

## Reaching a Consensus for Action (UN Biodiversity Goals)

**Overview:** Students apply their understanding of biodiverse systems to reach a consensus on a plan for action to preserve Earth's biodiversity.

**Grade:** 5-12, Math/Science

**Estimated duration:** 1-2 hours depending on age

**Key Concept:** Relationships

**Related Concepts:** Balance & Evidence

**Global Context:** Globalization & Sustainability

**Statement of Inquiry:** Sustainable systems remain diverse and productive over time

**Debatable Question:** What is the value of Biodiversity?

**Resources required:** [Aichi Targets](#) for Biodiversity, [Socratic Smackdown](#) (Institute of Play)

**Outline:** This is from a Math/Science unit on Biodiversity, where students inquire into measures and definitions of biodiversity. They practice taxonomy methods in dissections, field surveys for collecting data, and different ways to analyse this data to communicate the biodiversity of an area (through indices). To address the Debatable Question, students must use all of their work from the unit to come to a consensus on which UN Biodiversity Goals (from the Aichi Convention) they should take action on.

### Teaching Tips and Ideas:

To begin the task, the class is divided into four groups (one for each Compass point). They read through the Aichi Targets and decide on their Top Three, providing a rationale for their choice and what actions could support the targets. They must also plan ways to bring the other Compass Point Groups on board with their plan. At this point, many students want to branch to different Compass Points (as they see the larger systems), but must keep to their fixed perspective until the larger discussion begins. This ability to change perspective, then refocus on their forced objective supports well developed rationales and plans for consensus.

Groups come together in a round-table discussion to reach a whole-class consensus for their action plan. I love to use the game "Socratic Smackdown" from The Institute of Play to scaffold the discussion. Each student/team can keep "score" of their contributions using different strategies. I find this both keeps the discussion moving productively and respectfully, as well as pushes the depth of the conversations. Students are provided with some structure to their language, and feel confident with their ability to navigate a large group discussion.



### What the Compass does:

- Focuses objectives (used as forced perspective) to think deeper about issues before applying it back to a larger scope.
- Organises thinking to structure meaningful student initiated work.
- Helps students analyse complex concepts, apply their own knowledge and skills, and reflect on their own approaches to learning.
- Encourages deeper creative and critical thinking.

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