



INTERNATIONAL
LAND CONSERVATION
NETWORK

NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

Lincoln Institute staff promote private and civic land conservation at historic COP15

Shenmin Liu, ILCN Regional Representative for Asia
January 5, 2023



Shenmin Liu (bottom right) and global partners at COP15 in December 2022. Photo: ILCN

Leaders and conservationists from over 190 countries came together in Montreal, Canada, from December 7 to 19, to recognize a global biodiversity crisis parallel to that posed by climate change. A team from the Lincoln Institute was among the group of changemakers that stepped up to commit to halting the degradation of our landscapes by the end of the decade.

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) has been compared in importance to its better-known counterpart, COP21, where nearly 200 parties pledged to take action to mitigate climate change by signing the Paris Agreement. COP15 resulted in a similarly historic agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which serves as a roadmap toward a nature-positive future. The first phase of the COP15 was held in Kunming, China in October 2021. The meeting resulted in the Kunming Declaration, announcing the establishment of the Kunming Biodiversity Fund and other host-country initiatives.

A pillar of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is Target 3, which establishes the “30x30 goal”. The goal challenges countries to collaborate to protect at least 30 percent of the world’s lands, oceans, coastal areas, and inland waters by 2030. It prioritizes areas based on the value of their biodiversity and aims to create ecologically representative, well-connected, and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. Target 3 also recognizes Indigenous and traditional territories and emphasizes respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Did you know?

Human-driven land- and sea-use change is the biggest driver of biodiversity loss, globally. A major factor is our food system, which is fueled by unsustainable large-scale farming.

The next largest contributors to our biodiversity crisis are resource exploitation, climate change, pollution, and invasive non-native species.

This is according to the World Wildlife Fund’s Living Planet Report 2022. Read more about the risks and solutions associated with biodiversity loss [here](#).

Four staff members from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (LILP) joined more than 18,000 participants from 196 parties and organizations around the globe at COP15. Jim Levitt, director of the International Land Conservation Network (ILCN); Chandni Navalkha, ILCN associate director of sustainably managed land and water resources; Zhi Liu, director of the LILP China program; and Shenmin Liu, ILCN regional representative for Asia, all attended on behalf of the LILP.

As part of COP15, the ILCN and the Peking University-Lincoln Institute Center for Urban Development and Land Policy (PLC) co-hosted a day-long action zone event with the Global Environmental Institute, the Africa Wildlife Foundation, and other non-governmental organizations on December 9. The event centered on strengthening non-state actors’ efforts to support multi-goal and multi-benefit biodiversity conservation and sustainable development initiatives. Over 100 participants from different non-state entities such as civil society, academia, commercial enterprises, youth groups, and local communities convened to conduct in-depth exchanges and discussions on the topic.



Levitt presents on collaborative land conservation techniques at COP15. Photo: Shenmin Liu

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity delivered a speech at the beginning of the action-zone event. She addressed the critical role of non-state actors in meeting the collective challenges of biodiversity. Murema told the audience that she expects civil society organizations to work closely with communities around the world to help implement the new framework.

Later that afternoon, Levitt gave a keynote presentation on leveraging international and cross-sectoral expertise to help create an effective, trusted, and connected global network for private and civic land conservation. He shared examples of the FONAG water fund in Quito, Ecuador, and Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area in Nunavut, Canada during his presentation.

On December 10, the ILCN joined its partners from the Nature Conservancy of Canada to host a meet-and-greet with ILCN members attending COP15 from around the globe. Guests hailed from Canada, China, Australia, Spain, South Africa, Kenya, Liberia, and elsewhere.

Shenmin Liu delivered a speech at the Action Salon on Biodiversity Conservation representing youth groups. She emphasized the importance of engaging youth in the conservation movement and the power young people hold as the future stewards of the earth.



Meet-and-greet with ILCN members at Nature Conservancy Canada Montreal Office. Photo: Shenmin Liu

COP15 served as a springboard for ongoing work. In addition to the commitments made by signatories of the Kunming-Montreal Declaration, delegates sowed the seeds to establish a multilateral fund to enable equitable benefit sharing between providers and users of emerging agricultural technology. Details of the fund are set to be finalized at COP16 in Turkey in 2024.

Have news? Share updates from your organization or country by emailing ilcn@lincolinst.edu.