature-based solutions. Given that both bodies report back to their respective COPs, progress could easily be tracked and direct inputs from Parties could be incorporated in the decisions emerging from inter-sessional negotiations under the SBST(T)As.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), are responsible for reviewing and assessing the most recent scientific information produced worldwide, thereby guiding policymakers in their work. They exercise a remarkable amount of epistemic and political authority, promoting environmental sustainability within and beyond the scientific community.

Science: Supporting Science-Based and Evidence-Based Decision-Making

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IPBES-IPCC CO-SPONSORED WORKSHOP

BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

WORKSHOP REPORT



Policy: Increasing Political Coherence between Climate and Biodiversity Strategies

- Respective COP Presidencies must also strengthen their communication and cooperation, building bridges between the two events.
- Coordinating **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** by Paris Agreement and **National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)** by CBD is an opportunity to send a resounding political signal in favour of common climate and biodiversity ambitions, while reinforcing the impacts and coherence of national measures.
- We also need to start qualifying and quantifying the climate footprint of NBSAPs and the biodiversity footprint of NDCs. Countries must optimise the best tradeoffs and co-benefits between ocean, biodiversity and climate actions. This should be done both nationally and collectively at the international level.

Action: Strengthening the Ties between Climate and Biodiversity Non-State Actors

- In the longer run, the **Global Climate Action Agenda** and the **Action Agenda for People and Nature** could create new forms of collaboration. Building on the existing overlaps between the themes covered by both action agendas, joint work streams could be established to achieve common goals.
- The voice of civil society is stronger when united. Building bridges among climate and biodiversity communities of non-state actors could be a game-changer in the way non-party stakeholders mobilise and influence decision-makers to tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis as one and the same.

Finance: Mobilising Resources to Advance the Ocean, Climate and Biodiversity Nexus

- Strengthening the climate-biodiversity nexus can be further achieved through increased collaboration across the financial mechanisms and institutions Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF)
- To build bridges between their respective workstreams, mainstreaming climate issues in biodiversity projects and vice versa.
 - To develop and pilot innovative projects
 - To identify key co-financing opportunities
 - To scale up readiness support to lay the groundwork for enhanced climate finance in developing countries
- Current strategies are setting the foundation for further collaboration between the two agencies
 - GEF-7 Climate Change Focal Area Strategy and Updated Strategic Plan for the GCF

Finance: Mobilising Resources to Advance the Ocean, Climate and Biodiversity Nexus



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4. Opportunities

- Opportunities at international level:
 - The ongoing CBD negotiations on the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)
 - Work on considerations of biodiversity and ecosystems under the UNFCCC, including the UNFCCC COP 26 focus on nature
 - Efforts under the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions
 - Work in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Functions
 - To create legal and policy space to strengthen linkages and synergies while minimising trade-offs
 - To enable the sectoral transformations required to address drivers of both climate change and biodiversity loss

- Opportunities at national level: through the design and implementation of national-level instruments implementing the CBD and UNFCCC.
 - To include climate-related aspects in NBSAPs
 - To mainstream biodiversity concerns and implement NBSAPs in coordination with other national climate strategies
- Functions
 - Minimising trade-offs
 - Avoiding negative impacts on communities and livelihoods

5. Future Development in the View of International Law

- To enhance developments in general international law supporting **the principle of mutual supportiveness**
- To improve **institutional settings and legal provisions** enabling a synergistic approach under the legal framework of CBD and the UNFCCC
- To strengthen **legal basis** for synergies **from the international to the national and local levels**
- To ensure the **role of non-state actor** in international law

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