



Attn: CBD Co Chairs: Basile van Havre [basile.vanhavre@canada.ca](mailto:basile.vanhavre@canada.ca) ; Sabino Francis Ogwal [sabinofrancis@gmail.com](mailto:sabinofrancis@gmail.com); [fogwal@nemaug.org](mailto:fogwal@nemaug.org)  
Cc: Chair of Africa Group of Negotiators Mike Ipanga, DRC [mikeipanga@gmail.com](mailto:mikeipanga@gmail.com)

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**RE: Support of the Africa Group Statement made by the African Region during the session of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021.**

The African Civil Society Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA), a grouping of 80 CSOs across Africa wish to express its strong support for the African Group of Negotiators, as outlined in the statement by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during the session of 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021. We note further that this statement was supported by Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador and Bhutan and reiterated by Uganda in the plenary session on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2021.

**The statement by DRC**

All SBI Conference Room Papers (CRPs) (and reports) relevant to the post-2020 GBF should be bracketed and **further discussion deferred until a face-to-face meeting can take place**. The reason being:

- Online processes do not allow for inclusive and transparent participation necessary to reach consensus on key decisions
- Reduced hours to accommodate time-zone differences and poor access to stable connectivity means not all Parties and observers get a chance to speak
- Parties lose the benefits of informal and spontaneous consultations that happen at face-to-face meetings
- Nothing should be agreed until everything is agreed
- Africa must ensure that all its interests are safeguarded

ACBA draws attention to **Decision 14/34 Comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 GBF**, especially A. **Overarching principles guiding the preparatory process for the post-2020 GBF**, where the first includes the following:

- (a) Participatory .... the process will enable the effective and meaningful participation of all those who desire to engage in the process.

*ACBA is therefore concerned that despite challenges and limitations of virtual participation raised during SBSTTA and SBI, there is a decision to hold OEWG3 virtually. This poses potential risks that all outcomes may lack legitimacy thereby jeopardizing a successful GBF outcome.*

For the above reasons, consistent with the principles of inclusive and equitable participation for all, **ACBA calls for the:**

- *Postponement of the OEWG3 and COP15 until a time when face-to-face meetings will be possible.*
- *Extension of the existing 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity until a consensus on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework is reached.*

If we are to achieve the ambitious goals of the next strategic plan, it is critical that all parties and observers contribute and thus are invested in implementation.