

## Biodiversity ‘fundamental’ for global food systems, at “heart’ of development – UN agriculture chief



UNDP

*Mayra Monge has dedicated much of her life to researching and planting native trees in the verdant biodiverse powerhouse of Costa Rica.*

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[SDGs](#)

Because the production of everything we eat transforms the environment, the United Nations agriculture chief told a high-level UN meeting on biodiversity that careful discussions are needed to decide on the scale of acceptable transformations.

Qu Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)), [told](#) negotiators on Monday that as agriculture and food systems are “at the heart of the concept of sustainable development”, they are central to deliberations regarding the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, which is expected to be adopted at the [UN Biodiversity Conference](#) in October.

“Biodiversity is fundamental for ecosystems, for human beings, and is the basis of food diversity,” said Mr. Qu, opening the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group established by the Convention on Biological Diversity ([CBD](#)), which FAO is hosting.

He spoke about the enormous challenge of feeding more than nine billion people in 2050 – in ways that assure healthy diets while not overexploiting natural resources.

“I know that the world is eagerly waiting out there for demonstrable progress towards a clear, actionable and transformative global framework on biodiversity,” said the Acting Executive Secretary of the CBD, Elizabeth Maruma Mrema.

The FAO chief signaled his hope for a “robust” outcome at the UN Biodiversity Conference that will be held in Kunming, China. The framework decided there will set the course for the next 10 years and beyond.

## Leading the call

Mr. Qu noted that FAO has shepherded "many milestones" of UN efforts to achieve biodiversity conservation.

He highlighted the [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#) and [The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#) as well as knowledge products, such as last year's [The State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture](#).

He also pointed out that FAO provides keystone functional services, such as data collection and dissemination, standard-setting, policy consultation and capacity building – all useful in protecting biological diversity.

The FAO Director-General concluded by urging the delegations to ensure that biodiversity is an integral part of the issues discussed at the [2021 World Food Systems Summit](#), which will be hosted by the UN Secretary General and aims to maximize the co-benefits of a food systems approach across the entire 2030 Agenda and meet the challenges of climate change.

The [CBD](#), which entered into force in December 1993 and currently has 196 Parties, aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

This is a '[super year](#)' for the environment – a make or break year in which key international meetings, including on the Ocean (Lisbon) and a proposed 'Nature' summit in New York this coming September, will set the tone and agenda for environmental action in the decade ahead.



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# UN

## 2020 AND BEYOND

[https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/02/1057981?utm\\_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=1d0241807f-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_02\\_25\\_03\\_30&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_fdbf1af606-1d0241807f-104701741](https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/02/1057981?utm_source=UN+News+-+Newsletter&utm_campaign=1d0241807f-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_02_25_03_30&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_fdbf1af606-1d0241807f-104701741)