The Power of Participative Preparation

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Investigating the Effect on International Organizations' Policy Ambition and Comprehensiveness in Biodiversity Governance

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Abstract

The international community has so far failed to halt the loss of biodiversity including falling short of all Aichi targets the UN had set for 2020. Drawing the lessons from the previous defeat, the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decided to change to a party-led, participatory approach for preparing the new Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). This thesis investigates what impact such a party-led process has on the policy ambition and comprehensiveness in biodiversity governance. Drawing on the literature on technocratic versus participatory governance, it is hypothesized that party-led preparations like the GBF produce less ambitious yet more comprehensive outcomes than expert-led developments such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Ambition hereby captures depth and strictness while comprehensiveness refers to broadness, scope, and the inclusion of different stakeholders. The processes and outcomes of the two strategies' development are compared by combining document analysis and expert interviews in a qualitative multi-method design. The results show that while the GBF is indeed more comprehensive, it is only slightly less ambitious. This implies that participative processes might be more powerful than theoretically expected. The research thereby contributes to the understanding of how to design strategy preparation in order to most effectively tackle global issues in the environmental realm and beyond.

Keywords: biodiversity governance, EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, party-led preparation, technocracy, UN Global Biodiversity Framework

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1. Introduction

The international community has so far failed in halting the loss of biodiversity. Having achieved none of the UN Aichi targets[1] for 2020 fully (Secretariat of the CBD 2020), the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD) decided to go a new, more participatory way. Instead of the previously deployed top-down design led by the CBD Secretariat, the *Post-2020 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* (GBF) adopted in December 2022 was developed in a party-led preparatory process. This opened the possibility for both more tedious discussions and early-stage compromises, on one hand, and enhanced inclusiveness and accountability, on the other. Therefore, it raises the question of which direction this preparation leads policymaking. States could either get stuck in discussions and produce a watered-down, unambitious policy. Or they might manage to maintain the ambition level while creating a more inclusive and comprehensive strategy. This thesis consequently addresses the following question: *What impact has a party-led preparation on the policy ambition and comprehensiveness in the case of biodiversity strategies?* It aims to understand the differences between party-led and expert-led preparation processes, their benefits and shortcomings, and the effect on the outcome documents. Ultimately, it aims to show the power of participatory policy preparation processes.

The issue holds both practical as well as theoretical relevance. In practice, the biodiversity crisis is overlooked by many policymakers. Whereas the abundance of empirical proof is similar to that of climate change,[2] neither politics, the public, nor

[1] The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are part of the UN Strategic Plan to mitigate the global loss of biodiversity for the period of 2010 to 2020.
[2] The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the analogue scientific body regarding biodiversity to what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

scientists have dedicated comparative attention to the loss of biodiversity. However, it represents a crucial, transboundary challenge that cannot be tackled solely by nation-states, but rather needs collaboration by the international community. Species and genetic material constantly travel and do not stay within national borders. The key drivers of biodiversity loss such as habitat fragmentation, invasive species, and pollution are of a transboundary nature and require global action (Almond, Grooten, and Peterson 2020). Consequently, initiatives by one country may not be sufficient to safeguard biological diversity within their borders as efforts can be counteracted by adverse impacts of other states. Therefore, the issue can only be addressed efficiently on the regional or international level, which emphasizes the relevance of regional or international organizations as the main actors for intergovernmental coordination. Having research findings at hand when ambitious and comprehensive policies are produced could enable them to better understand and design the policy-making processes.

The question on the impact of participative policy preparation is also theoretically relevant as it speaks to the broader debate on technocratic, top-down versus participatory, bottom-up governance. While most research in this domain is directed to the nation-state level and designed toward a national government (Brint 1990; McDonnell and Valbruzzi 2014; Pastorella 2016), some scholars have analyzed the technocratic governance of the European Commission (Metz 2015; Radaelli 2017; Wonka 2007). However, given the risen salience of decisions on the European level, the Commission has been under pressure in many policy areas to shift to responsive decision-making (Bazzan and Migliorati 2020) which is not yet the case for biodiversity.

(IPCC) is for climate, produces regular assessment reports on the state and knowledge of biodiversity which continue to highlight the accelerating decline of species. For the most recent global assessment see IPBES (2019).

Regarding the UN level, hardly any articles can be found on technocracy and only a very limited number shed light on the particular aspect of the role of co-chairs (Blavoukos and Bourantonis 2005; Pitakdumrongkit 2015). An inter-organizational analysis regarding the question of technocratic versus participative governance is yet missing. Hence, this thesis widens the literature by adding to the intergovernmental perspective on technocratic versus participatory policy development. Findings about the effect of party-led strategy preparation hold valuable insights beyond the case of the CBD COP and are also interesting for other international organizations and topic areas.

The effect of party-led strategy-making on policy ambition and comprehensiveness is addressed by drawing on literature and theory on technocratic and participatory governance (Centeno 1993; Larson 1972). While technocracy ought to be more science-based and depoliticized, participatory decision-making is commonly associated more with representativity and democracy (Centeno 1993, 309–10). Therefore, policy formulation which allows for more participation typically faces higher contestation. Once a policy is, however, concluded, the participatory inclusion of more perspectives provides the opportunity for greater ownership and responsibility taken in the implementation phase. It is consequently hypothesized that party-led processes such as the GBF produces less ambitious [H1] yet more comprehensive targets [H2] compared to expert-led ones like the *EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030* (EU BDS) which was developed by the European Commission. Conceptually, ambition is understood as the depth and strictness of specific aspects of a policy while comprehensiveness refers to the policy's scope and the diversity of topics and stakeholders covered.

The theoretical propositions are tested with a multi-method qualitative research design using both document analysis and expert interviews. These are deployed to compare the party-led preparation and outcome of the GBF to the expert-led processes and policies of the EU BDS. These two strategies are suited for comparison as they are the only plans of international organizations in this domain for the current decade. They furthermore display variance on the independent variable, while the outcome documents are comparable in terms of structure and content, thereby providing the necessary preconditions for assessing the dependent variables of ambition and comprehensiveness. Based on the organizations' drafts and final strategies as well as interviews with experts involved in the development of the two strategies, the analysis traces how targets were developed and evolved throughout the preparatory phase in each case and which final targets were concluded. Combining these two methods is useful in this case as the document analysis reveals the development of the wording throughout the preparations while the interviews with policymakers, scientists, and thematic experts from NGOs provide context about these processes and interpretation of the words. The level of ambition is assessed by a deeper dive into the provisions regarding ecosystem protection and restoration with a focus on the quantitative thresholds whereas comprehensiveness is scrutinized based on the range of stakeholder groups and issues covered by all targets.

The analysis of this thesis reveals that the GBF is, in fact, more comprehensive, but only slightly less ambitious than the EU BDS. Both strategies have the so-called 30x30 protection target and show ambition in different domains for restoration. While the EU is more ambitious with strict protection, the numerical thresholds are more demanding to reach from the status quo of the UN. Therefore, the strategies' ambition levels are complementary rather than showing a strong lead of the EU BDS. Regarding

comprehensiveness, the GBF holds the clear advantage of covering more diverse aspects of biodiversity conservation and providing for the inclusion of different stakeholder groups. The analysis shows evidence that the preparatory processes had at least a partial impact on these outcomes. In consequence, the assessed cases point towards the benefits of a participatory preparation process as it brings comprehensiveness without necessarily the feared downside of lowering ambition.

In consequence, this thesis is structured as follows: The next section provides a two-fold literature review scrutinizing first the sparse research on biodiversity governance and then exploring theoretical contributions on technocratic, expert-led in contrast to participatory, party-driven policymaking. Building on this theory review, it is deduced that the ambition level should be lower and comprehensiveness higher in a policy prepared in a party-led than in an expert-led process. The ensuing section explains the rationale of the case selection, the reasons for choosing a multi-method qualitative research design as well as its concrete configuration. The empirical analysis follows outlining the development and content of the GBF and EU BDS separately by case and consequently bringing them together in a comparative discussion of their ambition and comprehensiveness. The thesis concludes by highlighting the implications of the findings and giving an outlook for future research to investigate, among others, the role of co-chairs and hosting countries as well as the impact of policy packaging on the strategies.

2. Literature Review and Theory

This section proceeds by first reviewing the literature on biodiversity governance both by international relations and environmental science scholars pointing out the gap in research regarding institutional factors of policymaking in this field. Afterward, topic-agnostic studies on the impact of technocratic in contrast to participatory governance are assessed. Based on the second review, theoretical propositions are deduced that international policies prepared by parties should be less ambitious yet more comprehensive than those prepared by technocrats.

2.1 Biodiversity Governance

Biodiversity governance represents an understudied issue by international relations scholars. While international agreements and conferences regarding climate change have by now gained the attention of the discipline, this is not the case for biodiversity loss and conservation. Even concerning aspects of biodiversity governance such as multilateral agreements, the influence of NGOs, and interactions between different levels of governance, attention by the field of international relations is mostly absent while environmental scientists dominate the publications (for a meta-analysis of the literature see Petersson and Stoett 2022). Most of their research on biodiversity agreements, however, focuses on the content level and implementation including the identification of thematic shortcomings to provide recommendations for future policies.

Such studies commonly consider one specific biodiversity agreement. In the past few years, many researchers have dedicated their attention to giving guidance on how to best design the UN Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (see e.g., Leadley et al. 2022; Xu et al. 2021). Díaz et al. (2020), for example, call for an ambitious

UN strategy on biodiversity by (1) including multiple goals to capture the topic's complexity, (2) addressing the topic holistically by understanding the interlinkages between goals, and (3) setting the highest level of ambition and ensuring proper implementation. Also, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (EU BDS; e.g., Hermoso et al. 2022; Miu et al. 2020) and its predecessor, the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (Gamero et al. 2017; Maes et al. 2014; 2016), have been analyzed mostly regarding their monitoring, progress or shortcomings.

In contrast to the analysis of individual strategies, comparative studies are sparse. The existing ones focus predominantly on national or local initiatives. Most common are comparisons between two, predominantly European countries regarding various institutional features and subtopics of biodiversity. Such articles, for example, investigate the role of local NGOs (Slavíková et al. 2017), the management of hay meadows (Dahlström, Iuga, and Lennartsson 2013), and the effectiveness of forest certification schemes (Gulbrandsen 2005). In these studies, implementation seems to be at the center. Institutional factors of biodiversity governance regarding the development and adoption of policies are less studied.

Exceptions to individual case studies and national comparisons consist of the more internationally-focused contributions by Atisa (2020) and Bezerra et al. (2018). In a study on the implementation of global biodiversity policies regarding sustainable forest management, Atisa (2020) investigates whether countries with stakeholder participation platforms more often develop respective legislation and conserve more forest land. The article thereby contributes to the interaction between top-down international policies and bottom-up approaches but at the implementation stage of international agreements rather than their development. Bezerra et al. (2018) assess

the institutional design of the three regional forest regimes, the Amazonian Cooperation Treaty Organisation, the Central African Regime and its Central African Forest Commission, and Forest Europe which are, however, not only intergovernmental. The authors carry out a detailed analysis of the membership, scope, control, centralization, and flexibility of the regimes based on the framework of Koremenos et al. (2001), but stay at a descriptive level without concluding on the effects of the institutional differences. While these two studies display a comparative perspective on biodiversity governance including the international or regional level respectively, they do not focus on the development phase of international biodiversity policies leaving this domain unstudied.

When it comes more precisely to the question of technocracy and participation in biodiversity governance, literature on science-based policymaking in the field is of relevance. This area has gained increased scholarly attention as an insufficient scientific basis was seen as a major factor for the ineffectiveness of biodiversity policies and was especially criticized in the early 2000s (Loreau et al. 2006). Since then, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has been established representing a main player in carrying out scientific assessments of the state of biodiversity and providing policy recommendations based on the empirical findings. IPBES is, however, found to mainly draw on Westernized Know-how and experts failing to incorporate indigenous and local knowledge (Dunkley et al. 2018; Timpte et al. 2018). For the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) represents the primary source for institutional inclusion of science. This body has, however, been subject to growing politicization in the past years (Koetz et al. 2008).

Therefore, scientific input and its effect on policymaking cannot be seen as uncontested or objective but also needs thorough investigation.

While studies have looked at external and internal science bodies in biodiversity governance, less attention is dedicated to the relevance of general technocrats such as in the EU Commission and the CBD Secretariat. The article by Jinnah (2011) is among the few researching the role of the CBD Secretariat regarding its influence on the linkage between climate and biodiversity governance. She finds entrepreneurial efforts in reframing biodiversity conservation as a development issue in the Secretariat-produced information and briefings. While this contribution holds valuable insights into the workings and actorness of the CBD Secretariat, it cannot speak to the question of how policies prepared by the Secretariat differ from the ones drafted by parties.

Whereas the above-mentioned research projects speak more towards the technocratic perspective, participation in biodiversity is predominantly associated with the inclusion of local stakeholders, grassroots movements, and indigenous communities. Some studies exist that investigate the involvement of different stakeholders in biodiversity science and policy-making (Atisa 2020; Jolibert and Wesselink 2012). Pure top-down governance is by now heavily criticized, but actions do not yet follow rhetoric so local stakeholders and non-stereotypical knowledge systems remain underrepresented (Rauschmayer, van den Hove, and Koetz 2009). When it comes to participation, the dichotomy between the nation-state and the local level appears as the apparent point for analysis. Participatory involvement of states on the international stage within organizations continues to be a black box.

All in all, the prime object of studies on biodiversity governance is the national and sub-national level, while investigations on actions of international organizations

are few and mostly limited to singular agreements. Research on the comparative assessment of international policymaking is lacking in the domain of biodiversity. No study has so far scrutinized either the content or the development of international organizations' biodiversity strategies in a comparative way – let alone analyzed the impact of different preparation procedures on their outcome.

2.2 Technocratic and Participative Governance

Having identified a gap in the research on biodiversity governance regarding comparative approaches to the preparation of biodiversity strategies, it is valuable to scrutinize the general literature dealing with a specific way of how policies are developed. Until today, no study exists in any policy area that systematically analyzes the impact of the preparation procedure on the ambition and comprehensiveness levels of international or multilateral agreements. In this absence, the closest contributions to the question of party-led versus expert- or Bureau-led policymaking seem to be about technocratic versus participatory rule. This dichotomy contrasts technocratic governance by non-elected high-skilled bureaucrats with democratically elected, partisan representatives (cf. Centeno 1993). It appears as a suitable approximation for the top-down EU preparation by the Commission, on one hand, and the bottom-up UN preparation by the parties with a guiding role of two elected co-chairs from the parties, on the other. While participative governance and democracy are broad terms with many different associated scientific approaches, the literature on technocracy is drawn upon and participatory governance is mostly approximated by distinction.

Most research on technocracy versus democracy is carried out at the nation-state level. Predominant are theoretical contributions toward the conceptualization

(e.g., Centeno 1993; Larson 1972) as well as studies of public perception (e.g., Aasen and Stensaker 2007; Bertsou and Pastorella 2017; Merler 2021). Therefore, the concept of a national government is normally at the center of attention (Brint 1990; Pastorella 2016). McDonnell and Valbruzzi (2014) offer a characterization of the archetypical technocratic government as a (majoritarian) non-partisan, expert cabinet with sufficient sovereignty and power to change the status quo. Building on the ideal type of the 'full technocratic government', the authors distinguish three other forms of technocratic regimes: nonpartisan caretaker, partisan caretaker, and technocrat-led partisan government. With this typology, they contribute to and provide openings for the extension of the sparse comparative research on the technocratic rule, which is often used as a blank term for many different forms of governance. It holds potential for application also at the international, non-governmental level but does not speak to the outcome dimension.

Technocratic and democratic rule are often perceived as opposites and mutually exclusive. Thus, many scholars have dedicated their research to testing this claim (Schudson 2006; Shapiro 2005; Williams 2006). Among them is Pastorella (2016), who compares technocratic and party governments based on the key dimensions of democracy. Contrary to common belief, she finds that technocratic governments in Europe are not less democratic than party governments. This is, however, attributed to the worsening of democratic standards among partisan governments, which perform now equally poorly regarding delegation and accountability. Citizens' evaluation of technocratic rule is also not uniformly better or worse than representative democracy but depends on the context. Not surprisingly, the public supports technocratic governments when democratic institutions and political representatives are perceived as weak and distrustful (Bertsou and Pastorella 2017). Such research might help to

understand why different organizations, depending on their context, decide to adopt technocrat-led policymaking processes or not. It does, however, not speak to the question of what results these approaches achieve on the outcome level.

While technocracy is heavily debated in the light of legitimacy and democracy from a theoretical point of view, its results and outcome efficiency are surprisingly understudied. Most advances regarding this subject are single case studies investigating the effectiveness of technocratic governments or other political institutions in countries such as Indonesia (Shiraishi 2006), Nigeria (Bangura 1994), and Rwanda (Chemouni 2019). These studies look at very context-specific factors in the states and provide few generalizable results. While technocratic governance is assumed to be linked to decreased input but increased output effectiveness (Schmidt 2013), there are only a few scholars critically assessing this claim. Looking at citizens' attitudes in the case of the Monti government in Italy, Merler (2021) finds indeed that this expert cabinet is perceived as more output effective, even without worsened opinion on input effectiveness. Yet, this article only speaks to output perception and not to how effectively the technocrat-led government actually tackled the eurozone crisis policy-wise compared to democratically elected governments. Systematic approaches to the outcome of technocratic compared to participatory ways of policymaking are still missing – both in terms of ambition and comprehensiveness.

While technocracy studies are fewer on the international level, their prime object is the European Union, particularly the European Commission (Metz 2015; Radaelli 2017; Wonka 2007). This can be explained as European Integration started as an elite-led process and citizens' involvement has only slowly progressed. Despite efforts such as the introduction of the public elections of the European Parliament and the

European Citizens' Initiative, the EU remains to be seen as dominated by Brussels bureaucrats who are detached from the realities of Europe's people on the ground. Wallace and Smith (1995, 154) are pessimistic that technocratic policymaking can create sufficient public legitimacy for an enlarged and further enlarging Union.

As a body composed of supranational, highly skilled Bureaucrats with the mandate to act in the "general interest of the Union" (Treaty on European Union Art. 17(1)), the Commission has been at the forefront of technocratic analysis in recent years. Radaelli (1999) has identified the puzzling tension that while the inclusion of science and a knowledge-based problem-solving approach is desired, the public negatively perceives the technocratic nature of the Commission and the EU as a whole. He sees the politicization of expert knowledge as a promising way for greater accountability. Decisions at the EU level have certainly faced increasing salience in the past years. Given the risen politicization, the Commission has been under pressure in many policy areas to move towards responsive decision-making (Bazzan and Migliorati 2020). Despite slowly augmenting awareness of the loss of biodiversity, politicization of the issue in the EU still seems low.

Regarding the UN level, hardly any articles can be found on technocracy. A field where some contributions consider technocratic governance is global peacekeeping (e.g., Bueger 2010; Coelho 2008). The concept has been criticized for bringing a degree of coercion for conformity to host nations of peacekeeping operations and calls for local participation instead of top-down instructions are prominent (Mac Ginty 2012). Such articles deal with the outside consequences of technocratic reasoning on the ground but do not look into policymaking within the UN. Inside the UN system,

technocracy is not used for the analysis of how international agreements are developed.

Not precisely referring to technocracy but still useful are the contributions on the role of expert bodies, secretariats, and co-chairs within the UN as they are also mostly composed of non-elected bureaucrats selected through a competitive skill assessment. As described in the previous sub-section, the CBD Secretariat can exercise influence for example through framing (Jinnah 2011). On a more general level, studies have investigated the UN Secretariat, its staff, and national influences on it (Meron 1976; Novosad and Werker 2019). Particularly interesting are the articles on the role of co-chairs. Blavoukos and Bourantonis (2005), for example, find that chairs can influence negotiation outcomes by setting the agenda and acting as brokers, whereas the extent is dependent on contextual factors. Pitakdumrongkit (2015) argues that effectiveness is related to resource management rather than possession. While such contributions look into policy development and decision-making within the UN, an inter-organizational analysis regarding the question of technocratic versus participative governance is still missing.

Moving from contributions on technocracy to democracy, participative governance at the level of international organizations seems to exclusively refer to the inclusion of local voices. Such studies look at stakeholder or citizens' platforms and how they manage to represent perspectives apart from those formally included in the governance system (Hilbert, Miles, and Othmer 2009; Rabadjieva and Terstriep 2020). Democratic governance provides more relevant research regarding the issue of organizations' democratic deficits. While the term 'democratic deficit' was coined by Marquand (1979) concerning the European Union, it has been applied to many other

international organizations thereafter pointing out the absence of sufficient democratic mechanisms (Grigorescu 2013). Yet, the concept highlights predominantly the vague link between the organizations' actions and citizens rather than the relationship between secretariats and member states. Whether and how states are participatorily involved in policy preparation is not yet studied.

In sum, the literature on governance by technocrats versus democratic representatives shows parallels to the expert-led strategy preparation in the EU and the party-led process in the UN, thereby offering valuable, transferable takeaways. So far, most of the respective research has focused on the national government level with some scholars investigating the technocratic nature of the European Commission. These studies have, however, mostly centered around concerns of legitimacy and public perception. Evidence on the effectiveness and outcomes of technocratic compared to more participatory leadership is lacking. It seems, thus, worthwhile to build on existing conceptualizations of technocratic and democratic governance in order to expand them into the international sphere and develop expectations for their outcome in international strategy-making.

2.3 Theoretical Propositions

There is no uniformly agreed definition of technocracy and technocrats as the terms are deployed for a variety of different situations. Centeno (1993) offers an approach to the concept of technocrats based on a background of elite education, the coming to power through appointment, and the comprehension of politics' purpose as problem-solving. Technocratic experts, consequently, combine specialized knowledge with high decision-making power. This coincides with the key characteristics identified by other scholars. McDonnell and Valbruzzi's (2014) conceptualization of a technocratic

government similarly emphasizes the autonomy for introducing policies and making decisions that change the status quo. In Larson's (1972, 5) words: "the experts' role becomes technocratic only when it is inserted at high levels of responsibility in a public or private apparatus of power." Technocratic policymakers operate in their area of expertise but have the possibility to impact outside or non-technical decisions (Centeno 1993, 310). While expertise and capabilities are especially important for technocrats, technocracy is not value-free but can be described as an "ideology of method" (312). Coincidingly, Shapiro (2005) sees them as a group with special interests of their own which distinguish them from the electorate and hinder representativity.

Typically contrasted with technocracy is the ideal-type representative democracy which allows for participation through the democratic election of (partisan) politicians. As this research aims to apply these concepts to the international level, the partisan aspect is disregarded in light of the lack of international parties.[3] Here, the key feature is their role as speakers for their constituency by whose citizens they are elected (e.g., Centeno 1993). For these politicians, specialized knowledge is not necessary but the similarity with the represented primarily in ideas but also in background is desirable (cf. Narud and Valen 2000; Urbinati 2011, 22–23). The intended purpose of politics is the representation of the needs and interests of their constituency and through this the inclusion of different perspectives. Thereby, decisions shall be based on a broad consensus throughout society.

Based on the definition of technocracy and participative governance, the features of the two systems can be contrasted. While technocracy ought to be more

[3] While the European Parliament is composed of political groups, so far, they do not represent specialized European parties that campaign in all EU Member States but are mainly an amalgamation of domestic parties with similar ideological orientation. Volt represents the only transnational party that gained a seat in the 2019 EP election.

science-based, participatory policymaking is commonly associated with more representativity and democracy (Centeno 1993, 309–10). Technocratic governance is output-focused as this is where technocratic leaders commonly attain their legitimacy, whereas participatory governance is concerned with the inputs into the political system ensuring broad inclusivity. Technocracy is by definition understood as a depoliticization of politics (cf. Sánchez-Cuenca 2017, 362). As more actors are involved and deliberation is encouraged, policy formulation which allows for more participation is contrarily more politized and contested. Higher politicization connected to the consideration of numerous perspectives is argued to demand more compromises and concessions. Hence only lower ambition is possible in order to still attain broad support. Technocrats are, by contrast, hypothesized to share similar beliefs and knowledge due to their shared background and require fewer admissions when developing policies.

Based on the discussed literature, this thesis contends that these effects of technocratic or participative governance not only hold for the adoption of policies but also their preparation. Even if the preparatory phase is followed by a democratic, non-technocratic negotiation and adoption of a policy or agreement, participatory preparation is argued to produce a less ambitious negotiation basis than represented by a technocrat-composed draft. I propose that the negotiation basis has an impact on the outcome. Therefore, a less ambitious draft prepared in a participatory process is hypothesized to lead to a less ambitious final policy after party negotiations. This thesis, consequently, hypothesizes that preparations of international policies that are led participatorily by Member States produce less ambitious policies than the more technocratic preparation by international bureaucrats.

***Hypothesis 1 [H1]**: Party-led preparations in international organizations produce less ambitious policies than technocrat-led ones.*

As described above, participatory policymaking is associated with the deliberation and inclusion of different perspectives. When a variety of actors with differing interests is involved in the preparation and adoption of policies, I argue for the outcomes to be more comprehensive. In contrast to technocrats with shared expertise and a more coinciding problem perception, representatives of multiple constituencies or countries respectively may hold more divergent understandings of where the problem lies, and which aspects need to be taken into account in a policy area. If such different facets are already voiced in the preparatory phase and find their way into the negotiation draft, their later removal will be difficult as it would require concessions in other domains. Adding further aspects to a draft in a negotiation phase will, by contrast, be significantly more challenging because it provokes a late change in scope. Hence this thesis puts forward the argument that participatory preparations of international policies create more wide-reaching or comprehensive policies than drafting by technocrats.

***Hypothesis 2 [H2]**: Party-led preparations in international organizations produce more comprehensive policies than technocrat-led ones.*

Looking precisely at the biodiversity strategies of international organizations, the European Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (EU BDS) was composed by the European Commission as an unelected, expert body, which is why the development process displays more technocratic features. The UN Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was, by contrast, developed through a party-led process coordinated by two co-chairs who came from the parties and were elected by them. Thus, the GBF represents the more participative path of policy development. Applied to the case at hand, it is, therefore, expected that the party-led preparation of the GBF resulted in a less ambitious but more comprehensive policy compared to the EU BDS.

3. Data and Methods

Biodiversity and conservation are still overlooked issues by policymakers. While some intergovernmental organizations have by now declared to tackle the issue, only a few of them have developed strategies and even fewer of those have set concrete goals and targets. According to the UN, of the 34 regional intergovernmental organizations that address biodiversity, ten have adopted regional strategies (Convention on Biological Diversity 2019). Most of these were written in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Besides the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity which adopted the UN Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in 2022, the only organization with a strategic plan for the current decade is the EU with its Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (EU BDS).

The UN and EU strategies are suitable for comparison as they display variation in the independent variable but have comparable outcomes in terms of the policy documents. While the UN chose to adopt a party-led preparatory process for the GBF, the EU BDS was created top-down by the European Commission. Despite their distinction in the preparation process, the structures of their strategies are similarly composed of overarching goals or themes and more specific quantitative and qualitative targets, which also overlap thematically. This facilitates the evaluation of policy ambition and comprehensiveness as the dependent variables. Analyzing these two policies is also of great policy relevance as other organizations might follow the GBF's call (2022, 2) for regional action and synergies by producing new or updated strategies on their own. In such processes, the already existing plans of the UN and EU are likely to serve as orientation.

While the two strategies are in general well suited for comparison, their different modes of adoption create the challenge of distilling the effect of the preparation procedure on the outcome. The drafting of the GBF and its surrounding documents was followed by COP15 in Montreal where the ministers of the parties came together in the second week to negotiate the package of remaining unresolved and highly contested issues. Thereby, the states are involved in the final discussion phase anyway independent of a party- or expert-led prior preparation. This is not the case for the EU BDS, as the document was adopted by the Commission without needing party support. The EU Member States only formulated an opinion on the final strategy afterward through council conclusions. As the reaction of the Council and the ensuing passing of connected EU legislation exceed the strategy development and form part of the implementation phase, they are not in the scope of this thesis, just as in the case of the GBF. The challenge is furthermore addressed by using information on the adoption only as context information while focusing on the preparatory phase and the outcome as well as by drawing on interviewees' insights and evaluation of the effect of the preparation.

To answer the research question of the impact of a party-led process on the policy ambition and comprehensiveness of biodiversity strategies, a multi-method qualitative research design is deployed using document analysis and elite interviews. Combining these two methods is useful in this case as the document analysis allows to trace the development in ambition and comprehensiveness throughout the preparatory process, while the interviews provide context about these processes and interpretation of the words. This is necessary as firstly, the documents themselves do not inform about the considerations and debates behind their (non-)inclusion, and secondly, precise wording is key in such policymaking processes. Only the participants

involved in the preparation can inform about the little words that have a central impact on the target's meaning and therefore require attention in the analysis.[4] Moreover, the interviews can contribute valuable evaluations on the extent to which the preparation mattered for the policy outcomes.

The documents as well as interview transcripts are analyzed comparatively regarding their ambition and comprehensiveness levels of the final strategies and to what extent these are caused by the varying preparatory processes (party-led vs. expert-led). Ambition is, in line with Slapin and Gray (2014, 732), understood in terms of the goal an organization aims to achieve through its policy or agreement. It centers around the depth and strictness demanded by specific policy provisions. Ambition is measured based on both quantitative numerical aspects and additional qualitative considerations of the strategies' targets. Comprehensiveness, like ambition, refers to the outcome dimension and not the characteristic of the preparation process. It concerns the scope and broadness of the entirety of the targets and is understood as the degree to which diverse aspects and target groups are covered by the strategies. The ensuing analysis only offers a relative evaluation of these two outcome dimensions based on the comparison of the two strategies. It does neither provide any statement about their absolute level of ambition and comprehensiveness nor evaluate whether their content is enough to halt or reverse the global loss of biodiversity.

The focus of the analysis lies on the strategies' targets while their introductions and further content other than the targets do not form key objects for assessment. As

[4] An example is the "and" included in Target 3 of the GBF: "Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas […] are effectively conserved and managed […]" (Conference of the Parties on the Convention of Biological Diversity 2022, 9, emphasis added) where one interviewee highlighted that it had been an issue of constant discussion to be kept in and not replaced with "or".

both strategies are not binding, their target sections are the central parts of the documents holding actual practice implications. The strategies' progress will be tracked against the targets, whereas actions on other aspects mentioned at a different stage in the strategies will most likely be overlooked and thus negligible. Regarding the targets, both their text as assessed in the document analysis, and their interpretation by involved actors, which is deduced from the expert interviews, are used to determine ambition and comprehensiveness. The focus for analyzing ambition lies on the targets of protection and restoration of areas that correspond to Targets 2 and 3 in the GBF and Targets 1,2, and 4 in the EU BDS. This refinement is made as these targets are best comparable and represent the key commitments of the strategies that also were at the center of media coverage on the GBF while the consideration of all targets would exceed the resources of this project. The analysis of comprehensiveness levels is not narrowed to any specific targets but rather considers the topics and stakeholder groups covered by the entirety of the targets.

As documents for the GBF, reports of the meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework (OEWG2020) are available for each of their five meetings. As the report of the first OEWG2020 session only focuses on the discussions regarding the general structure of the GBF and does not contain a draft of the targets, this report is not considered. Therefore, the reports of the second to the fifth working group meetings are included in the analysis (OEWG2020 2020; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c). Additionally, the report of the Informal Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (2022), which condensed the draft of the fourth session, is assessed as well as the final, officially passed text of the GBF (Conference of the Parties on the Convention of Biological Diversity 2022). For the EU BDS, only the roadmap of this initiative (European Commission 2019) is accessible apart from the

final EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (European Commission 2020). Additionally, the Commission's staff working document "Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations" is taken into account where deemed useful for context (European Commission 2022a). It can be considered as part of the EU strategy to the extent as it represents follow-up clarifications by the Commission and not a politically discussed legislation. All these documents are used to trace the evolution of the precise text of the targets throughout the preparatory phase.

As a second component of the research design, experts involved in the processes of drafting, adopting, and commenting on the EU and UN biodiversity strategies were interviewed. Potential interviewees were identified based on their specific role or the institution they are part of or were referred to by previous interviewees. Nine interviews were conducted from February to May 2023. The number was determined predominantly by feasibility concerns. The participants (six female and three male) came from policymaking, the scientific community, and an environmental organization. An overview of their roles can be found in Table 1. The high number of EU representatives is an asset of the sample as this allowed profound information about the procedures of both strategies which would have otherwise not been possible, especially for the EU BDS. Interviews centered around either mainly the GBF (n=4), the EU BDS (n=3), or both (n=2). Six of the participants were familiar with the global, and five with the European biodiversity strategy and could answer respective questions.[5]

[5] To guarantee the protection the interviewees' identities, a more detailed description of their work and roles cannot be provided.

Table 1: Interview participants' roles

Role	Number
European level representative	5
National level representative	1
Scientist	2
Environmental NGO expert	1

The interviewees either participated in an in-person or online, guideline-based interview or provided written answers to a set of questions. For oral interviews which lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, a transcript was produced and sent to the interviewee for authorization. All interviewees received and signed a consent form briefing them about the research topic and process. They were informed that their participation in the research is voluntary, their consent could be withdrawn for a certain period after the interview, and their personal data was anonymized so their identity cannot be determined based on this thesis. For enhanced transparency, the guiding questions were sent to the participants before the oral interview. The questionnaire was tailored to the experiences of the respondents and thus differed between interviews. Questions were formulated openly where possible to prevent leading interviewees to a certain answer. Participants were asked, based on their role and expertise with the strategies, about the preparation processes, the evolution of the strategies throughout the development phase, how ambitious they perceived the strategies to be and why, and what impact the preparation had on the final strategy texts according to their impression.

4. Analysis

This section provides an analysis of the two cases, the UN Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. The development and content of the two strategies will first be explored separately. It is followed by a comparative discussion regarding their ambition and comprehensiveness levels.

4.1 Case 1: UN Global Biodiversity Framework

The UN Strategic Plan for 2020 (2010) including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets were prepared solely by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity before its negotiation and adoption at the tenth Conference of the Parties (COP) in Nagoya. In contrast, at COP14 in Sharm El Sheik in 2018 the parties decided to shift to a "comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation" of the UN Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF; COP CBD 2018). This decision encompassed the establishment of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework (OEWG2020) as well as the election of two co-chairs of the working group from the parties, Basile van Havre from Canada and Francis Ogwal from Uganda. Besides the preparation of the GBF, OEWG2020 was tasked with preparing connected documents including the headline indicators as part of the Monitoring Framework, the Digital Sequencing Information process, and financing. For this aim, five working group sessions were held between August 2019 and December 2022, in which parties, as well as observers, produced reports and recommendations. Discussions started based on the so-called Zero Draft prepared by the two co-chairs. In sessions one and two which took place online due to the pandemic, no decisions were taken but only opinions were collected. Afterward, in sessions three to five, each one produced an updated draft containing the different views and possibilities in brackets.

The final GBF passed at COP15 in Montreal in December 2022 is structured in eleven sections. Section G formulates four overarching goals for 2050 related to the areas of expanding ecosystems, managing biodiversity sustainably, sharing benefits equitably, and securing adequate implementation. In Section H, 23 specific, short-term targets follow which are to be reached by the end of the decade. These targets address a range of different biodiversity aspects starting from reducing the impact of direct drivers of biodiversity loss such as invasive species (Target 6), pollution (Target 7), and climate change (Target 8) and going as far as the reporting of businesses on their biodiversity impacts (Target 15), and the encouragement of biodiversity-friendly public consumption choices (Target 16). The inclusion of different societal groups such as indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs) as well as women (Target 22), provisions on subsidies and financing (Target 18 and 19), and an overarching target on gender equality in the implementation of the framework (Target 23) are also included.

Most prominently discussed were Target 2 and 3 – the so-called 30x30 targets. Target 2 sets out that 30% of degraded ecosystems – both on land and in water – are to be brought under restoration by 2030. Similarly, Target 3 holds that by 2030, 30% of terrestrial and marine ecosystems are to be conserved as protected areas with particular recognition of indigenous rights and territories. Hereby, the importance of the precise wording must be noted as both targets state that “at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, *and* coastal and marine” ecosystems are under restoration and areas are protected respectively (COP CBD 2022, 9, emphasis added). The “and” is crucial as it signals that 30% must be fulfilled in terrestrial and marine areas separately without allowing for adding them up. One interviewee highlighted this as a big achievement because it was changed several times throughout the

preparation. Additionally, it secures the same level of protection of the sea which generally represents the weakest part of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its strategies according to two respondents. The previous Strategic Plan only aimed at protecting 10% of marine areas, whereas 17% of land should be conserved (COP CBD 2010, 9, Target 11).

Looking at the preparation process of the GBF, both the OEWG2020 documents and the interviews highlight that the text of the targets became more complicated over the working group sessions. Target 3 on protected areas, for example, started as three lines (41 words) in the Zero Draft and evolved to taking up 20 lines (264 words) in the fourth report of the working group. Whereas the first two working group sessions took place online due to the pandemic, and no decisions were taken during them, text and brackets accumulated from the third meeting in Geneva onwards. One interviewee pointed out that especially during OEWG2020-3, parties added numerous new aspects to the draft to represent their perspectives. This marked the time when the effects of the party-led process became visible:

> *It was already open-ended working group 3 when the parties really started to own the framework. Before that, it was more perceived as the co-chairs' framework.*

The text became so extensive that it was decided to set up the so-called Informal Group tasked with simplifying the GBF draft. According to the interviews, many brackets did not indicate disagreement between the parties. Instead, they were due to the target-by-target structure of the discussion. Thus, parties that wanted a particular aspect present in the GBF added them at different places throughout the framework to ensure their appearance somewhere as highlighted by one respondent. The informal group allowed the participants a full overview of the whole draft for the first time. While the group managed to remove a lot of redundancies, many brackets

still existed in the draft at Montreal, in the fifth working group session, right before COP15. Even in the final document, Target 3, for example, amounts to eight lines or 104 words. Consequently, the parties first extended the Zero Draft with their positions and afterwards shortened it again to a condensed version. While the co-chairs as well as the hosts of the working group meetings were not perfectly happy with that, one interviewee directly involved in the GBF's negotiation pointed out that this process was necessary for creating ownership:

> *I know that the co-chairs were saying at a certain moment "we are back to what we proposed in the first place." And I said, "yes indeed but it comes from the parties and not from you"*.

The party-led process brought both advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, the series of consultations, webinars, and meetings were seen as a good way to "keep the momentum" from COP14 in 2018, where the party-led process was decided, until 2022 when COP15 finally took place after being postponed due to the pandemic. It was also stated several times that the process enabled parties to better understand each other's positions and red lines as well as the content of the targets. In sum, the participation created involvement and ownership of the framework by the countries. They also took the negotiations more seriously as they already thought of national implementation, as reported by two respondents. Moreover, the participative approach generated greater awareness of biodiversity loss among the governments of the parties and made the topic move up on their political agendas according to one interviewee. However, most participants that were familiar with the GBF also mentioned negative aspects of this process as it lasted a long time and required a lot of meetings and organization – more than were necessary for the preparation of the previous UN Strategic Plan or the EU BDS. The research participants described it among others as "heavy" and a "very intensive, time- and resource-consuming process."

4.2 Case 2: EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

The new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (EU BDS), like the previous European strategy, was developed top-down by the European Commission (EC) with some involvement of the EU Member States. As indicated by one interviewee, discussions on the new strategy started in June 2019 at a conference on the takeaways from the previous EU Strategy to 2020. In December 2019, the EC then published a roadmap for the initiative of the new strategy. It sets out that the EU BDS shall display the "EU ambition for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework" (European Commission 2019, 2). The strategy's content was proposed to center around and contain measures regarding ecosystem protection, restoration, sustainable use, integration of a biodiversity review for policies, and effective implementation. The publication of the roadmap was followed by a public consultation period until 20/01/2020 which received 328 valid responses. Most of the feedback came from individual citizens (36%), followed by NGOs (26%), business associations (9%), and individual companies (6%) (European Commission 2023). 18 answers came from academic or research institutions accounting for 5.5%. Member states and stakeholders could additionally voice their positions at meetings of the Coordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature, as mentioned in an interview. Based on the reactions, the EC expanded on its ideas from the roadmap and published the final strategy on 20.05.2020.

The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 is based on four pillars, namely protecting nature, restoring nature, enabling transformative change, and action to support biodiversity globally. For Pillars 1 and 2, 17 targets are set. Thus, only measures contributing to ecosystem protection and restoration are included. While Pillar 1 on protecting nature contains three targets narrowly connected to the theme, Pillar 2

comprises more diverse objectives. The topics included are, among others, chemical pesticides (Target 6[6]), fertilizers (Target 13), urban green planning (Target 14 and 15), and by-catch (Target 17). Regarding the number of targets and their content, one respondent from the EU level expressed their belief that the design was mostly influenced by the current working areas of the Commission and that alternative arrangements would have been possible. A different respondent stated that the higher number of targets compared to the former strategy was the result of lessons learned from the previous decade. Most of the targets contain quantitative metrics to be reached by 2030. The phrasing places a focus on the output rather than the progress of how to reach the targets.

The EU BDS contains, similar to the GBF, a 30x30 target for *legally* protecting terrestrial and marine areas. Additionally, unlike the global level, the EU sets a 10% target for strict protection within the protected areas. No definition of "strict protection" can be found in the EU BDS but the term was later clarified in the Commission's staff working document "Criteria and guidance for protected areas designations" (European Commission 2022a). It defines these places as "essentially undisturbed from human pressures and threats" (European Commission 2022a, 19). Additionally, a separate target specifies that protected areas shall be effectively managed and monitored. For restoration, no deterioration in status and positive development in 30% of areas is set. Unlike in the GBF, no concrete target on the number or share of areas where restorative actions shall be performed exists in the EU strategy. Instead, the proposal

[6] The EU BDS itself does not number its targets. For easier identification, I performed a numbering which can be found in Appendix A.

of a legally binding target is announced in Target 4 which was acted upon by the EC's initiative for the Nature Restoration Law (European Commission 2022b).[7]

The development of the EU strategy happened separately target by target. This allowed for variance in the preparation procedure and the inclusion of stakeholders' perspectives between the individual targets – other than the ways of general engagement outlined above. While some targets were based on the intensive engagement of the Member States through working groups as reported by an EU representative, this was not the case for most topics. Systematic state involvement in all targets did not exist. A Member State representative was not even aware of such happening for any target. Instead, they concluded that there was no formal national consultation. The drafting procedure of some targets took the perspectives of NGOs into account, which was also not systematic. When Member States or stakeholders proposed additions to the strategies text, such points were often taken up in the general parts of the EU BDS but did not receive their own targets, as revealed during one interview. Generally, interviewees from the European level emphasized possibilities for participation in the strategy-making more than other interviewees who did not perceive to have had so much chance for incorporating their views. All in all, this highlights that the preparation procedure was heavily driven by the "Commission's internal liberations", as called by one participant, and its bureaucrats who lead the discussions on the topics they had expertise in and only included other positions at their discretion.

[7] The Commission's proposal for the Nature Restoration Law contains the 30x30 target for restoration as it required restoration measures to be in place by 2030 in 30% of terrestrial and 30% of marine ecosystems (European Commission 2022b, Article 4 and 5). It is, however, not considered in the analysis of this thesis as it, firstly, exceeds the content and preparation of the EU BDS and, secondly, represents a legislative proposal that is not yet passed but is currently under discussion in the European Parliament and the Council.

4.3 Comparative Discussion

After having assessed the two strategies and their development individually, a comparative evaluation follows to assess the power of participative policy preparation. Both hypotheses are tested individually, first comparing the ambition level of the two strategies, and secondly scrutinizing their comprehensiveness.

4.3.1 Ambition

This part of the analysis seeks to examine the first hypothesis of this research which expects the expert-developed EU BDS to be more ambitious than the GBF drafted in a participatory process. It first looks at the strategies' overall ambition level before investigating their targets on nature protection and restoration. While respondents described both strategies overall as ambitious, the evaluation by interviewees of different positions diverged.[8] National or European representatives perceived both policies as ambitious or very ambitious, whereas participants from the scientific community and the NGO sector were more skeptical. A respondent attending COP15 for an environmental organization, for example, criticized that the sense of urgency was still missing at the beginning of the conference and saw the prime benefit of the GBF not in its content, but merely in its adoption. Five interviewees stated that the GBF and the EU BDS are similar in their ambition levels and are complementary to one another. Several research participants referred to the different approaches both strategies take, which makes their ambition levels more difficult to compare. On the one hand, the GBF includes controversial topics such as harmful subsidies and agroecology on the EU did not reach an agreement. On the other hand, the EU cannot

[8] It is important to reiterate that this thesis draws no conclusion on the absolute level of ambition of the strategies but only offers a relative assessment of the two against each other.

be seen in isolation without the legislatures it proposes. It was emphasized that the EU is ambitious in the way it calls for the further development of legally binding instruments, such as the Nature Restoration Law. Furthermore, one respondent pointed out that the EU BDS represented the basis on which the Council adopted the EU's mandate for COP15.

Directing the attention from the general approach to the precise targets, a comparison is less difficult. Starting with the protection of ecosystems, the EU BDS is only slightly more ambitious than the GBF. Both strategies contain the 30x30 target for protected areas. The EU BDS additionally holds a 10% target for strict protection, which did not make it into the final GBF although it was part of the Zero Draft. The interviews revealed that while the EU, among others, campaigned for having a strict protection target in the GBF, resistance came from NGOs as well as developing countries that advocated for the concept of land sharing rather than land sparing. Especially considering IPLCs' territories, people need to inhabit and use biodiversity-rich areas in some countries while simultaneously protecting them, which contradicts strict protection. Having been confronted with the counterarguments, the EU turned away from its strong advocacy for the requirement. Other actors still argued in favor of strict protection and its inclusion remained controversial and uncertain until the end, as indicated in one interview. These proceedings show that the party-led process enabled states to gain a better understanding of each other's constraints. The final inclusion, however, seems to have been decided during the high-level negotiations rather than the preparation.

Differing interpretations of the UN's protection target's ambition were voiced in the interviews. One respondent from a member state expressed the view that the

qualitative specifications of Target 3 in the GBF – particularly that “any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes” – coincide with the definition of strict protection used in the EU. Therefore, they argued that all of the 30% protected areas would be under strict protection, which is why they perceived the GBF as more ambitious on this issue. None of the other interviewees supported this perception. On the contrary, a participant from the scientific community explicitly stated that the GBF is less ambitious regarding the numerical aspects:

> *In the EU Biodiversity Strategy, we have the target of 30% of protection including 10% of strict protection, which is something we don't have for instance at the UN GBF*.

Taking a closer look at the precise definitions of protection and strict protection, the GBF indeed phrases protection more narrowly than the EU BDS which, however, calls for legal protection, unlike the GBF. In its 10% target, the EU places a particular focus on leaving such areas “essentially undisturbed from human pressures and threats” (European Commission 2022a, 19), while the UN allows for sustainable use, which is not clearly defined.

While the EU BDS’s target looks more ambitious in terms of the numbers, reaching these quantitative thresholds is easier at the European level. The interviewees confirmed that the EU already has about 26% of its territory on land dedicated as protected areas. One respondent stated that this was a consideration of the EU for supporting the global protection target, both in the GBF and the previous Aichi targets, because the EU was then, as well as now, already about to reach the global benchmarks. Worldwide, by contrast, only 17% of terrestrial areas are protected areas or so-called Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs; Protected Planet 2021). Thus, 30% protection is closer in reach and less challenging for the EU than on the UN level, which makes the GBF target more ambitious in practice. In sum, the strict protection element makes the EU BDS more ambitious in

theory, whereas reaching the target is a bigger step at the UN level. All in all, the text of the EU BDS can only be regarded as slightly more ambitious than the GBF in the field of protected areas.

For the area of restoration, both strategies place a distinct focus hence making them equally ambitious, yet in different regards. The 30x30 target for restoration is only part of the GBF. During the preparatory phase, restoration of 20% of degraded areas and 1 billion hectares were also discussed as can be seen in the OEWG reports. While one interviewee referred to 75% of terrestrial areas being degraded as reported by IPBES (2019, 118), another interviewee expressed that there was still a lack of knowledge on exactly how many and which areas were in bad condition. Two interviews articulated that there was, therefore, a debate on whether to include an absolute number or a percentage in the target. Calculating with 75% degradation, bringing 30% of it under restoration exceeds the alternatively proposed 1 billion hectares by a multiple of three and, thus, represented the most ambitious option discussed. All three alternatives remained in the working group drafts until the end. While the First Draft by the parties proposed 20% restoration (OEWG2020 2021, 6), interviews revealed that later working group discussions were already leaning more in the direction of 30%. Due to the policy package the GBF's targets were part of, no issues could be terminally concluded until the whole document was agreed upon. Target 2 on restoration was, however, among the lesser contested ones at COP15, as affirmed by one interviewee. This signals that the party-led preparation had an effect on the ambition of this target which was, in fact, not negative.

The EU BDS, in contrast, generates its ambition in restoration by preparing for a binding regulation. It postpones the decision on how many areas to restore to a

separate legislative procedure. On the one hand, the GBF is here more ambitious in terms of numbers. The EU BDS, on the other, shows more ambition in the imposition because a legislative procedure will give the target, unlike the strategy, a binding nature. Yet, it starts a completely new legislative initiative which gives rise to new discussions and more politicization. This is why it is not certain that 30x30 is concluded or a lower percentage agreed on throughout the legislative bargaining. Given the strategies surpassing the ambition level of the other in different aspects, this thesis evaluates the GBF and the EU BDS as equally ambitious on restoration.

In sum, the analysis reveals that the EU BDS is slightly more ambitious than the GBF. This provides only little support for the first hypothesis. In line with the thesis' argument, one interviewee had expected the GBF to be less ambitious due to its party-led process. However, they were surprised that "still a lot of ambition remained after so long negotiations" and further stated:

> *I still think that this party-led process has provided a lot of ambition even if we were scared that it may dilute the ambition. But, on the contrary, we are amazed that there is still a lot of ambition*.

In conclusion, both this thesis as well as at least one interviewee had expected the GBF to be less ambitious than the EU BDS, which did, however, not find full support from the analysis. While the protected area targets hint at a higher ambition level at the European level on paper, this could not be replicated regarding the restoration targets. Interview responses rather pointed towards the strategies' different and thus complementary approaches.

There are multiple potential causes for only finding little evidence for the first hypothesis. While the alternative approaches of the two strategies could be one explanation, another reason might be the focus of the analysis on the targets for protection and restoration. A study of all targets, while exceeding the scope of this

project, may reach a different evaluation of the strategies' ambition. Additionally, even the interviewees who could speak to both strategies commonly had greater expertise in either the GBF or the EU BDS which could have limited their ability to comparatively evaluate ambition levels. Yet, it could also be the case that technocrats are just not as effective in developing demanding policies as expected by the literature. As described in the second section of this thesis, theoretical contributions argue for effective, solution-driven decision-making by technocrats whereas empirical studies confirming this claim are scarce. Therefore, more research on the effect of expert-led preparation on the ambition of policy outcomes is required.

4.3.2 Comprehensiveness

After having assessed the biodiversity strategies' ambition, this section uncovers if and in what ways the GBF is more comprehensive than the EU BDS as expected by the second hypothesis. Regarding the comprehensiveness of the two strategies, it is noteworthy that the GBF holds more targets on a wider range of issues. While the UN strategy includes 23 targets on diverse topics, the EU BDS entails 17 targets only speaking to the two pillars of nature protection and restoration. The other two pillars of the strategy dealing with transformative change and external action do not include specific targets. A matching of the GBF's and EU BDS's targets (see Appendix B) reveals that the following 16 topics find no equivalent in the EU BDS which highlights the greater comprehensiveness in the scope of the global targets:

- Spatial planning (GBF Target 1)
- Trade of wild species (Target 5)
- Climate change and resilience (Target 8)
- Sustainable management and use of wild species (Target 9)
- Restoration of ecosystem services (Target 11)
- Utilization of genetic resources (Target 13)
- Policy integration (Target 14)
- Corporate reporting (Target 15)

- Sustainable consumption (Target 16)
- Biotechnology (Target 17)
- Reduction of harmful subsidies (Target 18)
- Financial resources (Target 19)
- Capacity-building and corporation (Target 20)
- Data and knowledge (Target 21)
- Inclusive decision-making (Target 22)
- Gender equality in the implementation (Target 23)

In contrast to the GBF, the EU BDS contains not only less but also narrower targets further indicating its backlog in comprehensiveness. Topic areas covered by one longer target in the GBF occasionally receive two or more targets in the EU BDS. Examples are the GBF Target 3 on protected areas which corresponds to Targets 1,2, and 3 in the EU BDS, and pollution (GBF Target 7), which is captured in Targets 6 and 13 in the EU BDS. In some cases, these more confined EU targets encompass aspects not covered by the GBF. For instance, the European strategy provides for additional specifications on restoration such as the reversal of pollinators (EU BDS Target 5), the planting of trees (Target 9), soil remediation (Target 10), and the restoration of free-flowing rivers (Target 11). These can, however, only be seen as more concrete elaborations falling under the domain of area restoration rather than representing distinct topic areas within biodiversity conservation.

The direct drivers of biodiversity loss are also captured more closely in the GBF than in the EU BDS. The EU strategy focuses only on nature protection and restoration while not taking explicit action regarding some of the drivers of the decrease in biodiversity. An example of this are the strategies' approaches to invasive species. The GBF Target 6 tackles the issue broadly with reference to the prevention of their introduction, eradication where invasive species are already present, and the mitigation of their impacts. The EU BDS, however, aims for a reduction in the rate of native species endangered by alien ones (EU Target 12) without specifying action on

how to reach this. Climate change – while explicitly acknowledged as a driver for deterioration in biodiversity in the EU's general introduction (European Commission 2020, 2) – is not addressed in the targets. One interviewee working at a research institution evaluated the EU's approach to target-setting which hardly relates to the direct drivers of biodiversity loss as a shortcoming and highlighted the GBF's strength in this regard:

> *This* [approach] *is quite great about the UN GBF because the first targets of the GBF are directed towards direct drivers whereas the EU Biodiversity Strategy is not quite as traditional*.

The party-led process had an apparent positive effect on the comprehensiveness of the GBF. While the Zero Draft by the co-chairs entailed 20 targets, the final strategy holds 23. One target was added already before the publication of the First Draft by the parties during the third working group meeting, and another two joined later, as can be seen in the OEWG reports. Especially the aspects of women's inclusion in decision-making and implementation and equitably sharing the benefits of biodiversity came from the parties (OEWG2020 2020, 49). One interviewee pointed out that the first few working group sessions centered around the inclusion of new facets to capture the states' perspectives. Consequently, the abundance of aspects covered by the GBF's targets was supported by its participatory preparation.

The Commission-led preparation of the EU BDS, on the other hand, hindered the comprehensiveness of its targets to a certain degree. One interviewee listed some proposals by the Member States and stakeholders including the admission of a target on funding, one on the elimination of harmful subsidies, and dedicating a percentage of farmland as non-productive and high-biodiversity areas.[9] While these topics were

[9] The first two proposed targets can be found in the GBF.

acknowledged in the strategy's text as a result of the feedback, the Commission decided not to include specific targets. It was also brought up in an interview that the "need to strengthen stakeholder engagement was emphasized repeatedly". While the EU BDS refers to plans for increased cooperation, it does so mainly under Pillar 3 and 4 and consequently does not dedicate any target to inclusiveness.

The GBF not only contains more targets on a wider range of biodiversity aspects, but also provides more for the inclusion of stakeholders. Looking at the specific elements of gender and IPLCs is interesting in this regard as this speaks to the inclusiveness dimension of comprehensiveness. As put forward in the theory section, participative preparation processes are expected to include a larger number and more diverse participants which then produce inclusive outcomes mirroring their various perspectives. The GBF's targets on representation in decision-making and gender equality in implementation (Targets 22 and 23) were brought in through the preparatory phase and did not exist in the co-chairs' Zero Draft. Two respondents pointed out that the demand for these targets did not come directly from the parties themselves, but rather from stakeholders – supported by Asian, European, and Latin American states. This indicates that not only the parties gained a greater potential to participate because of the new process, but also observers were empowered as a consequence.

The European strategy, by contrast, is less comprehensive in this regard as it sees the inclusion of underrepresented groups in biodiversity conservation merely as an external issue. The EU BDS mentions the principle of equality, encompassing the recognition of IPLCs as well as the participation of stakeholders, like women and youth, in its Pillar 4 (European Commission 2020, 20). This part of the strategy refers to the

global agenda and does not hold any specific target. None of the EU's targets makes any mention of stakeholders or inclusive decision-making or implementation. Hence, the EU does not see the representation of women or any other kinds of societal groups as an important component of the internal fight against biodiversity loss. This can be set in context with the fact that stakeholder groups had fewer possibilities to incorporate their positions during the actual phrasing of the individual targets. While an interviewee pointed out that there was a working group composed of Member States heavily involved in the drafting of one goal, they also emphasized this as probably being an exception. Consequently, the GBF takes into account more stakeholder groups than the EU BDS and provides for their inclusion in decision-making and implementation in the targets.

Information from interviews generally supported the GBF being more comprehensive. While not many interviewees spoke directly about the comprehensiveness of the strategies, one respondent particularly emphasized the trade-off with ambition regarding the two strategies:

> *You can compare some elements like targets 2, 3, and 7, and those targets may be less ambitious, but the GBF is more comprehensive*.

The GBF was described as "address[ing] more elements, more tools, more mainstreaming, and more implementation". This relates well to the statement by another interviewee who mentioned that the participative preparatory process encompassed a lot of additions by the parties to the co-chairs' draft to mirror their perspectives. Concludingly, both the documents and the interviews provide support that the GBF is more comprehensive than the EU BDS and that this resulted – at least to some extent – from the party-led process which backs the second hypothesis.

In summary, the carried-out analysis demonstrates some empirical grounds for supporting both proposed hypotheses. The backing for the first hypothesis is weaker, while the documents and interviews provide stronger evidence for the second theoretical proposition. The party-led preparation of the GBF seems to have produced a more comprehensive policy compared to the technocrat-written EU BDS. Yet, the GBF is only slightly less ambitious. While finding little evidence for the first hypothesis could derive from the specifications of the analysis, it could also reveal that the theoretical perception of technocracies' effectiveness only holds to a limited extent in practice. The findings imply that the effect of participatory preparation may be more positive than expected by the literature. In the case of the two biodiversity strategies, a party-led process has diluted the ambition level to a lesser extent than expected. Consequently, this research's case studies displayed a combination of the positive effect of participatory preparation on more comprehensiveness with only little adverse impact on ambition. The analysis has provided empirical evidence that these outcomes are at least partially the result of the preparation procedure. Therefore, this thesis highlights the impact of the preparation mode and gives reason for optimism about the potential of participatory preparatory processes on international organizations' policies.

5. Conclusion

This thesis has shown that participative preparation of policies really can be powerful. It sought to answer what impact a party-led preparation, in contrast to a technocrat-led one, has on the policy outcome of international organizations. The theoretical expectation based on the literature on technocratic versus participative governance was that a participatory development including the Member States would result in a less ambitious, yet more comprehensive policy. Document analysis and elite interviews provided some evidence in favor of the theoretical propositions in the field of biodiversity governance, where the party-developed UN Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was compared with the Commission-written EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (EU BDS). While the GBF is only moderately less ambitious than the EU BDS, it is still more comprehensive. Consequently, party-led preparations seem powerful, at least for this case, as they did not affect ambition as adversely, while still bringing the advantage of being far-reaching in terms of the topics covered and the stakeholders included.

This research contributes to the field by giving us novel and valuable insights both into the intricacies of policy preparation, as well as the realm of biodiversity governance. While the precise extent still needs to be determined, it could be demonstrated that the preparation phase has some impact on policy outcomes. Given the different ways of adopting the GBF and the EU BDS, the research has focused on the preparation phase and the final documents, without investigating the high-level discussions at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) in Montreal or the reaction of the Council to the EU strategy. While it remained challenging to distinguish between the effect of negotiations during the preparation and the adoption phase of the GBF,

the analysis provides preliminary evidence that the mode of preparation matters for international organizations' policies. As policy preparation received little scholarly attention before, the thesis represents a necessary starting point for further studies on the preparation procedures of policies by international organizations in any subject area.

Additional to the analysis of preparatory and final policy documents, this research was based on nine interviews with people who participated in the drafting and/or adoption processes of either or both biodiversity strategies. A strength of the sample is the high number of EU officials as they could provide deep insights into both strategies. Yet, the inclusion of more respondents from nation-states, NGOs, and the scientific community would be desirable. The respondents could nevertheless shed light on all important stages and features of the policy preparation in the two cases and their answers mostly coincided regardless of their role and background. While some variance between national and European representatives, on one hand, and the NGO worker and scientists, on the other, could be seen for the strategies' ambition, this does not constitute an issue as ambition level was determined not only from interviews but also from the documents.

The conducted interviews hinted at several issues that might additionally have had some impact on one or both strategies and would be interesting to explore in future studies. Regarding the GBF, the impact of COVID-19 on the preparation procedure, as well as the influence of the current Ukraine and connected energy crisis on the negotiations were frequently mentioned. The effect of crises on what is deemed possible as ambition level of less salient topics consequently represents a first avenue for study. Additionally, the role of the co-chairs became apparent in several interviews.

Two respondents also stressed China's part as the hosting country for the final compromise. Ensuing researchers could investigate the different approaches of COP host countries and what influence they can have on the agreements, for example contrasting China's role in the GBF with France at the Climate COP in Paris 2015. Furthermore, the GBF and the EU BDS were both part of policy packages. While the GBF was prepared and adopted together with, among others, the Monitoring Framework and the Digital Sequencing Information process, the EU BDS is part of the EU Green Deal and needs to be analyzed in the context of its to be adopted, accompanying instruments like the Nature Restoration Law. Therefore, future research might investigate the strategies and their outcomes from the perspective of the policy packaging literature.

The results of this thesis are a valuable starting point both for further research as well as policymaking. It provides some evidence that the effect of participative policy preparation in international organizations is more promising than theoretically expected. This implies, firstly, that the mode of policy preparation deserves more attention and consideration also by policymakers, secondly, that party-led processes hold a lot of potential for future strategy-making, and thirdly, that advantages might even be more numerous than just increasing comprehensiveness. The fear of watered-down agreements might, in fact, be exaggerated. Instead, including parties in the development creates, according to the findings of this thesis, a better understanding of the issues as well as other states' perspectives, enables ownership, and moves the issue up in the political agenda. Yet, it remains to be seen if the positive effect of participatory preparation holds only for strategy-making or also for the even more important implementation phase.

Appendix

Appendix A – Numbering of the EU BDS targets

Nr.	Pillar	Target
1	Nature protection	Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of the EU's sea area and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network.
2		Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's protected areas, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests.
3		Effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
4	Nature restoration	Legally binding EU nature restoration targets to be proposed in 2021, subject to an impact assessment. By 2030, significant areas of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems are restored; habitats and species show no deterioration in conservation trends and status; and at least 30% reach favourable conservation status or at least show a positive trend.
5		The decline in pollinators is reversed.
6		The risk and use of chemical pesticides is reduced by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides is reduced by 50%.
7		At least 10% of agricultural area is under high-diversity landscape features.
8		At least 25% of agricultural land is under organic farming management, and the uptake of agro-ecological practices is significantly increased.
9		Three billion new trees are planted in the EU, in full respect of ecological principles.
10		Significant progress has been made in the remediation of contaminated soil sites.
11		At least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers are restored.
12		There is a 50% reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species.
13		The losses of nutrients from fertilisers are reduced by 50%, resulting in the reduction of the use of fertilisers by at least 20%.
14		Cities with at least 20,000 inhabitants have an ambitious Urban Greening Plan.
15		No chemical pesticides are used in sensitive areas such as EU urban green areas.
16		The negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats, including on the seabed through fishing and extraction activities, are substantially reduced to achieve good environmental status.
17		The by-catch of species is eliminated or reduced to a level that allows species recovery and conservation.

Appendix B – Mapping of the GBF's against the EU BDS's targets

Topic	Targets of the UN Global Biodiversity Framework	Targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
Spatial planning and effective management	Target 1: Ensure that all areas are under participatory integrated biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.	
Restoration of degraded areas	Target 2: Ensure that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.	Target 4: Legally binding EU nature restoration targets to be proposed in 2021, subject to an impact assessment. By 2030, significant areas of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems are restored; habitats and species show no deterioration in conservation trends and status; and at least 30% reach favourable conservation status or at least show a positive trend.
Additional specifications on restoration	/	Target 5: The decline in pollinators is reversed.
		Target 9: Three billion new trees are planted in the EU, in full respect of ecological principles.
		Target 10: Significant progress has been made in the remediation of contaminated soil sites.
		Target 11: At least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers are restored.
Conservation and protected areas	Target 3: Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.	Target 1: Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of the EU's sea area and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network.
		Target 2: Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's protected areas, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests.
		Target 3: Effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
Halt extinction	TARGET 4: Ensure urgent management actions to halt human induced extinction of known threatened species and for the recovery and conservation of species, in particular threatened species, to significantly reduce extinction risk, as well	Target 16: The negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats, including on the seabed through fishing and extraction activities, are substantially reduced to achieve good environmental status.

	as to maintain and restore the genetic diversity within and between populations of native, wild and domesticated species to maintain their adaptive potential, including through in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable management practices, and effectively manage human-wildlife interactions to minimize human-wildlife conflict for coexistence.	
Harvesting and trade of wild species	TARGET 5: Ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal, preventing overexploitation, minimizing impacts on non-target species and ecosystems, and reducing the risk of pathogen spill-over, applying the ecosystem approach, while respecting and protecting customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.	
Invasive species	TARGET 6: Eliminate, minimize, reduce and or mitigate the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity and ecosystem services by identifying and managing pathways of the introduction of alien species, preventing the introduction and establishment of priority invasive alien species, reducing the rates of introduction and establishment of other known or potential invasive alien species by at least 50 per cent, by 2030, eradicating or controlling invasive alien species especially in priority sites, such as islands.	Target 12: There is a 50% reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species.
Reduction of pollution	TARGET 7: Reduce pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including: reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; reducing the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and also preventing, reducing, and working towards eliminating plastic pollution.	Target 6: The risk and use of chemical pesticides is reduced by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides is reduced by 50%. Target 13: The losses of nutrients from fertilisers are reduced by 50%, resulting in the reduction of the use of fertilisers by at least 20%.
Climate change and resilience	TARGET 8: Minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solution and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.	/
Sustainable managem	TARGET 9: Ensure that the management and use of wild species are sustainable, thereby providing social, economic and	/

ent of wild species	environmental benefits for people, especially those in vulnerable situations and those most dependent on biodiversity, including through sustainable biodiversity-based activities, products and services that enhance biodiversity, and protecting and encouraging customary sustainable use by indigenous peoples and local communities.	
Sustainable management of agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry	TARGET 10: Ensure that areas under agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably, in particular through the sustainable use of biodiversity, including through a substantial increase of the application of biodiversity friendly practices, such as sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches contributing to the resilience and long-term efficiency and productivity of these production systems and to food security, conserving and restoring biodiversity and maintaining nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services .	Target 7: At least 10% of agricultural area is under high-diversity landscape features. Target 8: At least 25% of agricultural land is under organic farming management, and the uptake of agro-ecological practices is significantly increased.
Additional specification – fisheries and by-catch	/	Target 17: The by-catch of species is eliminated or reduced to a level that allows species recovery and conservation.
Restoration of ecosystem services	TARGET 11: Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, such as regulation of air, water, and climate, soil health, pollination and reduction of disease risk, as well as protection from natural hazards and disasters, through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches for the benefit of all people and nature.	/
Urban areas	TARGET 12: Significantly increase the area and quality and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and the provision of ecosystem functions and services.	Target 14: Cities with at least 20,000 inhabitants have an ambitious Urban Greening Plan. Target 15: No chemical pesticides are used in sensitive areas such as EU urban green areas.
Genetic resources	TARGET 13: Take effective legal, policy, administrative and capacity-building measures at all levels, as appropriate, to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of	/

	benefits that arise from the utilization of genetic resources and from digital sequence information on genetic resources, as well as traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, and facilitating appropriate access to genetic resources, and by 2030 facilitating a significant increase of the benefits shared, in accordance with applicable international access and benefit-sharing instruments.	
Policy integration	TARGET 14: Ensure the full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes, poverty eradication strategies, strategic environmental assessments, environmental impact assessments and, as appropriate, national accounting, within and across all levels of government and across all sectors, in particular those with significant impacts on biodiversity, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities, fiscal and financial flows with the goals and targets of this framework.	/
Businesses and financial institutions	TARGET 15: Take legal, administrative or policy measures to encourage and enable business, and in particular to ensure that large and transnational companies and financial institutions: (a) Regularly monitor, assess, and transparently disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, including with requirements for all large as well as transnational companies and financial institutions along their operations, supply and value chains and portfolios; (b) Provide information needed to consumers to promote sustainable consumption patterns; (c) Report on compliance with access and benefit-sharing regulations and measures, as applicable; in order to progressively reduce negative impacts on biodiversity, increase positive impacts, reduce biodiversity-related risks to business and financial institutions, and promote actions to ensure sustainable patterns of production.	/
Sustainable consumption	TARGET 16: Ensure that people are encouraged and enabled to make sustainable consumption choices including by establishing supportive policy, legislative or regulatory frameworks, improving education and access to relevant and accurate information and alternatives, and by 2030, reduce the global footprint of consumption in an equitable manner, including through halving global food waste, significantly	/

	reducing overconsumption and substantially reducing waste generation, in order for all people to live well in harmony with Mother Earth.	
Biotechnology	TARGET 17: Establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement in all countries in biosafety measures as set out in Article 8(g) of the Convention on Biological Diversity and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits as set out in Article 19 of the Convention.	/
Elimination of harmful subsidies	TARGET 18: Identify by 2025, and eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful for biodiversity, in a proportionate, just, fair, effective and equitable way, while substantially and progressively reducing them by at least 500 billion United States dollars per year by 2030, starting with the most harmful incentives, and scale up positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	/
Financial resources	TARGET 19: Substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, in an effective, timely and easily accessible manner, including domestic, international, public and private resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, by 2030 mobilizing at least 200 billion United States dollars per year, including by: (a) Increasing total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, and from countries that voluntarily assume obligations of developed country Parties, to developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, to at least US$ 20 billion per year by 2025, and to at least US$ 30 billion per year by 2030; (b) Significantly increasing domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances; (c) Leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments; (d) Stimulating innovative schemes such as payment for ecosystem services, green	/

	bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, benefit-sharing mechanisms, with environmental and social safeguards (e) Optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises, (f) Enhancing the role of collective actions, including by indigenous peoples and local communities, Mother Earth centric actions22 and non-market-based approaches including community based natural resource management and civil society cooperation and solidarity aimed at the conservation of biodiversity (g) Enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of resource provision and use;	
Cooperation, development, and technology transfer	TARGET 20: Strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation, to meet the needs for effective implementation, particularly in developing countries, fostering joint technology development and joint scientific research programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and strengthening scientific research and monitoring capacities, commensurate with the ambition of the goals and targets of the framework.	/
Data and knowledge	TARGET 21: Ensure that the best available data, information and knowledge, are accessible to decision makers, practitioners and the public to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management and, also in this context, traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of indigenous peoples and local communities should only be accessed with their free, prior and informed consent, 23 in accordance with national legislation.	
Participatory decision-making	TARGET 22: Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and	/

	ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.	
Gender-responsive approach	TARGET 23: Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the framework through a gender-responsive approach where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision-making related to biodiversity.	/

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