

Humanity owes nature a huge debt: Let's make peace with nature



Elizabeth Taylor Jay

Vice Minister of Multilateral Affairs of Colombia

Biologist with emphasis in Marine Biology and Master's degree in Marine Environmental Protection, with large professional experience in public administration and practice in international consulting for environmental issues, climate change and sustainable development. She has stood out by serving as Co-Agent of Colombia before the International Court of Justice, she is Former Ambassador of Colombia in Kenya and Former Director of Marine, Coastal Affairs and Aquatic Resources of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, in addition, Former Director of the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina -CORALINA.

2024年10月21日～11月1日、生物多様性条約第16回締約国会議（COP16）がコロンビア共和国・カリで開催されることに先立ち、駐日コロンビア共和国大使館の協力により、Elizabeth Taylor Jayコロンビア共和国多国間問題担当副大臣より寄稿いただきました。（JOI編集部より）



We must act swiftly; our planet is running out of time. Humanity's ecological footprint is exceeding the limits of our planetary boundaries, due to unsustainable production and consumption patterns, which are systematically harming nature. The future of humanity stands at a critical juncture where we must reaffirm our unwavering commitment to our planet and to future generations. Environmental degradation and biodiversity loss threaten not only the health of our ecosystems but also the social, economic, and political stability of our societies. It is time to make *peace with nature*.

In order to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and adequately adapt to the impacts of climate change, we must reevaluate our relationship with nature. Protecting the environment and promoting peace are intrinsically linked; as stated in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, there can be no sustainable development without peace, nor peace without sustainable development. Celebrated every two years, the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) has placed *peace with nature* at its core, expecting representatives from 196 countries in Cali, Colombia, from October 21st until November 1st, to set an inspiring example pursuing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into our daily life.

In 2010, Japan hosted a landmark agreement during COP10, when the Nagoya Protocol was adopted on access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization. Colombia is aiming for COP16 to also be a historical one: it is the first biodiversity conference since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), also known as the Biodiversity Plan. The GBF was adopted in December 2022 at COP 15, and establishes a roadmap for countries to take actions at the national level to achieve its 4 objectives and 23 goals, in order to stop and reverse the loss of biodiversity by 2030. COP16's focus will be on enhancing ambition and supporting countries in aligning their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) with the Biodiversity Plan.

Peace with nature also references to the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity, from an environmental justice approach, paving the road towards the upcoming COP30 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be celebrated in Brazil next year. The time has come to



Photos courtesy of Instituto Humboldt

evaluate the possibility of unifying both agendas, understanding climate change and the loss of biodiversity as intrinsically related challenges. Colombia is proud to be the second most megadiverse country in the world, and it is because of this that it's hosting the world's most important Biodiversity Summit. The summit aims to bring together leaders, experts, and decision-makers to establish joint goals on biodiversity protection and to halt and reverse the loss of nature, which threatens the survival of over a million species worldwide. The country of beauty is home to 10% of the world's biodiversity with over 50,000 registered species and nearly 31 million hectares of protected areas, equivalent to 15% of the national territory.

Peace with nature also requires making peace among people. War dynamics and organized crime have

historically proven to harm, modify, and transform entire ecosystems, jeopardizing their resilience and its capacity to survive adversity. An important step forward is preventing nature from harm's way. Nature must not be considered a spoil of war, nor should it be exposed to it. World policy must be oriented towards eliminating the threat of war, renouncing the use or threat of force between countries, and peacefully settling disputes in accordance with the United Nations' Charter.

And finally, everyone is invited. This COP will be the people's COP, open to civil society in an unprecedented manner. For the first time ever in a CBD COP will there be a Green Zone, one that is dedicated to cultural activities, exhibitions, dialogues, among others, open to the public. Anyone who is interested in learning, encourage discussions, and exchanging views and proposals on the global challenge of biodiversity will be welcomed. On the sidelines of COP, Colombia will present the "Peace for Nature Coalition", which will be a call to action open to every State, civil society, world leaders, environmental defenders, among others.

Humanity is indebted to nature, and it's time to make peace. COP16 is a beacon of hope to save nature and life as we know it. Countries must present their NBSAPs soon, and make the necessary adjustments for their national plans to keep on track with the roadmap signaled by the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. COP16 aims to further strengthen resource mobilization for the implementation of the Global Framework, as well as finalize and operationalize a multilateral mechanism on the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources.

COP16 Official Website:
<https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2024>

お問い合わせ
JOI 事業企画部
E-mail: bd@joi.or.jp

駐日コロンビア共和国大使館
E-mail: ejapon@cancilleria.gov.co
<https://japon.embajada.gov.co/>