



## Nationally-specific assessment of information provided with regards to Aichi Targets 5 and 15

**Target 5:** *"By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced."*



**Target 15:** *"By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification."*



**Country:** Iraq

In preparation for a series of capacity building workshop on ecosystem restoration, a scoping of progress under Aichi Targets 5 and 15 was conducted for 81 countries in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Africa and the Mediterranean. This analysis of progress is based on a review of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), 5th National Reports and Nationally Determined Contributions under the UNFCCC. Specific elements relevant to the planning and implementation of efforts in pursuit of Targets 5 and 15 were listed and screened for in each party's submissions, under four categories:

- Assessment of state and trends of natural ecosystems
- Specific, Measurable and Time-bound national target-setting under Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5 and 15
- Assessment of drivers and policy response
- Linkages with climate change mitigation and adaptation

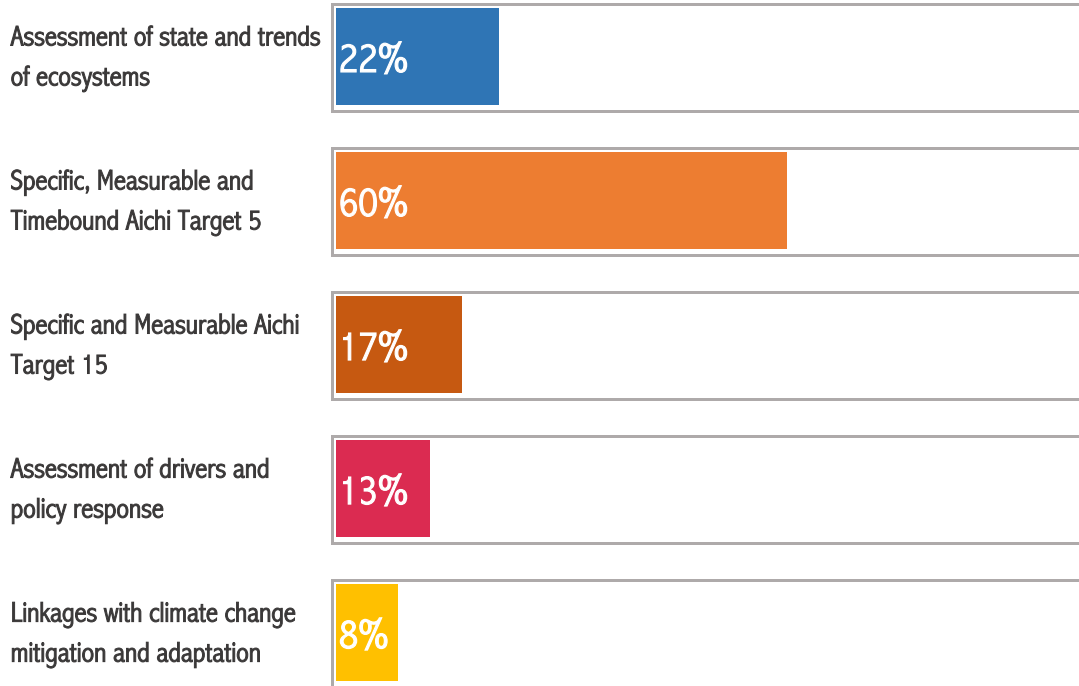
Statistics on the presence of these elements were compiled at the regional scale for the four regions. The nationally-specific analysis contained in this report can help countries identify gaps in relevant baseline information for Targets 5 and 15, in the definition and/or advancement of their national targets and associated institutional, financial and policy measures to implement agreed actions. Linkages with climate change mitigation and adaptation are also explored, as action under Targets 5 and 15 can present synergies with these objectives. **At a national level, countries may use this review to prioritize next steps and the support required to define and/or advance their national targets and associated institutional, financial and policy measures to implement agreed actions.**

An additional section lists forest and other ecosystem-based commitments that the country may have taken under other fora such as under the Paris Agreement via their Nationally Determined Contribution or national pledges to the Bonn Challenge. **Countries may use this summary to ensure that these commitments are consistent with national objectives under Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5 and 15 and explore where synergies could be found for the achievement of the concurrent objectives of climate change mitigation and adaptation, the reduction of loss of natural ecosystems and the restoration of degraded ecosystems.**

## Summary of completeness of information provided in the 5th national report and NBSAP

The bar chart below summarizes progress of your country in the provision of relevant elements regarding targets 5 and 15.

NB: This list of relevant elements is provided as a form of technical support, as an illustration of the type of data that might be useful, and does not reflect a decision on the Convention on the Party's reporting obligations. The information provided in this country file has been developed solely on the basis of information contained in national reports, NBSAPs and NDCs and may not reflect information available through other national sources.



The tables in the following sections provide further details on whether each of these elements were found in your national communications to the CBD and statistics on the provision of this element amongst the group of countries reviewed.

LEGEND		
Presence of the information in the 5th National report or NBSAP of your country:	yes	
	no	
Proportion of countries reviewed that have included this information:	e.g.	79%

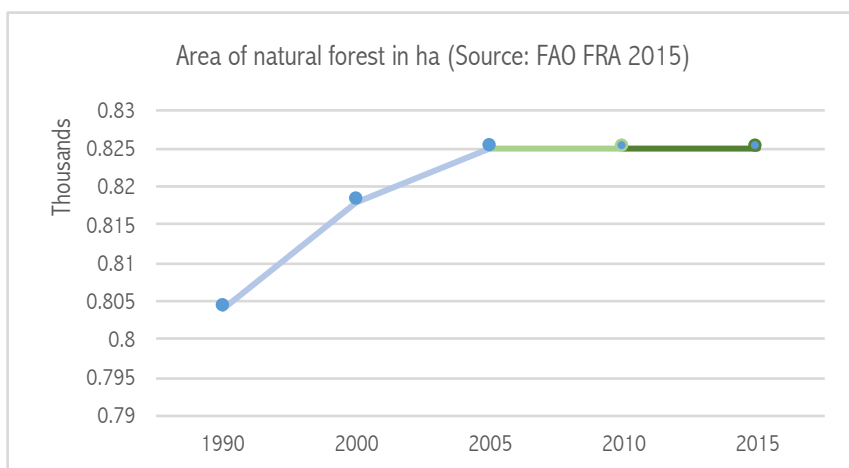
## Assessment of state and trends of ecosystems

The setting of sound national targets under Targets 5 and 15 requires the gathering of data on the state and trends of ecosystems at the national scale, across a variety of ecosystems, including but not limited to forests. The fact that both targets contain a quantitative element further underline the need for quantitative data at the national scale. The categories of data listed below illustrate what may be needed in order to set SMART national targets on ecosystem loss and ecosystem restoration, monitor progress and the effectiveness of implementation measures, and report to the Convention on this progress.

			Presence of the information in the 5th National report or NBSAP of your country:	Proportion of the 13 countries reviewed that have included this information:
Assessment of state and trends of ecosystems	Extent	of forest	✓	92%
		of wetlands	✓	46%
		of other ecosystems	✓	62%
	Distribution (map)	of forest	⚠	15%
		of wetlands	⚠	8%
		of other ecosystems	⚠	8%
	Rate of loss	of forest ecosystems	⚠	31%
		of wetland ecosystems	⚠	8%
		of other ecosystems	⚠	0%
	Distribution of loss	of forest ecosystems	⚠	8%
		of wetland ecosystems	⚠	0%
		of other ecosystems	⚠	0%
	Extent of degradation	in forests	✓	38%
		in wetlands	⚠	0%
		in other ecosystems	⚠	0%
	Distribution of degradation	in forests	⚠	0%
		in wetlands	⚠	0%
		in other ecosystems	⚠	0%
	Indicators of degradation	in forests	✓	23%
		in wetlands	⚠	8%
		in other terrestrial ecosystems	⚠	15%
in marine ecosystems		⚠	0%	

## Indication of progress under Aichi Biodiversity Target 5 based on the FAO Forest Resource Assessment

Country:  
Iraq



Average annual rate of change in natural forest area, 2005-2010	0.00%
Average annual rate of change in natural forest area, 2010-2015	0.00%

### Conclusion on progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 5 according to the FAO FRA data:

For the first half of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020, the rate of loss of natural forest in your country has remained stable, indicating that there is no significant change in your country with regards to the objective of Aichi Biodiversity Target 5, as far as forest habitats are concerned.

You may also wish to consult the country-level data on forest cover available on the Global Forest Watch website by visiting the following link:







<http://www.globalforestwatch.org/country/IRQ>

## Target setting

Targets at the national level should aim to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-Bound (SMART). Whether a target is attainable or realistic calls in part for a subjective judgement on the capacity of the country to foster the political will and enforcement capacity necessary to reverse the trends of ecosystem loss and degradation. Information on past rates of loss of degradation, illustrated in the previous section, will be crucial in determining what might be a realistic objective for the abatement of ecosystem loss and degradation and the restoration of ecosystems. Whether a target is Specific, Measureable and Time-bound can, on the other hand, be broken down to a handful of elements listed below for Targets 5 and 15, respectively. The inclusion of quantitative measures of the target contribute to making it more specific. Countries that have included these elements in their targets make it much clearer what their intended contribution to the progress of the Strategic Plan is.

Targets 5 and 15 are interlinked, in so far as ecosystem restoration can be used as a way to improve the net balance of ecosystem loss and degradation at the national scale. However, gains in natural ecosystems from restoration do not compensate for loss of natural habitat in the same time frame. National targets that distinguish between gross loss of natural ecosystems and targeted gains provide a clearer contribution to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and facilitate an assessment of outlook at the regional or global scale through the aggregation of national targets.

	Presence of the information in the 5th National report or NBSAP of your country:	Proportion of the 13 countries reviewed that have included this information:
National Target for AT5		69%
Specific, Measurable and Timebound national Target under Aichi Biodiversity Target 5	<i>(P.92) Iraqi Target 5</i> <i>By the end of 2020, a GIS database of the extent, condition (i.e. healthy or degraded) and protection status of the natural (not altered by human intervention), semi-natural and human modified habitats of Iraq has been developed.</i>	
	<i>Iraqi Target 6 - By the end of 2020, the reasons for loss and degradation (i.e. the species that used to be present in that habitat are not there anymore, and the services that the people expected or used are reduced or absent) of each of the natural (not altered by human intervention), semi-natural and human modified habitats of Iraq have been identified to inform conservation actions.</i>	
	<i>Iraqi Target 7 - By the end of 2015 the main pressures on forest ecosystems are identified and studied</i>	
	<i>Iraqi Target 8 - By the end of 2020, legislation to address the main pressures on forest ecosystems and native forest species is issued, promoting sustainable management, restoration and conservation."</i>	
	Rate of abatement of ecosystem loss	
Target year		54%
Specification of baseline period		8%
Prioritization of certain ecosystems		31%

Specific and measurable national target under Aichi Biodiversity Target 15	National Target for AT15		77%
	<i>(P.92) Iraqi Target 5 - By the end of 2020, a GIS database of the extent, condition (i.e. healthy or degraded) and protection status of the natural (not altered by human intervention), semi-natural and human modified habitats of Iraq has been developed.</i>		
	<i>Iraqi Target 6 - By the end of 2020, the reasons for loss and degradation (i.e. the species that used to be present in that habitat are not there anymore, and the services that the people expected or used are reduced or absent) of each of the natural (not altered by human intervention), semi-natural and human modified habitats of Iraq have been identified to inform conservation actions.</i>		
	<i>Iraqi Target 7 - By the end of 2015 the main pressures on forest ecosystems are identified and studied</i>		
	<i>Iraqi Target 8 - By the end of 2020, legislation to address the main pressures on forest ecosystems and native forest species is issued, promoting sustainable management, restoration and conservation.</i>		
	<i>Iraqi Target 9 - By the end of 2020, about 1,000 square km of desertified shrubland grassland is restored</i>		
	Quantitative target for the conservation of carbon in natural ecosystem		0%
Quantitative target for the enhancement of carbon in natural ecosystem		8%	
Quantitative target area for restoration		31%	
Quantitative target area for restoration with breakdown by ecosystem		0%	
Map of area targeted for restoration		0%	

## Assessment of drivers and responses

Once national targets are set, countries need to think about how they will be attained. Reversing the trends of ecosystem loss and degradation requires addressing the drivers of these phenomena, both proximate and underlying. Specific implementation measures should be designed that address the drivers at play, and their success monitored to ensure that they can be adaptively managed. Reporting to the Convention on these implementation measures and their degree of effectiveness can foster a process of mutual learning amongst parties on how they might be best able to reach their targets. Ideally, the planning of this implementation process should be iterative: once implementation measures are listed, planned and budgeted for, countries may wish to consider whether the intended target is realistic and whether its ambition may be raised or lowered.

		Presence of the information in the 5th National report or NBSAP of your country:	Proportion of the 13 countries reviewed that have included this information:
Diagnostic of drivers and responses	Diagnostic of drivers of loss and degradation of ecosystems	Description of drivers of loss and degradation	85%
		Identification of specific drivers per ecosystem	31%
		Identification of proximate and underlying drivers	23%
		Spatially explicit information on drivers of loss and degradation	0%
	Implementation measures	Description of measures taken to implement the targets	31%
		Specific measures are related to specific drivers	0%
		Spatial planning of implementation measures	0%

## Linkages with climate change mitigation and adaptation

Reversing the loss and degradation of ecosystems provides benefits not only to biodiversity but also in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The development of REDD+ under the UNFCCC recognizes this potential and seeks to support it through results-based payments. Countries should consider the extent to which their national REDD+ strategy can support the achievement of their NBSAP. Whilst ecosystems other than forests cannot be considered for results-based payments under REDD+, the experience and capacity that countries have acquired on the measurement and management of carbon stocks in forests may prove useful when implementing ecosystem-based mitigation actions in other ecosystems. Processes underway in many developing countries such as the preparation to the REDD+ mechanism can also greatly increase the availability of data and national capacities to collect and analyse it. Moreover, healthy and functional ecosystems can provide a range of benefits for climate change adaptation. Assessing which ecosystems are most vulnerable to climate change and where can help design policy responses that prevent the further degradation of ecosystems by climate change and harness their potential to contribute to adaptation.

		Presence of the information in the 5th National report or NBSAP of your country:	Proportion of the 13 countries reviewed that have included this information:
Linkages with climate change mitigation and adaptation	Synergies with REDD+	Conservation actions explicitly aimed at preserving biomass carbon in natural ecosystems	8%
		Restoration actions explicitly aimed at enhancing biomass carbon in natural ecosystems	8%
		Reference to REDD+ strategy	8%
		Use of REDD+ baseline information (past)	8%
		Use of REDD+ MRV information	0%
	Assessment of carbon stocks and density in natural ecosystems	Quantitative assessment of carbon stock or density in forests	23%
		Quantitative assessment of carbon stock or density in peatlands	8%
		Quantitative assessment of carbon stock or density in other ecosystems	15%
		Map of carbon density in ecosystems	0%
	Assessment of resilience and vulnerability	Consideration of ecosystem resilience	38%
		Assessment of climate vulnerability	38%
		Map of climate vulnerability	15%
	Potential to contribute to adaptation	Assessment of contribution of natural ecosystems to adaptation	31%
		Assessment of contribution of natural ecosystems to Disaster Risk Reduction	0%
		Contribution to combating desertification	62%



## Other relevant forest and other ecosystem-based national commitments and actions

Many countries have made or are in the process of setting national targets directly related to ecosystem loss, degradation and restoration under a number of fora. Nationally Determined Contributions under the UNFCCC often count with targets in the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) or Agriculture, Forestry and Land Use (AFOLU) sectors. The Bonn Challenge, promoted by the Global Partnership for Forest Landscape Restoration, has registered quantitative restoration targets from many countries, and is supported by a number of initiatives such as 20x20 in Latin America and AFR100 in Africa. Countries should consider how these climate-related and restoration targets are articulated with their national targets under Targets 5 and 15 to ensure that national commitments remain consistent and coherent.

Those countries that have yet to adopt a revised NBSAP may wish to consider in which ways these targets will be reached and the extent to which they could be counted as support to the reduction of natural ecosystem loss and the promotion of natural ecosystem restoration. The extent of these synergies will depend in great part on how and where climate-related and restoration targets are implemented (e.g. avoiding the degradation of intact, biodiversity-rich forest landscapes, the ecological restoration of degraded ecosystems and the afforestation of natural grasslands with exotic mono-specific tree plantations all provide net benefits in terms of climate mitigation, with positive or negative impacts on biodiversity). Countries that have already adopted their revised NBSAP may wish to consider these aspects when undertaking further planning of its implementation.

Commitment under the Bonn Challenge	0	Hectares
New York Declaration on Forests	Not signatory	

### Ecosystem-based nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change - Source: NDC

<u>Quantitative</u> ecosystem-based contribution to climate change mitigation (where present)	<i>N/A or not found</i>
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Other ecosystem-based contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation

0

**Recommendation**

NBSAP V 2.0 has been submitted - Implementation actions under Targets 5 and 15 should aim to align with Bonn Challenge and UNFCCC actions

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