

Global community has failed to meet 2020 conservation targets for the second consecutive decade: UN report

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According to a UN report, the international community as a whole has failed to meet key conservation targets set for 2020, with individual countries, too, failing to successfully meet any within their own borders — for the second consecutive decade. However, the report acknowledged that countries are showing “examples of progress which, if scaled up, could support the transformative changes necessary to achieve the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.”

Published yesterday, and titled Global Biodiversity Outlook-V, the report states that we have failed to meet the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, established under the UN’s Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2010. 170 countries had agreed to use the strategic goals and targets enumerated in it, as a guiding framework for their national commitments towards biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and equitable sharing of benefits. But only six targets, including eradication of invasive species, and preservation of biodiversity on protected areas, have been achieved, albeit partially. But 11% of the targets have seen no significant progress, and about 1% are trending in the wrong direction. Habitat loss and degradation, especially in forests, remain high, and at the same time, pollution is still rampant, threatening species like coral reefs, among others. “...the more humanity exploits nature in unsustainable ways and undermines its contributions to people, the more we undermine our own wellbeing, security and prosperity,” Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, executive secretary of the CBD, said.

However, even though we have failed to completely meet any of the targets, countries have made decent headway. The global rate of deforestation has, reportedly, fallen by a third, when compared to the previous decade, and countries have introduced policies around management of fisheries, and

clamped down on illegal and unreported fishing. “Without such actions, extinctions of birds and mammals in the past decade would likely have been two to four times higher,” the report notes. In fact, a recent study found that 48 bird and mammal extinctions have been prevented on account of concerted conservation efforts.

The report also delves into the progress made by India. Low-external input farming systems, like [zero budget natural farming](#), being scaled up across Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, found a mention in the report. The report also lauded forest management groups in India and Nepal, with larger proportions of women, who have recorded greater improvements in forest health conditions, and more sustained levels of firewood — indicating that including women in resource management, improves governance and conservation outcomes. Further, the report noted that employment generation activities through social security schemes in India, in a positive move, have focused on restoration, rehabilitation, and conservation, of natural resources.

Experts believe that the collective global failure can, in part, be attributed to countries struggling to address conservation, while focusing on their economies and rising populations. “Frankly, we lost some time at the start of the decade as countries developed their own national targets,” David Cooper, deputy executive secretary of the CBD, and co-author of the report, [told Scientific American](#). And by the middle of the decade, countries began making strides, but were already too late to meet the targets. According to António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, Covid19 has demonstrated “the link between our treatment of the living world and the emergence of human diseases.” At present, environmentalists and experts are pinning their hopes on the [Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#), which will be adopted at CBD’s next meeting in Kunming, China, in May 2021.

“We have growth for growth’s sake. What we need is an economy not based on the accumulation of money, but the living logic of well-being,” Katharine Farrell, an ecological economist at Rosario University in Colombia, who also co-authored the report, said. “Action is needed now... These next 10 years, just as they are vital for climate change, are also vital for the biodiversity agenda if we’re going to prevent the [sixth mass extinction](#),” Cooper noted.

Source: <https://theswaddle.com/global-community-has-failed-to-meet-2020-conservation-targets-for-the-second-consecutive-decade-un-report/>