



A participant learns about China's experience in protecting biological diversity at the 2022 UN biodiversity conference, known as COP15. The meeting of nearly 200 countries was held in Montreal, Canada, and ended on December 19.  
— Ti Gong

# Global efforts called on to protect world's biodiversity

Wang Yong

With a new historic global deal on biodiversity protection, people around the world are moving closer toward the much-anticipated goal of “living in harmony with nature.”

In Montreal, Canada, nearly 200 countries signed the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework on December 19, to anchor a commitment to protect 30 percent of the world's land and water for biodiversity by 2030, known as “30 by 30.”

It marked an enhanced global effort to halt human damage to nature.

The deal was clinched at the second phase of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Montreal from December 7-19.

The first phase was held in Kunming, China, last year. China held the presidency in both phases.

In a report released last Monday, the Associated Press called the agreement “a historic deal” representing “the most significant effort to protect the world's lands and oceans and provide critical financing to save biodiversity in the

developing world.”

Negotiations had been tough sometimes before the birth of the final framework in Montreal, as it required both idealism and pragmatism to balance the interests and concerns of all parties, especially those between developed and developing nations. The eventual adoption of the framework attests to the world's concerted effort to protect Mother Nature.

As the presidency of the COP15 meeting, China has contributed significantly to this effort.

AP pointed out that China, which held the presidency at the conference in Montreal, “released a new draft on Sunday (December 18) that gave the sometimes contentious talks much-needed momentum.”

At the beginning of its report, AP quoted Huang Runqiu as saying: “We have in our hands a package which I think can guide us as we all work together to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and put biodiversity on the path to recovery for the benefit of all people in the world.”

Huang is China's minister of ecology and environment. AP said Huang made the remarks “before the package was

adopted to rapturous applause just before dawn.”

“Many of us wanted more things in the text and more ambition, but we got an ambitious package,” Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change Steven Guilbeault was quoted by AP as saying.

“We have 30 by 30 ... We have an agreement to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, to work on restoration, to reduce the use of pesticides. This is tremendous progress.”

The African Wildlife Foundation said in its latest statement that it welcomes the historic framework, which has been dubbed the “peace pact with nature.”

## Peace with nature

Indeed, peace with nature brings about peace from nature. It's high time we stop treading the path of growth at the expense of our ecosystems, a path that has been taken for granted in many areas since around the Industrial Revolution.

Inger Andersen, under secretary-general of the United Nations and executive director of the UN Environment Programme, said in a speech on global

biodiversity last year that it needs to be ensured “that we live in a world where we ARE at peace with nature.”

She called for attention to “the triple planetary crises” of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, which are largely caused by people. She said the world needs a framework that brings nature's solutions to restore a degraded planet.

Now we have the framework. The rest is action.

Last year, China pledged US\$230 million in a special fund, called the Kunming Biodiversity Fund, to support biodiversity conservation in developing countries. About the same time, China announced the establishment of several national parks to cover 230,000 square kilometers of land across China. The parks will protect nearly 30 percent of the country's major terrestrial wildlife species, including pandas, tigers and leopards.

Going forward, there will always be challenges, but we are ready to meet them head-on. In creating a better world for all, China has a lot to learn from many other countries. Hand in hand, let's rediscover a “lost horizon” — a horizon where man and nature are one.