



Results from the Biodiversity COP14 by the French Water Partnership Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt), 17-29 November 2018

*Preparation of the post 2020 and the 2nd work program of IPBES:
Great progress overall, but what about freshwater?*

Short summary



General summary

COP14 Biodiversity was one of the last steps before 2020, the year of COP-15 in China, which will mark the end of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011-2020) and its Aichi Targets. The post-2020 preparation was on the agenda and COP14 laid the groundwork for negotiations to come over the next two years.

In this context, several decisions emerged from COP14, for example the creation of an intersessional working group with the organization of global, regional and thematic consultation workshops between today and 2020.

COP14 also helped prepare the second work program of IPBES (Intergovernmental Science and Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services), whose 7th and next plenary will be held in Paris from 29 April to 4 May 2019.

The COP emphasized the necessary synergies between the second IPBES program on the one hand and the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement on the other. The importance of cooperation between the work of IPBES and IPCC was also emphasized. Finally, it was recalled that the second IPBES program should work closely with the post-2020 framework and fully support its implementation.

The French Water Partnership at COP14

The FWP was granted observer status and was represented at COP14 by a member of its secretariat, who was on site from 17 to 23 November. This was the first biodiversity COP for the FWP, the main

objective being to observe the progress of negotiations and side-events, to better understand the mapping of international actors and to identify the place given to freshwater and its continuum with coastal and marine waters within the Convention.

While the FWP was accredited as a civil society organization, it was included in the exchanges within the French delegation. This delegation was initially led by Emmanuelle Wargon during the High-Level segment (14-15 November), Secretary of State to the Minister of State, Minister for an ecological and inclusive transition (MTES); and then by Xavier Sticker, Ambassador for the Environment. The French delegation was a multi-stakeholder one, with strong representation from research (National Museum of Natural History, French Foundation for Research on Biodiversity, CNRS, IDDRI ...).

Observations by the secretariat of the French Water Partnership

Participation in side events: several side-events co-organized by IUCN on "Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures" (OECM) and Aichi target 11 as well as on "Privately Protected Areas" (PPA) shed light on protected areas as a land-use planning tool for the conservation of biodiversity and the debates which this can entail.

In addition, it was noted that when a protected area is created around a water resource, wetland or watershed, the conservation of the water resources for supply is often the primary objective, rather than the conservation of aquatic biodiversity, which is rather a co-benefit.

Interesting encounters: International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF Trust), World Agroforestry Center (Trees on Farms for Biodiversity), WWF Mangroves Project, Rare (behaviors related to biodiversity conservation, links between local populations and nature conservation, particularly in the context of the restoration of watersheds)

General impressions :

- Freshwater and aquatic ecosystems did not constitute a draft decision as such at COP14 and few side-events were entirely dedicated to water.
- In the negotiations, the "voluntary guidelines" of agenda item 21 on biodiversity and climate change mention several examples of adaptation based on water ecosystems in response to droughts, floods, rainfall (...): management of mountain wetlands; peatland conservation, watershed restoration; transboundary water governance, green spaces and stormwater management in urban areas...
- Freshwater appear to be most commonly treated within terrestrial (vs. marine) ecosystems
- Lack of stakeholders from the water sector: for example, the IUCN and WWF Water Programs were not present. Their advocacy seems to have been focused on the Ramsar COP, probably because it adopts an "aquatic ecosystem" approach (rather than a "species" approach)
- Several organizations submitted to the CBD Secretariat a [document](#) on the integration of inland water in the post-2020 agenda

Click [here](#) to see the recommendations prepared and carried out at the COP14 by the French Water Partnership's working group on aquatic biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions.