

Other Topics: New Momentum for Green Development

Biodiversity: A Critical Aspect Contributing to the Green Development

Executive Summary

The sudden COVID-19 outbreak at the beginning of 2020 has given mankind a deeper understanding of nature and life. As former French President Georges Pompidou said, “The domination of man over nature has become so complete that it entails the risk of the destruction of nature itself.” Human being is part of the natural ecosystem, while the evolution of life is the result of coordination and adaptation with the environment. The outbreak of each pandemic seems to remind us that the emergence of new diseases may be the result of ecological imbalances.

Starting in the 21st century, countries around the world began to explore green development approaches that took both economic growth and environmental protection into account. In recent years, China has proposed a green development concept that features the coordination of economic growth and environmental protection and has actively promoted the building of an ecological civilization. As an important part of ecological protection, biodiversity has been put on the agenda of countries. However, the value of biodiversity has not widely recognized, and it is essential for the sustainable development of economy and society. But the world is currently quickly losing its biodiversity, and about one million species are threatened with extinction. As one of the countries in the world with the richest assortments of species, China is also facing serious threats to that biodiversity. Under the leadership of the Chinese Government and with the support of society, China has achieved tremendously in biodiversity conservation. At present, the country’s biodiversity conservation actions are still facing many challenges.

Focused on efficiency and productivity to meet the needs of a growing world population, our globalized and highly specialized agricultural system is seeing negative impacts: a loss of diversity on farms, loss of ingredient diversity in diets, and the degradation of ecosystems. The private sector has come to an increasing awareness that the resources used by the food, textile and personal care industries are highly dependent on biodiversity, so companies have an incentive to protect and restore biodiversity and strive to improve the relationship between man and nature.

Danone believes that mankind's dietary choices have a profound impact on our individual health, the health of society, and even the health of the planet, and that the sources of food and drink are highly dependent on biodiversity. This is a common challenge faced by man and urgently needs the whole of society to work together to catalyze systematic change. Biodiversity conservation should take the balance of ecological protection and sustainable use of resources as the basic concept and drive the whole society to participate in co-governance. Biodiversity co-governance should take the establishment of regulations and governance frameworks as the starting point, promote regenerative agriculture as an innovative approach for agriculture, and strengthen the participation of the business and the public, thus achieving biodiversity conservation and restoration.

The article aims to analyze the current status of global biodiversity. In doing so, we attempt to learn from existing practices of global biodiversity conservation, including the balancing of economic development and ecological protection, about governance frameworks and measures, and corporate participation. We briefly summarize the significance of biodiversity conservation measures, highlight that worth emulating, and offer recommendations for the engagement of key stakeholders in biodiversity conservation, in support of China's green development.

1. Status Quo of Global Biodiversity Conservation

1.1. The rapid loss of biodiversity – a common global challenge

Biodiversity is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. It includes animals, plants, microorganisms plus their genes, and the complicated ecosystem formed by them and their living environment. The biodiversity we see today is the fruit of billions of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and, increasingly, by the influence of humans. It forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we so fully depend.

The vast array of interactions among the various components of biodiversity makes the planet habitable for all species, including humans. Our personal health, and the health of our economy and human society, depends on the continuous supply of various ecological services that would be extremely costly or impossible to replace.

Biodiversity is a backbone of life, it creates and sustains life, allowing systems to regenerate and not succumb to entropy. It is the inclusive lifeline of all people on this planet. Yet today we are losing it at an unacceptable rate, despite the adoption of ambitious targets by the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), efforts by conservation organizations, and alarming warnings from scientists. A report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) finds that around 1 million animal and plant species out of 8 million are now threatened with extinction. More than 40% of amphibian species, almost 33% of reef-forming corals and more than a third of all marine mammals are threatened with habitat loss, exploitation, climate change and pollution as the main culprits.¹

1.2. The role of the food system in biodiversity conservation

¹ IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services:
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/>

Indeed, after decades of investment by governments and industry, focused on efficiency and productivity to meet the needs of a growing world population, our globalized and highly specialized agricultural system is seeing negative impacts: a loss of diversity on farms, loss of ingredient diversity in diets, and the degradation of ecosystems. The food system alone is responsible for around 60% of global biodiversity loss, fueled by increasing overspecialization, loss of both natural and cultivated biodiversity due to land use change, monoculture and intensive farming practices. A recent report by the FAO found that, of the 6,000 or so plant species cultivated for food, just nine account for 66% of total crop production. The world's livestock production is based on around 40 species, with only a handful providing most of the meat, milk and eggs. 27% of deforestation is commodity-driven, with demand for four resources – palm oil, soy, paper and cattle – responsible for the majority.² Half of the negative health, environment, and economic externalities of our current food system come from the way our food is produced.

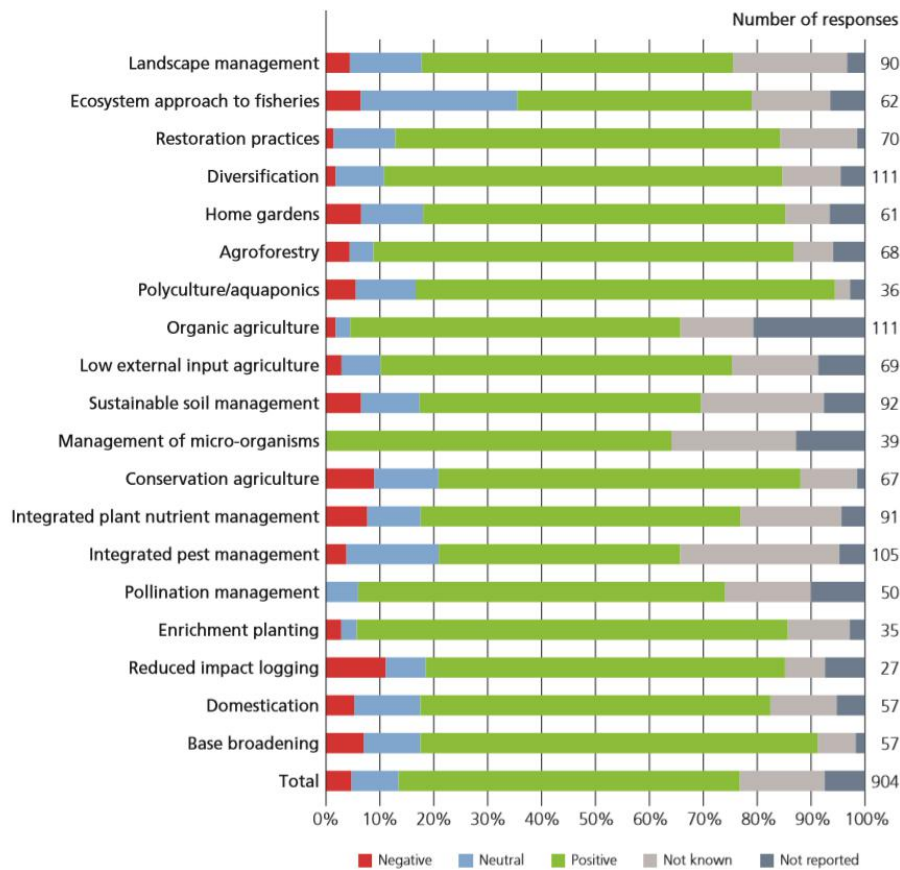
| Drivers of change | | Reported effect on biodiversity for food and agriculture |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Economic and social | Population growth and urbanization | -- |
| | Markets and trade | - |
| | Changing economic, sociopolitical and cultural factors | + / - |
| Environmental drivers | Climate change | -- |
| | Natural disasters | -- |
| | Pests, diseases, invasive alien species | -- |
| Drivers at production system level | Changes in land and water use and management | -- |
| | Pollution and external inputs | -- |
| | Overexploitation and overharvesting | -- |
| Other | Advances and innovations in science and technology | + |
| | Policies | ++ |

Countries' evaluation of the effects of drivers of change on biodiversity for food and agriculture in production systems

Data Source: FAO report on 'State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture'

² FAO report on 'State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture': <http://www.fao.org/state-of-biodiversity-for-food-agriculture/en/>

On the other hand, according to surveys, sustainable agricultural production can have a positive impact on biodiversity conservation. More and more countries have been adopting and implementing biodiversity-friendly agricultural management models, including regenerative agriculture, ecological restoration, sustainable land management, diversification, organic agriculture, and low external input agriculture.



Perceived impacts on biodiversity for food and agriculture of various management practices and approaches

Data Source: FAO report on ‘State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture

Biodiversity is a common challenge facing mankind now and requires all stakeholders to act together to effect systemic change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and many scientific studies, we have ten years to revise our approach and bend the curve on climate change and biodiversity loss.³

³ IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C:
<https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policy-makers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>

1.3. Beneficial international actions to catalyze systemic change

In recent years, the international community, countries and companies around the world have been increasingly concerned about biodiversity conservation and have taken actions to meet the challenge, such as balancing resource protection and economic development, establishing regulations and governance frameworks, and promoting corporate participation. These initiatives have gradually begun to have positive effects.

1.3.1. Economic development and ecological protection need to be reconciled

Biodiversity conservation first needs to balance the contradiction between economic development and protection of ecological resources. Over the past few years, our economic development inevitably neglected the protection of resources, thereby sacrificing the ecological environment. However, with mankind's development entering a new stage, various countries and organizations have understood the importance of ecological protection and have proposed solutions to combine ecological protection with economic and social development to ensure that both can be prioritized.

The European Union is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world, but for a long time in the past, the loss of biodiversity in the region was a serious concern. Therefore, the EU committed to containing the damage, and began trialing and adopting different measures. Over the past few decades, the region's agriculture has seen rapid development and its food production has reached self-sufficiency. In order to balance the needs of resource protection and agricultural development, the EU insists on reconciling the economic interests of producers, consumer needs and the requirement to protect the environment. Green agriculture is promoted as the primary means of ensuring a sustainable future. Nevertheless, due to the excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in agricultural production, the overall soil quality in the region has declined, and the ecological environment and biodiversity have been

threatened. The EU revised its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), combining various subsidy policies with regulations on compliance issues such as environmental protection, food safety, animal health standards. In 2014 alone, the EU invested more than EUR 30 billion in agricultural development funds to establish a standard model of agricultural production, support producer training, and develop organic agriculture. In addition, the CAP also requires 30% of the EU's fiscal revenue to be used for controlling global climate change and supporting sustainable agricultural development, 5% for compensating losses caused by weather disasters, and 30% of the agricultural subsidies for encouraging green plantation models such as diversified cultivation.⁴ After years of practice, the EU has achieved certain results in biodiversity conservation. The EU is now moving one step further thanks to its Green Deal strategy, including the Biodiversity Strategy 2030 which commits the EU to curtail biodiversity loss, and preserve and restore its ecosystems.

1.3.2. The regulatory framework should be formulated and improved to drive consensus and ensure united actions within the region

Biodiversity conservation involves multiple stakeholders – the sharing and protection of certain natural resources has exceeded geography and industry boundaries, while many biodiversity conservation topics involve the participation of stakeholders across different regions, fields, industries, and authorities. Therefore, formulating an effective and feasible legal governance framework is the basis for multiple parties to obtain consensus and achieve results. Biodiversity conservation needs the establishment of a sound legal framework and institutional mechanisms to reconcile the interests of various stakeholders and provide a basis for reaching consensus and joint actions.

In as early as 1992, the United Nations' Environment Program proposed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), calling on countries around the world to

⁴ Zhu Xiaoli, Zhang Guixing, Li Jingjuan, et al. The Learnings of French Green Agriculture on China's Agricultural Development [J], China Agricultural Information, 2017(5).

reach a consensus on the importance of biodiversity conservation. The Convention provides a governance framework for biodiversity conservation, proposing overall goals and shaping a basis for countries to formulate biodiversity conservation strategies. At the same time, the Convention weighs the conflicts of interest between developed and developing countries and promotes financial and technical consensus and cooperation between them.

Since the start of the 21st century, in face of the dual challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, the international community has further strengthened biodiversity conservation actions and called on governments, non-governmental organizations, companies, and citizens to participate in biodiversity conservation and accelerate global efforts to combat climate change. In March 2021, Kunming will host the 15th Conference of Parties (COP 15) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with the aim to lay the foundation for a highly ambitious, and yet achievable, global framework for the next decade. This conference will thus be a historical moment to shape the post-2020 global biodiversity landscape.

Under the overall framework of global biodiversity conservation, countries have also formulated policies and regulations that suit their own national conditions. In August 2016, the French government passed the 'Biodiversity Law' to integrate national resources and establish the French Agency for Biodiversity to integrate biodiversity into policies such as agriculture, fisheries, and ecological protection. In addition, France also actively invites the private sector and the public to participate in biodiversity conservation, contribute to the formulation of the National Biodiversity Strategy, and put forward plans to ensure that the strategy is implemented in various institutions and industries. By establishing a business-focused biodiversity conservation organization, the country has strengthened communication and cooperation between companies and stakeholders. Through such measures encouraging social participation, the public awareness towards biodiversity

conservation in France has been further enhanced. In 2018, the European Union conducted a public survey of biodiversity in its member states, showing that France is one of the countries with the highest public awareness of biodiversity.⁵

1.3.3. Corporate participation serves as the backbone of biodiversity conservation

Biodiversity conservation is a common responsibility of the whole of society, and for companies whose production resources are highly dependent on biodiversity – especially those in agriculture and food – promoting biodiversity protection has value for both business development and resource protection. The private sector has begun implementing initiatives to preserve and restore nature’s ecosystems, with companies developing multiple initiatives to build fairer, more sustainable supply chains. As a world-leading company focused on healthy foods, most Danone products originate in agricultural production. Since its creation, the company has stuck to its dual commitment, seeking both “business success and social progress”. In recent years, the company has been committed to promoting sustainable agriculture together with farmers and consumers, starting from its own business. Yet it has become clear that scattered actions are not enough anymore; a massive scale-up is needed to create an enabling environment for the preservation of biodiversity. As such, initiated by Danone and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), twenty-one⁶ forward-thinking, agriculture-centric companies launched a new coalition named “One Planet Business for Biodiversity” (OP2B) in September 2019, to protect and restore biodiversity within their supply chains and product portfolios.

The OP2B member companies have committed to take tangible actions, on an individual and collective basis, to develop solutions aimed at enhancing biodiversity in agricultural systems. OP2B member companies intend to deploy these solutions to

⁵ Public awareness of biodiversity in Europe: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/public-awareness-2/assessment>

⁶ Balbo Group, Barry Callebaut, Danone, DSM, Firmenich, Google, InVivo, Jacobs Douwe Egberts, Kellogg Company, Kering, Livelihoods Funds, L’Oreal, Loblaws Companies Limited, Mars, Migros Ticaret, McCain Foods, Nestlé, Sonae, Symrise, Unilever, and Yara

transform their strategic value chains and reach impact at scale. OP2B companies want to develop and scale up solutions to reduce their environmental impact and restore the world's natural resources, whilst improving farmers' incomes and livelihoods. OP2B members see three main enablers:

- Scaling up regenerative agriculture practices to protect soil health.
- Developing product portfolios to boost cultivated biodiversity and increase the resilience of the food and agriculture models.
- Eliminating deforestation and enhancing the management, restoration, and protection of high-value natural ecosystems.

OP2B members intend to demonstrate leadership progress by the 2021 CBD COP 15.

These efforts will include:

- Developing a compendium of systemic, meaningful, measurable solutions that can be implemented by OP2B members in their value chains.
- Disclosing ambitious, timebound and measurable commitments during CBD COP 15, together with policy proposals that would help to deliver successful outcomes.

2. China: actively addressing biodiversity challenges though a long way still to go

2.1. Urgent actions are required to address declining biodiversity in China

As one of the countries in the world with the richest assortments of species, China is also facing serious threats to its biodiversity. Threats faced by China's biodiversity are multi-fold. China's accelerating population growth, industrialization and urbanization have been translating into an ever-increasing demand for natural resources, leading to the ecological environment's loss or degradation, overexploitation of natural resources, large-scale cultivation of single species and climate change. The number of endangered plants in China has reached 3,767, accounting for about 10.9% of the total

higher plant species in China. In China, the degraded area of cultivated land has accounted for 40% of the total cultivated area; 90% of the grasslands have been degraded or desertified to varying degrees; 60% to 70% of the original distribution sites of wild rice have disappeared or shrunk; and the populations of more than a half of local livestock and poultry breeds have been going down, with 18% of the total of local breeds being endangered and facing extinction.⁷

2.2. China actively addresses biodiversity challenges based on building an ecological civilization

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the building of an ecological civilization, with the concept of “ecological civilization” written into the Constitution in March 2018. CPC General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out: “Man and nature form a community of life; we, as human beings, must respect nature, follow its ways, and protect it. Clear waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets.” In recent years, the Chinese government has been accelerating the building of an ecological civilization, with its ecological environment continuously improving and biodiversity conservation actions continuously progressing.

2.2.1. Initially establishing a system of biodiversity conservation and management

In 2010, the Chinese Government promulgated its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030) (NBSAP), which identified guiding principles, strategic goals and tasks for biodiversity conservation in China in the next two decades. The country has gradually promulgated several regulations, including the Regulations on Nature Reserves, Regulations on Wild Plants Protection, and Regulations on Administration of Agricultural Genetically Modified Organisms Safety to strengthen the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

⁷ China's Fifth National Report on the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, China National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030)

2.2.2. Establishing a network of nature reserves with different types, reasonable layout and relatively sound functions

By the end of 2017, the terrestrial protected areas of various types in China exceeded 18% of the country's total land area, having achieved in advance the target of 17% for 2020 identified in the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's Aichi Biodiversity Targets.⁸ The nature reserves conserved 90% of terrestrial ecosystem types, 85% of wild animal populations and 65% of higher plant communities, as well as covered 25% primary forests, more than 50% of natural wetlands and 30% of typical desert areas.⁹

2.2.3. Actively participating in international cooperation and exchange

To date, China has joined more than 30 multilateral conventions or protocols related to the ecological environment¹⁰, guided international cooperation in addressing climate change, and become an important participant, contributor, and leader in building a global ecological civilization. The Chinese government values, conserves, restores and uses biodiversity in a wise manner, encourages the participation of all actors and stakeholders, and supports the development and implementation of an ambitious yet practical post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

For example, China has been striving to promote the highest-level political leaders to actively attend the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with the theme of 'Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth' to advocate biodiversity conservation. It has also promised to, from the perspective of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030¹¹, take appropriate and ambitious actions to halt and reverse the degradation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and

⁸ Aichi Biodiversity Targets : <https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>

⁹ China's Fifth National Report on the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity

¹⁰ Li Ganjie, Minister of Ecology and Environment: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/19th/n1/2017/1023/c414536-29604145.html>

¹¹ <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/new-un-decade-ecosystem-restoration-offers-unparalleled-opportunity>

the loss of biodiversity, and restore at least 30% of recoverable degraded ecosystems, thus contributing to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, biodiversity conservation, prevention of desertification and land degradation, and food security. Moreover, China has worked with France to publish the ‘Beijing Call on Biodiversity Conservation and Climate Change’ In November 2019, the two countries declared their commitment to making unprecedented efforts to secure the future of generations, and called countries and, when relevant, sub-national authorities, companies, NGOs, and citizens to join them in stepping up the global efforts to tackle climate change and speeding up the transition towards green and low-carbon and climate-resilient development.

2.3. Main issues for biodiversity conservation in China

While China has achieved tremendous advances in terms of biodiversity conservation, the situation is still grim, with a long way to go for relevant conservation efforts. China's biodiversity conservation now faces three key challenges.

2.3.1 China needs to further improve relevant laws and systems

Biodiversity conservation is a relatively broad field. China’s existing biodiversity conservation laws and regulations are inadequate to cover all aspects of the issue – the country is yet to formulate a basic law for biodiversity conservation, and there are no specialized laws or regulations to address issues such as benefit-sharing, wetland conservation control of invasive alien species. Therefore, the legal system has been unable to meet the new needs for biodiversity conservation and regulation.

2.3.2. China hasn’t included biodiversity in policies relate to fields such as agriculture

According to a study by Peking University¹², China ’s current biodiversity conservation and agricultural policies ignore “agricultural-related biodiversity”, meaning the country attaches little importance to the various organisms living in and

¹² Li, L., Hu, R., Huang, J. *et al.* A farmland biodiversity strategy is needed for China. *Nat Ecol Evol* (2020)

around agricultural production systems. Therefore, farmland biodiversity conservation should be included in ecological protection and agricultural production policies; more extensive and detailed farmland biodiversity monitoring and research work should be carried out; baselines for agricultural biodiversity should be established and important agricultural biodiversity areas should be identified; and biodiversity conservation in the agricultural field should be mainstreamed.

2.3.3. China lacks mainstreaming awareness for biodiversity conservation

At present, biodiversity conservation in China lacks social, economic, policy and cultural support, and “mainstreaming” hasn’t been realized across the whole society. A biodiversity conservation concept of “a community of shared ecological destiny” is yet to receive widespread awareness and recognition.

2.3.4. China’s public and companies lack awareness around biodiversity conservation

Although the Chinese Government has made top-level deployment and strategic planning for the building of an ecological civilization a priority, companies and the public still lack awareness around biodiversity conservation. There are limited channels and opportunities for companies and people to participate in biodiversity conservation, and most actions are aimed at strengthening their awareness and cognition. Biodiversity conservations policies, measures and projects are yet to be integrated into different aspects of companies’ production and people's lives. This has led to low awareness and initiative levels.

3. Suggestions for Biodiversity Conservation in China

Danone believes that the health of people and of the planet are interconnected, and the earth and mankind form a community of shared destiny. Biodiversity co-governance is an effective way to promote conservation in China. In response to the challenges

faced by China's biodiversity conservation and based on Danone's practices, we now propose the following suggestions:

3.1. Further improving laws and regulations for biodiversity conservation to establish a basis for co-governance

A legal system is fundamental to guaranteeing the sustainable development of biodiversity conservation. Improving relevant laws and regulations and governance frameworks is of great significance to the conserving a thriving ecosystem.

First, fully integrating “biodiversity conservation” into the legal system. China should formulate a Biodiversity Conservation Law and improve related laws, regulations and standards systems; amend the Agriculture Law, Wild Animal Protection Law, Regulations on Wild Plants Protection, Forest Law and other laws to strengthen legislation on issues such as wetland conservation, the invasion of alien species, and benefit sharing; amend the Regulations on Nature Reserves to include local resources in the scope of nature protection and biodiversity conservation management; improve the laws and regulations for the development of ecological agriculture, guide and regulate agricultural production relations, and balance and coordinate the relationship between resource utilization and environmental protection.

Second, actively advancing the global governance framework. China should participate in the discussion and consultation with the international community and various stakeholders, evaluate the implementation progress of the current CBD conservation strategy, and make positive contributions to the post-2020 biodiversity conservation framework. It should also summarize the country's experience in biodiversity conservation and promote best practices in the building of an ecological civilization to the international community. At the same time, China should strengthen international and regional cooperation, promoting regional and multilateral cooperation in biodiversity conservation. It should learn from, support and expand

existing initiatives, promote cross-border biodiversity conservation, and invite international organizations and stakeholders of countries to participate in joint governance.

Third, improving financial mechanism for biodiversity conservation to expand co-governance channels. China should strengthen financial investment – it should increase government investment in biodiversity conservation and expand investment in key areas, including regenerative agriculture and organic agriculture. It should also introduce all parties in society to participate in biodiversity conservation, establish various biodiversity conservation funds, attract and absorb social and private capitals, and form a diversified funding mechanism.

3.2. Allowing companies to support biodiversity conservation to achieve co-governance and innovation

Companies can play an important role in the field of biodiversity conservation. The private sector has come to an increasing awareness that the resources used by the food, textile and personal care industries are highly dependent on biodiversity, so companies have an incentive to protect and restore biodiversity and strive to improve the relationship between man and nature. The public and private sectors can work together to take strong measures to jointly promote biodiversity conservation and lead systemic changes.

Taking regenerative agriculture as an example, it is a part of agroecological practices. Encouraging and promoting regenerative agriculture can effectively conserve agricultural biodiversity and thus the ecological environment. Danone launched a multi-year, \$6 million soil health research program to help farmers improve the qualities of soil and their efficiency and promote regenerative agriculture.

Centered on preserving soil health, regenerative agriculture aims to leverage the power of plants to keep carbon in the soil (carbon sequestration), increase the capacity of soils to hold water, enhance the resilience of crops, support the livelihoods of farmers, and regain the nutrient density of food while also decreasing reliance on synthetic inputs, contributing to protecting and recovering biodiversity.

To achieve these enablers, financial flows and market mechanism must be unlocked to support the transition towards the soil regenerative practices, notably through the development of carbon markets and the redirection of subsidies towards carbon positive private investments in agriculture. Also, it is suggested that the country reform financial incentives and eliminate subsidies that are “most harmful to biodiversity” to transition toward a new, more sustainable, socially inclusive and biodiversity-friendly economy that places soil regeneration at its core.

The need is evident for existing subsidies to be redirected in order to reach the most impactful players in the value chains, from farmers to local authorities and consumers, in order to incentivize and help finance the transition towards carbon-positive practices and consumer habits. Such subsidies would enable the development of the necessary conditions to create long-term value – for instance, by facilitating the implementation of local capacity-building and training or carbon sequestration activities. The redirection of subsidies would also support the development of innovative financial levers for biodiversity, such as output-based financing mechanisms or blended finance, in order to mobilize carbon-positive private investment and engage the banking and insurance systems.

In addition, regenerative agriculture also needs the involvement of all stakeholders in the supply chains. OP2B, which is being initiated by Danone, suggests that all stakeholders in the supply chains should be encouraged to allow for more genetic variety and diversity in ingredients and local species, seeds, and animal breeds to be

cultivated, traded, and used in foods and associated products. In addition, OP2B companies are committed to playing their part in encouraging consumers and citizens to adopt planetary diets that are more respectful of the world's biodiversity. Finally, OP2B members wish to stress the importance of integrated livelihood management in protecting biodiversity, while guaranteeing the income of local small holders and farmers, respecting the rights of local and indigenous people, encouraging biodiversity-positive private and public investments, supporting local and subnational authorities in landscape planning and supporting citizens and consumers to adopt a planetary diet.

3.3. Promoting public participation in biodiversity conservation to achieve universal governance

The public is an important force for biodiversity conservation. Enhancing relevant public participation and awareness and achieving universal governance will positively impact the cause.

First, strengthen education around nature conservation and integrate biodiversity into the lifelong education process. It is suggested that knowledge on biodiversity, both wild and cultivated, be included in primary, secondary and higher education systems and run through different stages including preschool education, elementary education, higher education, vocational education and adult education.

Second, broadening the cooperation channels of social organizations, companies, schools, communities, and governments in biodiversity conservation, and realizing organic integration between nature conservation projects and education, cultivated biodiversity, and social participation.

The United Nations worked with the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums to launch a UN Decade on Biodiversity communications campaign, titled 'Biodiversity Is Us', which introduces the connection between mankind and biodiversity and the

benefits of biodiversity to help the public understand the significance of biodiversity. The United Nations also launched the 'Green Wave' initiative to educate children and young people about biodiversity and promoted a 'wave' of tree planting and other International Biodiversity Day events, and provided learning materials on biodiversity to support the year's learning activities and events. It is indeed relevant to enable everyone to participate in biodiversity protection and preservation, including by making better informed choices in their everyday purchases, like, privileging products from natural agricultural practices or locally sourced for instance.

In addition, strengthen the disclosure of biodiversity conservation information.

China should regularly share the achievements and states of biodiversity conservation efforts by countries, cities, industries, and companies, and establish annual surveys to regularly understand the needs of stakeholders for biodiversity conservation awareness. It should also regularly publicize relevant information and share progress and experience in various fields through conference exchanges, and promote dialogue and collaboration between the government, companies and various stakeholders.

4. Ending

The sudden COVID-19 outbreak at the beginning of 2020 has given mankind a deeper understanding of nature and life. As Friedrich Engels pointed out in his *Dialectics of Nature*, our lives are impossible to extricate from our natural world, and our harmful interventions have serious consequences. Man is part of the natural ecosystem, while the evolution of life is the result of coordination and adaptation with the environment. The outbreak of each pandemic seems to tell us that this may be the result of ecological imbalances. Mankind needs to be respectful of nature, protect ecology, and respect life.

Biodiversity conservation relates to mankind's future survival and economic and social development. With 2020 being a critical year for the issue, all parties should seize the opportunity to achieve positive results and create favorable conditions for a more sustainable future. China's achievements in building an ecological civilization and biodiversity conservation are very sound but with great challenges ahead. By joining forces to promote biodiversity and catalyze systemic change, China should continue to keep and strengthen efforts in biodiversity conservation, drive and support global, regional and national efforts for ecological protection and green development. Danone also hopes to work together with the Chinese government, companies and other stakeholders to promote biodiversity conservation and build a community of shared future for mankind on the planet.