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## DAC Network on Environment and Development Co-operation

### Aligning Development Co-operation and Biodiversity Action

This document presents the aligning development co-operation and biodiversity action report, following its declassification by the DAC ENVIRONET on 18 September.

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# Aligning Development Co-operation and Biodiversity Action

# Foreword

Biodiversity is a critical component of sustainable development, underpinning economic stability, livelihoods and climate resilience. But biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate due to human activities, ecosystem degradation and climate change. In response to this crisis, in 2022 the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) established an international roadmap with specific goals and targets for halting biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems.

Developing countries face a range of challenges around biodiversity conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources. These include limited financial and technical resources, competing development priorities and institutional capacity constraints that hinder the effective implementation of biodiversity policies. Development co-operation providers can play a crucial role in supporting countries to tackle the biodiversity challenge. By integrating biodiversity in their strategies, policies and financing mechanisms, development co-operation providers can align themselves with the KMGBF.

This report aims to provide a better understanding of the implications of aligning development co-operation with the KMGBF. In addition, it seeks to support development co-operation providers in scaling up biodiversity action and increasing its effectiveness. At the same time, the report contributes to the implementation of the *OECD DAC Declaration on a new approach to align development co-operation with the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change*. The report takes stock of how development co-operation providers are contributing to biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources; and highlights several areas in which providers can seize the co-benefits of development and biodiversity action.

Chapter 1 provides an overview on the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development and the key role that providers of development co-operation play in this area, as well as the implications of KMGBF alignment. Chapter 2 delves into the process of KMGBF alignment itself and introduces five action areas for providers to consider when aligning with the KMGBF. These are developed in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 focuses on the institutional level and the steps that providers could take to reflect the KMGBF across their development co-operation strategies and governance mechanisms. The chapter also looks at provider capacity needs and the issue of climate-biodiversity co-benefits. Chapter 4 assesses the operational level, namely development co-operation policies and implementation practices, including those to avoid and mitigate activities that harm biodiversity. Chapter 5 looks at external and international co-ordination and policy coherence, including the role of strategic partnerships to leverage biodiversity action and ambition. Chapter 6 addresses financing and the potential scale-up and mobilise development finance for biodiversity. Finally, Chapter 7 considers monitoring, evaluating and learning, as well as deepening the evidence base on biodiversity, to ensure that provider action is effective.

The conclusions of this report are intended to inform the work of development co-operation providers. Beyond members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), the actions and conclusions in this report would also be valuable for other bilateral and multilateral providers, including South-South co-operation actors, triangular co-operation providers and private philanthropy.

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

|                 |                                                               |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| AFD             | Agence française de développement (French Development Agency) |
| BIOFIN          | Biodiversity Finance Initiative                               |
| CBD             | Convention on Biological Diversity                            |
| CGIAR           | Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research     |
| CO <sub>2</sub> | Carbon Dioxide                                                |
| COP             | Conference of the Parties                                     |
| COVID-19        | Coronavirus Disease 2019                                      |
| CRS             | Creditor Reporting System                                     |
| DAC             | Development Assistance Committee                              |
| DFI             | Development Finance Institution                               |
| DNSH            | Do No Significant Harm                                        |
| ECA             | Export Credit Agency                                          |
| EIA             | Environmental Impact Assessment                               |
| FAO             | Food and Agriculture Organization                             |
| FCDO            | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office                  |
| G7              | Group of 7                                                    |
| GBP             | Great Britain Pound                                           |
| GDP             | Gross Domestic Product                                        |
| GEF             | Global Environment Facility                                   |
| GGKP            | Green Growth Knowledge Partnership                            |
| IADB            | Inter-American Development Bank                               |
| IDA             | International Development Association                         |
| IEA             | International Energy Agency                                   |
| IFAD            | International Fund for Agricultural Development               |
| IFC             | International Finance Corporation                             |
| IIED            | International Institute for Environment and Development       |
| IMF             | International Monetary Fund                                   |

|        |                                                                                  |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| IPBES  | Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services |
| IPLC   | Indigenous peoples and local communities                                         |
| IPCC   | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                                        |
| IUCN   | International Union for Conservation of Nature                                   |
| KMGBF  | Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework                                   |
| LDC    | Least Developed Country                                                          |
| MDB    | Multilateral Development Bank                                                    |
| MEL    | Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning                                              |
| NAP    | National Adaptation Plan                                                         |
| NBFP   | National Biodiversity Finance Plan                                               |
| NbS    | Nature-based Solutions                                                           |
| NBSAP  | National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan                                 |
| NDC    | Nationally Determined Contribution                                               |
| Norad  | Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation                                     |
| ODA    | Official development assistance                                                  |
| ODF    | Official development finance                                                     |
| OECD   | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development                           |
| PBL    | Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving (Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency)    |
| PS     | Performance Standard                                                             |
| SBTN   | Science Based Targets Network                                                    |
| SDGs   | Sustainable Development Goals                                                    |
| Sida   | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency                             |
| SIDS   | Small Island Developing State                                                    |
| TCFD   | Task Force on Climate-Related Finance Disclosures                                |
| TNFD   | Task Force on Nature-Related Finance Disclosures                                 |
| UAE    | United Arab Emirates                                                             |
| UK     | United Kingdom                                                                   |
| UN     | United Nations                                                                   |
| UNCCD  | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification                              |
| UNEA   | United Nations Environment Assembly                                              |
| UNEP   | United Nations Environment Programme                                             |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Programme                                             |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change                            |
| WEF    | World Economic Forum                                                             |
| WWF    | World Wildlife Fund for Nature                                                   |

# Executive Summary

Biodiversity plays a crucial role in sustainable development and underpins the health of all economies, but it is being lost at an alarming rate. With developing countries particularly dependent on biodiversity, its decline is holding back progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2022, the international community agreed a new roadmap for biodiversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). Its ambition is to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030 and achieve full recovery by 2050. The agreement has important implications for development co-operation, with development finance a central means of implementation, and asks for all activities – including development co-operation – to align with its vision and mission. Yet four years after the KMGBF was agreed, progress to align development co-operation strategies and portfolios with its goals is limited. This report has been prepared as a resource for development co-operation providers in aligning their activities and finance with the KMGBF. It assesses development co-operation providers' contributions to biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources; and it suggests action areas and inspiration to help providers seize the co-benefits of combined development, climate and biodiversity action to support sustainable development.

## Key findings

Despite clear evidence of biodiversity's crucial role in sustainable development, current development pathways often ignore its significance in meeting basic human needs and the deep connections between people, economy and nature. While some providers have taken steps to align their activities with the KMGBF and biodiversity action, for most DAC member countries comprehensive and systemic alignment remains limited. This limitation reflects, inter alia, capacity constraints, lack of awareness on how biodiversity interacts with socio-economic development, limited engagement by the private sector on biodiversity, lack of data and standardised biodiversity metrics, insufficient integration across climate and biodiversity, and limited use of nature-based solutions.

Livelihoods in many developing countries depend on nature-dependent sectors – e.g. farming, forestry and fishing – and so rely heavily on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Most development co-operation providers have been supporting biodiversity-related activities financially for several years, but few DAC members have dedicated biodiversity strategies. Development finance for biodiversity reached USD 8.4-14.8 billion a year in 2024, and flows have been increasing over time, but represent only 4% of DAC members' development finance.

While DAC members invested an average of 18% in nature-dependent sectors over 2015-22, only 19% of this support integrated biodiversity-related objectives. At the same time, providers do not always recognise their own dependence on nature. Few assess the risks associated with biodiversity loss or understand how these risks affect their biodiversity and development commitments. The links between development, climate and biodiversity are also not always well understood, or how development co-operation can incorporate Indigenous and local peoples' knowledge.

## Policy implications

The KMGBF presents a significant opportunity for development co-operation providers to reshape their biodiversity activities. However, slow progress to date is partly due to the lack of a clear framework to guide and inspire development co-operation providers when increasing their ambition. This report proposes five areas where providers can align their development co-operation activities and finance with the KMGBF effectively. Providers can either adopt this framework in full, implement it gradually or apply it selectively, depending on their size, capacity, priorities and ambitions:

### Action area 1. Institutional and governance arrangements

- Establishing a coherent vision and measurable targets for biodiversity to shift from fragmented efforts to structured approaches that guide investments and partnerships.
- Developing internal capacity and the right governance arrangements to make biodiversity a cross-cutting concern, embedded in decision making across sectors and teams.
- Strengthening the integration of biodiversity into climate change action to unlock synergies through nature-based solutions, align financing more effectively and maximise sustainability.

### Action area 2. Operational tools for biodiversity

- Understanding and assessing the dependence and impacts on biodiversity across sectors and geographies to reveal how all sectors rely on and affect nature, enabling better support.
- Updating tools and approaches to mainstream biodiversity – such as natural capital accounting and spatial planning.
- Reinforcing policies for social and environmental safeguards so that they align with the KMGBF.
- Ensuring that biodiversity action promotes people-centred approaches, respects rights, reduces inequalities and supports a just transition for all.

### Action area 3. Partnering for biodiversity: supporting national plans and global policy coherence

- Aligning support with partner country strategies, notably NBSAPs and NBFPs, and visions.
- Enabling KMGBF alignment of the international development co-operation system.
- Fostering policy coherence for sustainable development, from export credits to subsidy reform.

### Action area 4. Biodiversity-related development finance

- Using development finance for biodiversity strategically, by scaling up funding for conservation and restoration, mainstreaming biodiversity into key productive sectors, aligning biodiversity finance with climate goals and ensuring that funds reach biodiversity-rich and high-risk areas, especially in least developed countries.
- Mobilising finance from the private sector for biodiversity by strengthening enabling environments, acting as intermediaries between public and private actors, and promoting biodiversity-positive investments.

### Action area 5. Focus on learning and evidence

- Updating tracking systems to reflect KMGBF goals.
- Enhancing impact, learning and innovation in biodiversity monitoring.
- Deepening the evidence base on the links between development, climate and biodiversity.

By prioritising these actions, providers can drive meaningful change that supports human well-being, as well as economic and environmental resilience.

# **1 Biodiversity as a key foundation of sustainable development**

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Nature underpins all economic activity and human well-being, and therefore all development. Yet, biodiversity – the living component of nature – is declining at an unprecedented rate, with a heavy cost for developing countries, which often depend on nature to sustain livelihoods but have limited capacity to address its decline. This chapter looks at the fundamental interactions between biodiversity and our economies and society, and the risks that biodiversity loss presents. It highlights the importance of biodiversity for developing countries and for sustainable development more generally.

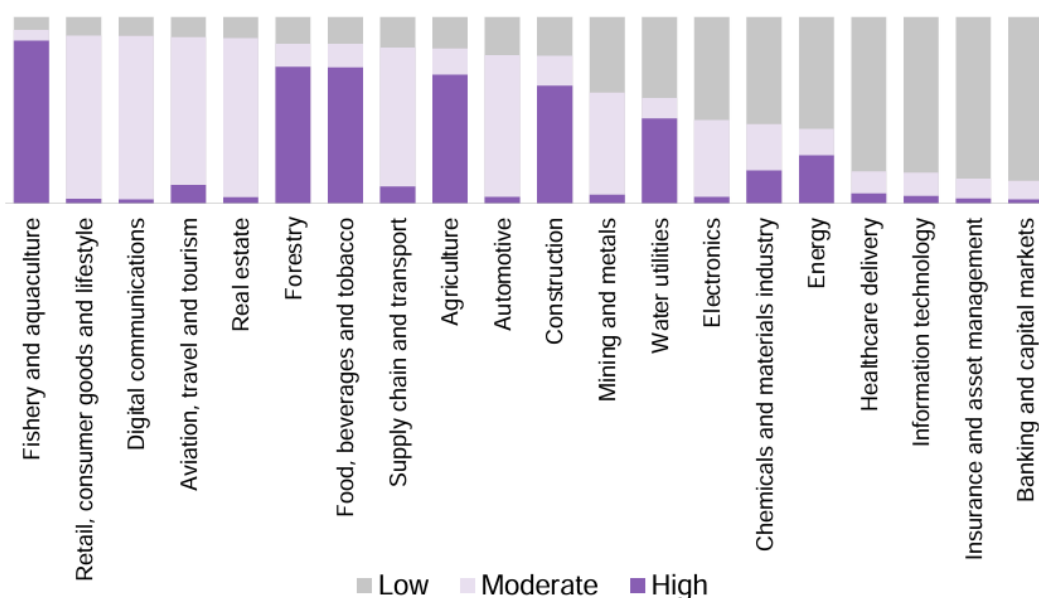
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## Safeguarding biodiversity is key to ensuring sustainable development

Biodiversity encompasses all species, ecosystems and genetic diversity, and underpins vital ecosystem services that support all life on Earth and that are essential for human well-being (Díaz, et al., 2019). Pollinators such as birds, bees and other insects contribute to one-third of the world's crop production (FAO, 2018), while healthy soils, relying on invertebrates, are crucial for agriculture (Cock, et al., 2012). Life from the oceans also provides the main source of animal protein for billions of people (UN, n.d.). All economic activity, directly or indirectly, depends on biodiversity and nature<sup>1</sup> to some degree (Figure 1.1).

The economic value of biodiversity is immense. In 2023, an estimated USD 58 trillion of global gross domestic product (GDP) was either moderately or highly dependent on nature, a significant increase on the USD 44 trillion in 2020 (PwC, 2023; WWF and Climate and Company, 2022). This is equivalent to 55% of global GDP (PwC, 2023). The direct link between biodiversity and development is particularly important for developing countries, which are home to many biodiversity-rich areas and have economies that are disproportionately dependent on functioning ecosystems (Arlaud, et al., 2018; Stephenson, et al., 2024; IPBES, 2019).

**Figure 1.1. All economic activity depends on nature to some extent**



Source: (PwC, 2023).

There is wide recognition that biodiversity, food, water, health, climate and energy are all interrelated and crucial for sustainable development (IPBES, 2021; Agardy, 2017; Cramer, et al., 2017; IPBES, 2024). Indeed, two of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which guide global development – SDG 14 on marine biodiversity and SDG 15 on terrestrial biodiversity – are commonly seen

<sup>1</sup> While this report uses the term “nature” where other studies have done so (e.g. to refer to “nature-positive”), it preferentially uses the term biodiversity. Nature embodies different concepts for different people, including biodiversity, Mother Earth, systems of life and other analogous concepts (IPBES, 2022; IPBES, n.d.). Biodiversity is the diversity of all living things, defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as “the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems” (UN, 1992). Nature includes living biodiversity and the non-living elements of natural areas, such as landscapes, rivers and physical structures. It is also a word in common usage, as well as being a technical term (IIED, 2019).

as the basis upon which other SDGs on poverty, health, education or economic growth are implemented (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2016) (Figure 1.2. ). Achieving development goals requires recognising their connection to the biosphere (UN, 2015).<sup>2</sup> However, research shows that biodiversity loss has hindered progress on 80% of assessed SDG targets (IPBES, 2019).

**Figure 1.2. Economies and societies depend on the biosphere**



Source: (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2016).

Biodiversity's role in development is particularly evident in regions where ecosystems are vital for livelihoods. For example, 1.2 billion people in tropical countries are highly dependent on biodiversity for housing materials, water, energy or employment (Fedele, Donatti, Bornacelly, & Hole, 2021); over 60% of Africa's population is directly dependent on ecosystem services to meet livelihood needs (IPBES, 2018); and across Central and East Africa, the Amazon and South-East Asia, 75% of the population depend on nature for their basic needs (Leclère, et al., 2020). This dependency spans both the informal economies (Fedele, Donatti, Bornacelly, & Hole, 2021) and formal sectors tied to global value chains. And yet biodiversity is declining at an alarming rate.

Recognising this crisis, in 2022 the international community agreed on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), aiming to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2050. The mission of the KMGBF concerns all actors, including development co-operation providers. In effect, aligning development co-operation with the KMGBF can ensure that biodiversity is prioritised for long-term sustainability.

This report outlines key findings and policy implications aimed at helping development co-operation providers align with the KMGBF and advance broader biodiversity action. The report also assesses current contributions by development co-operation providers to biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. Building on previous OECD work on biodiversity (OECD, 2024; Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024; OECD, 2023; OECD, 2023; OECD, 2018), it highlights action areas that can help providers seize the co-benefits of combined development and biodiversity action to support sustainable development. Following the overview presented in this chapter, Chapter 3 looks at biodiversity in development co-operation, noting that although it is part of most donor frameworks, its importance is not appropriately reflected, hence the need for a more systematic, impact-driven integration of biodiversity into development co-operation. Chapter 3 delves into the process of KMGBF alignment itself and introduces five institutional, operational, strategic, financial and knowledge-

<sup>2</sup> The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) attempts to draw such connections and includes a dedicated section on linkages with the 2030 Agenda, aiming to place biodiversity "at the heart of the sustainable development agenda" (CBD, 2022).

based actionable areas for development co-operation providers to consider when aligning with the KMGBF. Each of these actions is discussed in detail in Chapters 4 to 8.

## Current development pathways pose important risks to the global economy

The destruction of nature caused by current development pathways risks destabilising the Earth's systems as humanity crosses several biosphere tipping points leading to forest degradation, eutrophication of lakes, coral reef die-off and fishery collapse, amongst others (Lenton, et al., 2023) (Rockström, et al., 2023). Biodiversity loss is occurring at an unprecedented rate, driven by the alteration of 75% of land cover and increasing cumulative impacts on 66% of the ocean from land- and sea-use change, over-exploitation of natural resources, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species (IPBES, 2019). While the extraction of natural resources can boost short-term economic growth, unsustainable natural resource use can degrade long-term growth potential and create risks to future growth, debt sustainability and creditworthiness, especially in developing countries. Today, the rate of resource extraction and waste generation globally exceeds the planet's capacity to replenish itself or process waste (Wackernagel, et al., 2021). Almost a quarter of the world's land area has been degraded and 73% of wildlife populations have been lost since 1970 (WWF, 2024), costing the world an estimated USD 6.3 trillion a year in ecosystem service value, or 8.3% of global GDP in 2016 (WEF, 2020). Even a partial collapse of certain ecosystems would cost 2.3% of global GDP (USD 2.7 trillion) in 2030, with some of the poorest countries being hit hardest, seeing GDP fall by up to 10% by 2030 (World Bank Group, 2021).

Despite clear evidence of biodiversity's crucial role in sustainable development, current development pathways often ignore its significance in meeting basic human needs and the deep connections between people and nature. One reason for this is that biodiversity is largely unpriced in markets (OECD, 2021), meaning the costs of its destruction are borne by the global community and society in general, and in particular by the local populations that depend on it the most (FAO, 2015). In developing countries, financial resources for biodiversity initiatives are limited. Additionally, weak environmental protection laws, inadequate enforcement and ineffective legal systems make it difficult to combat illegal activities related to illicit farming, fishing, land-clearing or wildlife trade. As a result, natural resources are often overexploited to drive economic development and improve living standards (BloombergNEF, 2024).

Yet, investing in biodiversity can secure important benefits. For instance, estimates find that for every USD 1 invested in the conservation and maintenance of natural ecosystems, as well as in the restoration of agricultural land, over USD 20 in benefits could be realised (GGKP, 2024). Further, investing in expanding protected area coverage to 30% of the Earth's surface could lead to higher overall revenues than if such coverage was not expanded (estimated at between USD 64 billion and USD 454 billion per year by 2050) (Waldron, Adams, Allan, Arnell, & al., 2020). Moreover, investing in nature conservation and restoration, such as rewilding ecosystems on a landscape scale or regenerating farmland (WEF, 2020), not only stimulates economic growth but also provides valuable non-monetary benefits. These include improved provision of ecosystems services, such as water purification; climate change mitigation; cultural and spiritual value preservation; and providing socio-economic opportunities for communities (IUCN, 2021; World Bank Group, 2021; Waldron, Adams, Allan, Arnell, & al., 2020). While the global decline of biodiversity affects all countries, biodiversity and pressures on biodiversity are unequally distributed around the world (Arlaud, et al., 2018). Most impacts fall on lower income countries and marginalised populations within those countries (Förster, 2022).

Overall, ignoring biodiversity's key role in sustainable development can introduce important risks to global economic, trade and financial systems (WEF, 2024; Dasgupta, 2021), and deepen international and subnational inequities (Obura, et al., 2022). The main types of risk include physical risks, transition risks and liability risks (Power, Dunz, & Gavryliuk, 2022; Dasgupta, 2021; AFD, 2021) (Box 1.1). When these risks are combined, especially physical and transition risks, the loss of biodiversity can increase systemic

risks (OECD, 2021), which can spread through the whole economy and interact with other environmental risks, notably climate change (OECD, 2019).<sup>3</sup> These risks can then ripple through the broader economy, affecting food security, trade and rural incomes. Combined with climate impacts like drought and shifting rainfall, they amplify instability and undermine long-term development gains. Box 1.1 and Figure 1.3. explain how biodiversity loss can impact the economy and, in turn, development processes and development co-operation.

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<sup>3</sup> Climate change drives between 11-16% of all biodiversity loss and is one of its fastest growing drivers (WEF, 2020).

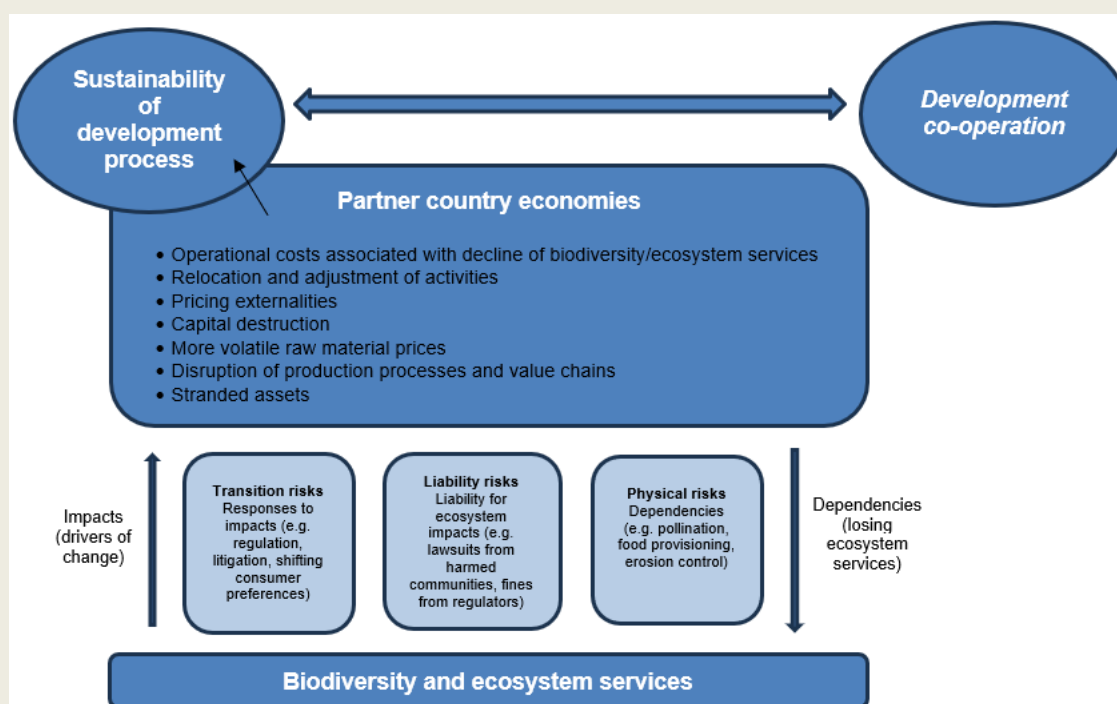
### Box 1.1. Biodiversity loss exposes economies to systemic risks

Physical risks stem from the direct impact of biodiversity loss (e.g. deforestation, water loss) and the non-linear disruption of the ecosystem services that biodiversity provides (i.e. if tipping points are reached and the ecosystem collapses). These risks can be chronic (e.g. gradual decline of species diversity) or acute (e.g. natural disasters). Physical risks can have negative impacts on global supply chains and production (e.g. lower agricultural productivity without pollination services), with macroeconomic implications (e.g. inflation). These affect the overall context in which development co-operation operates in partner countries, and compound other development needs and activities of these countries (Power, Dunz, & Gavryliuk, 2022).

Transition risks result from changes in economic policy, regulation, technological advancement, and shifting consumer preferences in response to actions aimed at protecting, restoring and/or reducing negative impacts on biodiversity. The greater the probability of introducing new standards, or for consumers to seek alternatives, the greater the need to change practices among private sector and financial institutions with large impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems. Further, the greater the physical risk, the greater the justification for transitioning and for providers to encourage such transition, as any adapted or alternative investment would avoid wastage of resources (Dasgupta, 2021).

Finally, liability risks are intensifying with increasing public awareness on biodiversity. When dealing with international financial investments, such as those associated with development co-operation or foreign direct investment, reputational risks may impact upon economic, trade, political and diplomatic relations among partners, especially as the impact on biodiversity in developing countries can often be attributed to the consumption of natural resources in developed countries (AFD, 2021).

Figure 1.3. The economy faces risks from the loss of ecosystem services and biodiversity



Source: Figure adapted from (OECD, 2023).

## Nature-based solutions play a key role in addressing the strong interlinkages between biodiversity loss and climate change

The interlinkages between biodiversity loss and climate change are increasingly recognised, backed by scientific evidence for these critical links and the importance of addressing both crises together (IPBES and IPCC, 2021). Forests, grasslands, wetlands and seagrass meadows act as vital carbon sinks, sequestering carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere and thereby playing a vital role in reducing the atmospheric stock of greenhouse gas emissions (IPCC, 2021). Their degradation releases substantial quantities of greenhouse gases, posing a significant threat to the global climate, undermining any technological advances in areas such as renewable energy. Biodiversity also provides climate adaptation benefits, securing ecosystem resilience to climate events (Isbell, Craven, Connolly, Loreau, & Schmid, 2015). For example, more biodiverse forests are better able to withstand climate extremes, particularly droughts, than low-diversity ones (Jactel, et al., 2017). In turn, biodiversity loss is a key driver of climate change, with agriculture, forestry and other land use (which lead to the conversion of land rich in biodiversity) accounting for 13-21% of global greenhouse gas emissions over 2010-19 (UNFCCC, 2021).

As climate change and biodiversity are deeply intertwined, policymakers are calling for synergistic action (Kok, et al., 2024) which includes the search for co-benefits (Leclère, et al., 2020) and dealing with trade-offs (WWF, 2023) through careful planning and management (OECD, 2024; IEA, 2022). For example, while hydroelectric power can promote net-zero goals, the dams required can reduce the abundance of nitrogen recycling bacteria, harming endemic river species (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021). While mining for lithium or gold is needed for electric vehicle batteries, it needs to be planned so that it does not materially affect high-value forest ecosystems (Sonter, Dade, Watson, & Valenta, 2020) or the lands of Indigenous peoples (Kemp & Owen, 2024). The call for synergistic action has been reflected most recently through the CBD's decision on biodiversity and climate change in 2024 (CBD, 2024) – the first time that the CBD has institutionalised co-ordinated climate–biodiversity planning at national and international levels.

In this context, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is the UN process aiming to tackle climate change, has gradually reflected on these linkages. For example, Article 5 of the Paris Agreement highlights the crucial role of forest conservation in supporting climate objectives and states that such efforts need to be synergistic with biodiversity goals (UNFCCC, 2015). More recently, the UNFCCC COP28 Decision on the outcome of the Global Stocktake on progress towards the Paris Agreement goals formally recognised the importance of nature (UNFCCC, 2023). The COP28 Decision called on all CBD Parties to implement climate nature-based solutions (Box 1.2) in line with the KMGBF (UNEP, 2022), while the COP28 Decision relating to the Global Goal on Adaptation set up under the Paris Agreement also refers to ecosystem-based approaches and NbS (UNFCCC). Finally, the Joint Statement on Climate, Nature and People released on Nature, Forests and Oceans Day at COP28, by the Presidency of the CBD COP15, committed Parties to better align and co-ordinate climate and biodiversity processes (UAE COP28 Presidency, 2023). At the UNFCCC COP29 held in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2024, there were also significant commitments related to nature and biodiversity. For example, civil society issued the COP29 Nature Statement, calling for parties to finance nature's role in climate action, and demanding strong recognition of NbS in the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, which calls on all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of financing to developing country Parties for climate action (UNFCCC, 2025). However, in the end biodiversity and NbS were not included in this goal.

### Box 1.2. Nature-based solutions are important tools but need to be well designed

Nature-based solutions (NbS) have become essential for climate change adaptation and mitigation, and if well-designed can also support biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management (Pettorelli, et al., 2021). NbS refer to actions that protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, to address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits (UNEP, 2022). An example of a NbS is planting native trees to store carbon and remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, while creating habitat for biodiversity. To date, 105 UNFCCC Parties have integrated NbS into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change (Seddon, et al., 2020). However, for NbS to be effective, it is essential that they enhance biodiversity, as outlined in the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) Resolution 5 (UNEP, 2022). Poorly designed and maintained NbS can have detrimental impacts on biodiversity (Suyadi, et al., 2023) and increase climate-related vulnerabilities. Studies indicate that 12% of reported NbS interventions – particularly monoculture reforestation – have exacerbated climate change impacts for local communities, such as increasing water scarcity (Chausson, et al., 2020) and harmed biodiversity (Seddon, et al., 2021). Recognising these challenges, the Sixth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6, April 2024) emphasised co-ordinated implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including through NbS (UNEP, 2024). However, despite their potential, the limited availability of evidence on NbS benefits has hindered their widespread adoption (AIIB, 2023).

## **2 The central role of development co-operation in biodiversity action and ambition**

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The international community agreed to a new ambitious roadmap in 2022, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to guide action on biodiversity by all stakeholders by 2030 and 2050. To support partner countries in implementing the new framework, development co-operation providers will need to enhance their biodiversity action and ambition, including by aligning their activities with the framework and supporting the transformation required to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. This chapter assesses the quantity and quality of official development finance for biodiversity to date, as well as the degree to which the nature dependency of development outcomes is reflected in members' portfolios.

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Awareness of the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development has gradually reached the international stage. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the first global agreement to cover all aspects of biological diversity (UN, 1992), has struggled to put a break on biodiversity loss since being agreed in 1992 (IPBES, 2019). The implementation of the CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020) and the so-called Aichi targets (CBD, 2010), aimed at promoting action on biodiversity by all Parties and stakeholders, fell short of its objectives. None of these targets was fully met and only six targets were partially achieved,<sup>4</sup> mainly due to insufficient implementation mechanisms and financial resources, and weak policy integration across sectors.

In 2022, the international community adopted a new roadmap for biodiversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).<sup>5</sup> Its ambition is to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 compared to a 2016-2020 baseline (depending on national circumstances and data availability) and achieve full recovery by 2050. Development co-operation has an important role to play in implementing this framework and contributing to a nature-positive future (Kok, et al., 2024). Many developing countries face significant challenges in conserving, sustainably using and restoring their biodiversity (Arlaud, et al., 2018). These countries rely on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems for livelihoods but often lack the necessary frameworks, funding, capacity, human resources and technologies for effective conservation and management (Brörken, et al., 2022). Some biodiversity-rich nations are particularly under-resourced (IPBES, 2018). For example, the 40 most underfunded countries in terms of biodiversity conservation are home to 32% of all threatened mammalian species (Waldron, et al., 2013). Similarly, out of 282 state-owned protected areas in Africa with lions, 94% were inadequately funded in 2018, with available financing covering only 10-20% of their needs on average. These funding gaps – along with poor governance, weak policy frameworks and harmful incentives – contribute to the underperformance of many protected areas, putting sustainable development at risk (World Bank, 2021). At the same time, these countries must tackle other pressing development challenges, underscoring the crucial role of provider support in bridging financial and capacity gaps.

Providers of development co-operation can support developing countries by, for example, ensuring biodiversity is mainstreamed into sector support, policy support, technical assistance and other forms of capacity development, or by investing directly in the conservation or restoration of key biodiversity areas. All of these can help fill critical gaps in developing countries to promote biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use. Official development finance for biodiversity has a particular “quality” in terms of its:

- size, which is notably large in some developing countries, such as least developed countries and small island developing states, where it can be the main source of finance, domestic or international, for biodiversity;
- stability and countercyclical nature: for example, funding for biodiversity did not decrease during the COVID-19 crisis (OECD, 2023) and preliminary 2024 estimates show that the development finance for biodiversity from DAC members increased, while their net ODA fell by 8.5% in 2024 (OECD, 2026);
- highly concessional nature, as most support relies mainly on grants (OECD, 2023);
- signalling role to other investors (e.g. promoting standards, mobilising private finance).

<sup>4</sup> Including the target related to development finance, see (OECD, 2023; Maney, et al., 2024).

<sup>5</sup> Importantly, the KMGBF is not an international treaty and is therefore not legally binding on CBD Parties. However, Parties have approved a series of decisions related to the implementation of the Framework, namely the need for a comprehensive monitoring framework, mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review, resource mobilisation, capacity-building and development, technical and scientific cooperation, and Digital Sequence Information [Decisions 15/5 to 15/9; (CBD, 2010)]. These are crucial elements of success for the KMGBF.

This chapter reviews the degree to which development co-operation support has prioritised biodiversity to date, especially in terms of financial allocations, and the extent to which members' strategies reflect the KMGBF goals.

## Biodiversity is already part of development co-operation policies and finance

DAC members are already committed to stepping up action on biodiversity. The *OECD DAC Declaration on a new approach to align development co-operation with the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change* recognises the need for development finance to be better aligned with environment and biodiversity objectives (OECD, 2021). Commitments to align with the KMGBF and its mission to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 are also part of the *Joint Donor Statement on International Finance for Biodiversity and Nature*, endorsed by 14 DAC members (Joint Donor Statement, 2022) and the *10 Point Plan for Financing Biodiversity*, endorsed by 20 DAC members (Finance Biodiversity, 2022). Several providers, including France, the European Union, Germany, Sweden and the UK and multiple multilateral development banks (MDBs), have begun efforts to align their activities with the KMGBF. For instance, the French Development Agency (AFD) has outlined key strategies to support this alignment (AFD, 2023).<sup>6</sup> However, most providers are still in the process of clarifying how the KMGBF can be incorporated into their strategies and activities, and are hindered by the absence of a universally defined framework aligning development co-operation with the KMGBF or biodiversity action.

Development co-operation strategies and policies are the basis upon which activities and finance are programmed and delivered. They guide the budgetary allocations of development agencies, influence providers' geographical and thematic priorities, and guide their relationships with multilateral organisations. They therefore constitute a useful starting point to understand how biodiversity is integrated within development co-operation. They also carry signals for partner countries, showing what they can expect from providers. While all DAC members mention biodiversity as an overarching strategic direction of their development co-operation, they vary in how they approach the issue (Box 2.1).

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<sup>6</sup> These include: (1) establishing ambitious financial targets and increased accountability for doubling financing for biodiversity over 2020-25; (2) taking into account risks at project and portfolio level and mainstreaming biodiversity; (3) ensuring climate-biodiversity convergence through the commitment that 30% of climate financing provides co-benefits for biodiversity; and (4) developing a framework for measuring biodiversity financing to establish accountability (AFD, 2023).

### Box 2.1. Biodiversity in DAC member policy frameworks

All DAC members mention biodiversity and/or nature as an overarching strategic direction for their development co-operation, either as a key objective or a crosscutting priority in their development programmes. However, only a few members have dedicated biodiversity strategies: France, Germany, the EU, Spain and the UK (OECD, 2023). In many cases, members' national biodiversity policies and/or National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAPs) also touch upon development co-operation, with the main examples being Australia, Greece, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg and Spain.<sup>1</sup> Some members have biodiversity enshrined in development co-operation legislation – for example, the Spanish Cooperation Law includes biodiversity as a key principle for development co-operation (Art 2.2.), as well as one of its key objectives (Art 4); (Jefatura del Estado, 2003). Finally, sectoral and partner country strategies, as well as operational tools, may also include biodiversity, which is the case for most DAC member nature-related sectoral strategies and tools, e.g. those on forestry or water and sanitation. Biodiversity objectives are also part of all DAC members' climate change and environment strategies or action plans, in one way or another, which often refer to nature-based solutions (OECD, 2023).

Note: <sup>1</sup> (The Government of the Republic of Korea, 2023; Government of Ireland, 2022; Hellenic Republic, 2014; Ministry of the Environment, 2022; Le Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, 2023; Ministry of Ecological Transition, 2023; Commonwealth of Australia, 2024).

Reflecting their strategic frameworks, most development co-operation providers have been supporting biodiversity-related activities financially for several years. Public and private development finance, which includes official development finance, for biodiversity increased from all sources between 2015 and 2024. Two methods were used to assess these amounts and both found a sharp increase in the total over this period. The first reflects the full values of these flows (i.e. biodiversity-related official development finance or ODF, akin to an upper bound of finance for biodiversity; see Annex A for details) as shown in Figure 2.1; while the second applies a 40% coefficient to those flows marked as having biodiversity as a significant objective (i.e. biodiversity-specific ODF, akin to a lower bound of finance for biodiversity), shown in Figure 2.2. (see Box 2.2 for further information).

### Box 2.2. Estimating biodiversity-related and biodiversity-specific development finance

This report uses a variety of data sources to estimate development finance for biodiversity, namely the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) Creditor Reporting System (CRS), which collects data on official development assistance and other official flows, as well as drawing from the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) database. Countries and institutions reporting their official development finance signal flows to biodiversity-related activities using the biodiversity Rio marker, as well as through two Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) tags – SDG 14 and SDG 15.

For DAC members and countries and institutions reporting on the biodiversity marker, activities should be screened and marked as targeting the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as (1) a principal objective; (2) a significant objective; or (3) not targeting the objective (the activity has no relation with biodiversity). Activities marked as "principal" must have biodiversity as fundamental in the design of, or the motivation for, the action. Activities marked "significant" have other primary objectives but have been formulated or adjusted to help meet biodiversity concerns.

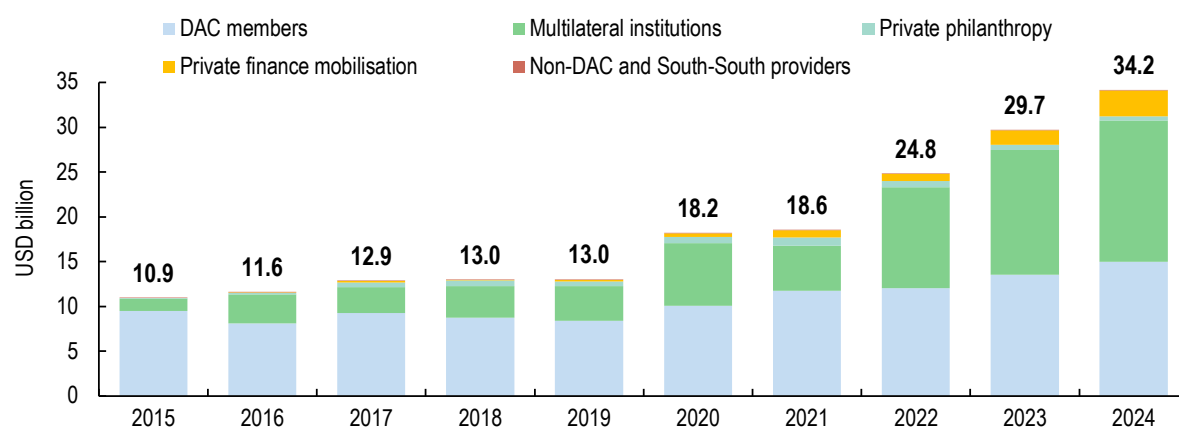
The Rio Markers were designed to track the degree to which members are integrating and mainstreaming environmental considerations into their development co-operation activities, and thus apply to the entirety of an activity reported – not just the finance associated with the biodiversity-specific component of that activity. However, many DAC members apply a coefficient when reporting to the CBD on these flows, particularly when it comes to development finance that targets biodiversity as a "significant" objective; see (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, 2024). There is no agreed definition or common approach for this practice, but 40% is the most common coefficient applied to countries' "significant" flows.

The analysis in this document uses two approaches: (1) "biodiversity-related development finance" which reflects the full value of flows reported to the OECD; and (2) "biodiversity-specific development finance", that applies a coefficient (40%) to flows corresponding to activities scoring as a "significant" (or secondary) objective of the biodiversity Rio marker and the totality (100%) of flows corresponding as "principal" (see Annex A for more information). The latter approach, therefore, provides a different scale but similar trends.

Based on this approach, development finance for biodiversity reached USD 18.9 to 34.2 billion in 2024, depending on the approach taken, with flows increasing over time. The OECD report *A Decade of Development Finance for Biodiversity* (OECD, 2023) shows that DAC members that are Parties to the CBD have collectively achieved the previous Aichi target 20 on resource mobilisation, which was to double total biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries by 2015 using average annual biodiversity funding over 2006-10 as a baseline, and to at least maintain this level until 2020 (CBD, 2014).

**Figure 2.1. Biodiversity-related development finance has increased sharply in recent years**

2015-2024, USD billion, full values

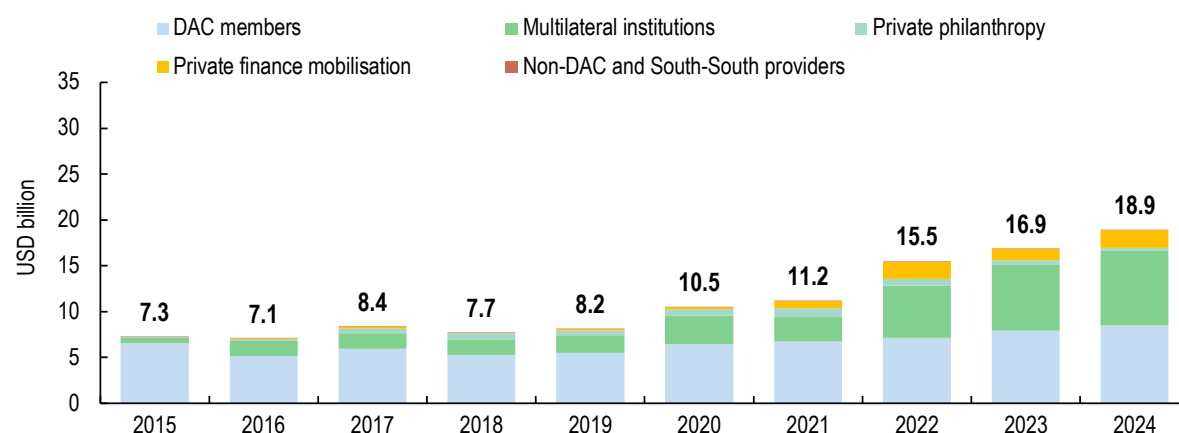


Note: The figure shows the full value of all biodiversity-related flows reported to the OECD. Private philanthropy refers to funds provided directly by them, with a developmental and international character, allocated to developing countries. The OECD does not currently capture private finance mobilised by philanthropic contributions. For details on what is covered under each category, see Annex A.

Source: (OECD, 2026)

**Figure 2.2. Biodiversity-specific development finance has also increased**

2015-2024, USD billion, estimates with coefficients



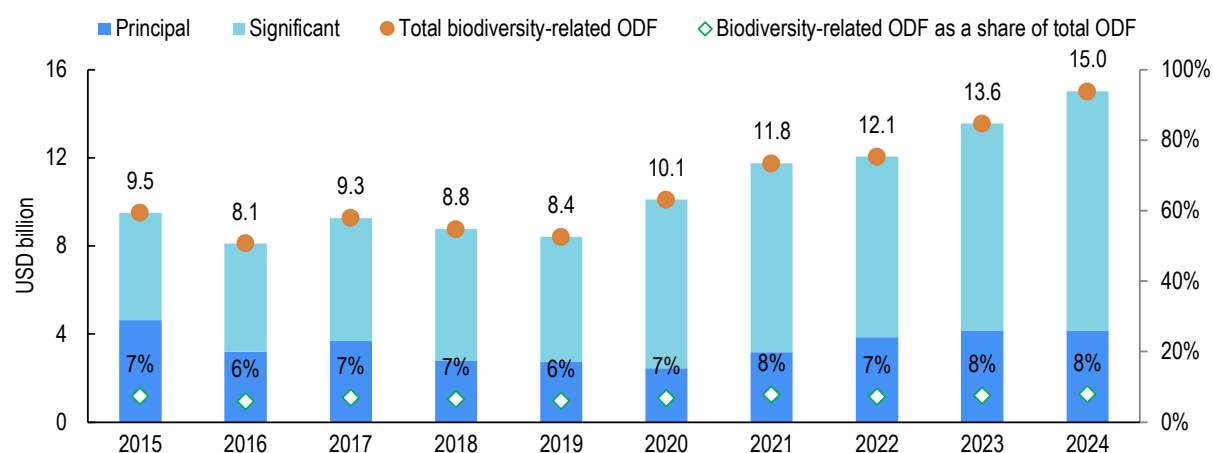
Note: The figure shows coefficients applied to the biodiversity-specific flows reported to the OECD. Private philanthropy refers to funds provided directly by them, with a developmental and international character, allocated to developing countries. The OECD does not currently capture private finance mobilised by philanthropic contributions. For details on what is covered under each category, see Annex A.

Source: (OECD, 2026)

According to OECD data (OECD, 2026), DAC members' biodiversity-related development finance increased from USD 9.5 billion in 2015 to USD 13.6 billion in 2023 and USD 15 billion in 2024. This represents an annual average of USD 10.7 billion and 7.1% of total development finance flows over 2015-2024, increasing by 8.8% in 2024 compared to 2023 values. When accounting for flows based on the use of coefficients, DAC members' biodiversity-specific development finance shows a similar trend, increasing from USD 6.6 billion in 2015 to USD 7.9 in 2023 and USD 8.5 billion in 2024. This represents an annual average of USD 6.5 billion and 4% of total development finance flows. Estimates for 2024 were 6.3% higher than 2023 values (see Figure 2.3. and Figure 2.4. ).

**Figure 2.3. DAC members have increased their biodiversity-related official development finance**

2015-2024, USD billion, full values

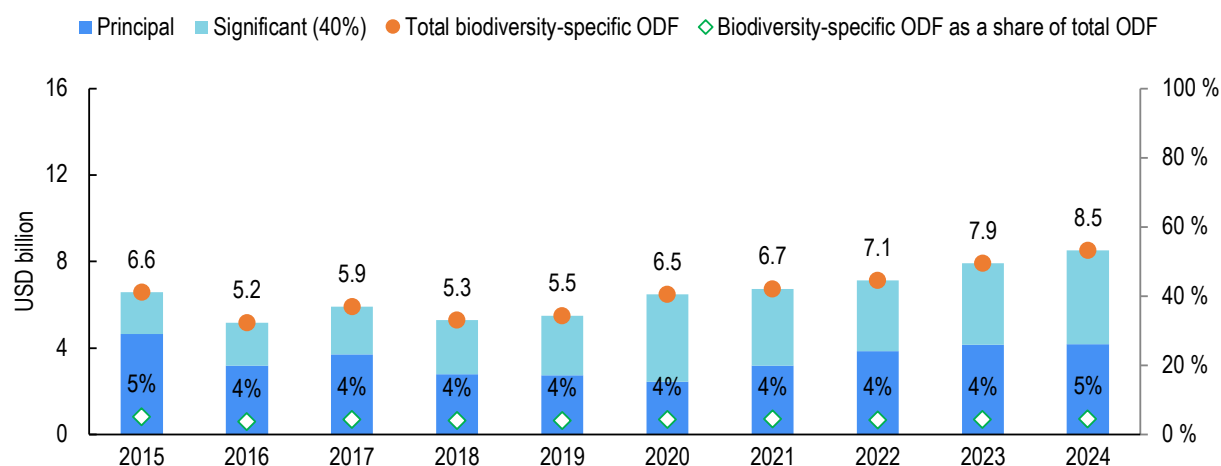


Note: ODF: official development finance. In the case of DAC members, biodiversity-related development finance refers to the full values of both principal and significant flows reported to the OECD. For further methodological information and other approaches, see (OECD, 2024) and Annex A.

Source: (OECD, 2026).

**Figure 2.4. DAC members have also increased their biodiversity-specific official development finance**

2015-2024, USD billion, estimates with coefficients



Note: In the case of DAC members, biodiversity-specific development finance refers to the full values of principal flows reported to the OECD and using a 40% coefficient applied to significant flows reported to the OECD. For further methodological information and other approaches, see (OECD, 2024) and Annex A.

Source: (OECD, 2026).

These trends became more pronounced during the negotiation and after the approval of the KMGBF (2020-2022) and also reflect recent provider pledges on biodiversity (Box 2.3). Most of these financial commitments are delivered through regular development co-operation budgets – although in a few cases dedicated facilities that are counted as ODF also channel biodiversity-related development finance. For example, France has the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM – *Fonds français pour*

*l'environnement mondial*), Japan has a Fund for Global Environment and Portugal has an Environmental Fund.

In addition, these trends reflect the fact that, to support the implementation of the KMGBF, CBD Parties agreed in 2023 to the setting up of a dedicated financial mechanism, the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). As of March 2026, GBFF has received over USD 386 million in contributions and programmed around USD 362 million for biodiversity projects and preparation grants in 87 countries, including multiple rounds of support in Brazil, Gabon, Mexico and other priority countries (GEF, 2023; GEF, 2024; GEF, 2026). This shows that the GBFF has had a strong start, with diverse provider backing and major recent allocations indicating a rapid move from launch to full-speed operation. Record-breaking pledges and successive GEF Council programming rounds reflect strong momentum and widening trust in the fund's mandate. While a substantial pipeline of projects is still in preparation, an increasing share of GBFF resources is already being deployed through country-level biodiversity initiatives, and further scaling will be needed to match the KMGBF's ambition.

### Box 2.3. Recent financial pledges for biodiversity by DAC members

- Austria has increased the portion of programmable activities that contribute to preserving the environment and natural resources to 60%, as pledged in its development co-operation policy (Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 2022). This target was replaced in 2025 to doubling its ODA and public expenditure for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems (gross disbursements) using the average flows of the 2015-2020 period as baseline (i.e. EUR 21.7 million or USD 31.5 million) (Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, 2025).
- Canada's international biodiversity programme (2023-26) commits CAD 350 million (USD 246 million) to deliver solutions that meet local, regional or global biodiversity-related needs, including to support countries to develop, update and implement NBSAPs to conserve 30% of land and oceans by 2030. It also allocates at least 20% of its CAD 5.3 billion (USD 3.7 billion) climate finance commitment to projects that leverage nature-based solutions and projects with biodiversity co-benefits in developing countries (Government of Canada, n.d.). This envelope was exhausted in March 2026 and the Canadian government has announced a new goal to deliver more than CAD 13 billion in climate-related support over 2026-2031, but no separate biodiversity envelope.
- France, through its development agency AFD, has committed to reach a goal of 30% of climate finance also contributing to nature by 2025 – a goal that it had already achieved in 2022 (AFD, 2023).
- Germany committed in 2022 to increase its international biodiversity financing to EUR 1.5 billion (USD 1.6 billion) a year by 2025, as part of its international climate financing of EUR 6 billion (USD 6.5 billion) a year (BMZ, 2024), which was met already in 2024.
- Luxembourg aims to quadruple its international biodiversity finance by 2026 compared to 2022 (Le Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, 2023).
- Spain intends to double its international funding for biodiversity, aiming to dedicate at least EUR 550 million (USD 596 million) of its development finance for biodiversity over the period 2021-25 (Joint Donor Statement, 2022).
- Finally, the UK is to spend GBP 3 billion (USD 3.8 billion) on climate change solutions that protect and restore nature and biodiversity in developing countries by 2026 (Government of the UK, 2021).

As members integrate biodiversity across their development policies, plans, screening tools and budgets (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2023), the share of biodiversity-specific ODF represents 4% of DAC members' total development finance flows (Figure 2.4). This overall share was relatively stable over 2015-24, but varies greatly across the members of the DAC, displaying variable levels of mainstreaming. For the remaining 96% of ODF flows, providers usually rely on safeguard policies to avoid environmental and social risks in development projects (see Action 2.3 in Chapter 5). Ultimately, development co-operation activities can either support biodiversity conservation or exacerbate biodiversity loss, depending on how they are designed and implemented. While no comprehensive study assesses the overall impact of development co-operation on biodiversity or its rate of loss, some research highlights specific effects. For example, infrastructure projects can negatively impact biodiversity (Narain, et al., 2023; OECD, 2024), while failure to consider biodiversity in development efforts can contribute to fragility, conflict and migration (OECD, 2022; OECD, 2022). By mainstreaming biodiversity further across development co-operation, providers can therefore ensure that such negative effects do not occur or are minimised.

Despite progress, projected headwinds are significant. While net ODA from DAC members fell by 8.5% in 2024, this did not happen for biodiversity, with increased by 9.6% in biodiversity-related and by 5.3% in biodiversity-specific ODA from DAC members in 2024. Notwithstanding, the OECD estimates that net ODA fell again by 23.3% in 2025, its largest drop ever, and is projected to decrease by a further 6.9% in 2026 (OECD, 2026). The impact on the future trajectory of development finance for biodiversity remains therefore uncertain.

## The nature dependency of development outcomes is not yet sufficiently reflected in current approaches

Livelihoods in many regions depend on nature-dependent sectors – those like farming, forestry and fishing – which rely heavily on biodiversity and ecosystem services. This raises key questions about the extent to which development co-operation activities are directed towards these sectors and whether they integrate biodiversity considerations. According to (OECD, 2024), bilateral and multilateral development finance flows to sectors such as agriculture, fishing and forestry reveals that most providers, especially multilateral institutions, allocate significant portions of their finance to these areas [see also (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021; NABU, 2020)]. Greater integration of biodiversity into these flows would therefore be important, given the risks associated with biodiversity loss, which, as noted in Chapter 1, can be significant (WWF, 2022). Biodiversity loss can affect partner country engagement, the sustainability of provider operations, and their credibility and reputation. These risks have direct implications for concessional lending and grant-making, particularly for providers operating in sectors with major ecosystem impacts, such as forestry, agriculture, energy, mining and fishing.

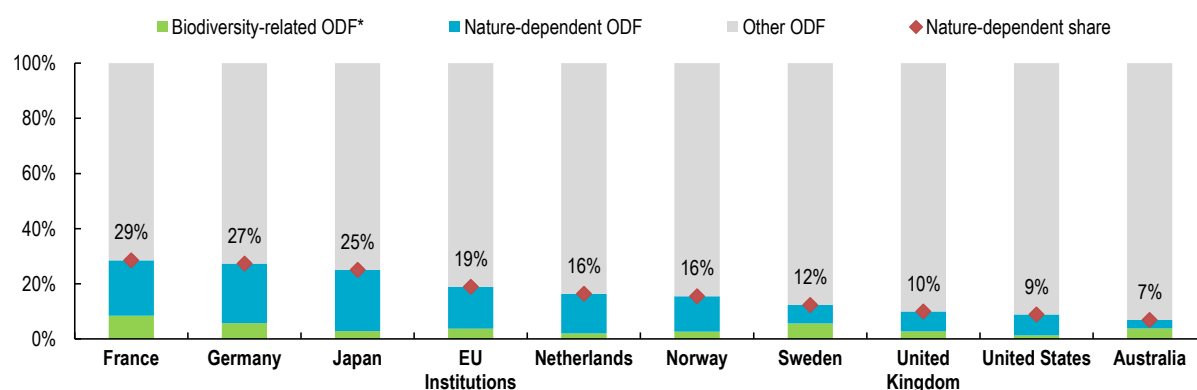
A report assessing the dependence on nature of several development finance institutions (DFIs) (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2020) found that DFIs frequently lend to sectors that rely directly on natural resources, with a high concentration of investments in biodiversity-rich but weakly regulated countries where negative environmental impacts are most likely. In 2020, DFIs collectively held USD 3.1 trillion in investments in highly nature-dependent and nature-vulnerable areas (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2020). Further research found that approximately 40% of development bank portfolios are invested in highly nature-dependent countries and sectors (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021). In response, several MDBs have committed to assessing the nature dependency of their portfolios (MDBs, 2021) (see Box 6.3). For example, the Inter-American Investment Bank is conducting nature dependency analyses, while the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development are piloting the Framework of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) (TNFD, n.d.).

Analysing these dependencies for DAC members using OECD DAC Creditor Reporting System (CRS) data shows that, collectively, DAC members invested an average of 18% of their ODF in nature-dependent sectors over 2015-22. However, of this only 19% integrated biodiversity-related objectives. Further, comparing biodiversity-related ODF to total nature-dependent ODF<sup>7</sup> shows that amongst the top 10 biodiversity-related ODF providers, France, Germany, Japan and the European Union have between 20-30% of their portfolios in nature-dependent sectors (including in biodiversity and biosphere protection) (Figure 2.5. ), with lower shares for the remaining six. Biodiversity-related considerations are not integrated in the same ways across these providers, sectors or domains: while 11% of Japan's portfolio in nature-dependent sectors is also biodiversity-related, the share reaches 55% in Australia.

<sup>7</sup> Based on a methodology developed by the Finance for Biodiversity Initiative to classify sectors as nature-dependent (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021).

**Figure 2.5. The top 10 biodiversity-related DAC providers vary in their share of ODF flows to nature-dependent sectors**

2015-2022, USD billion, full values

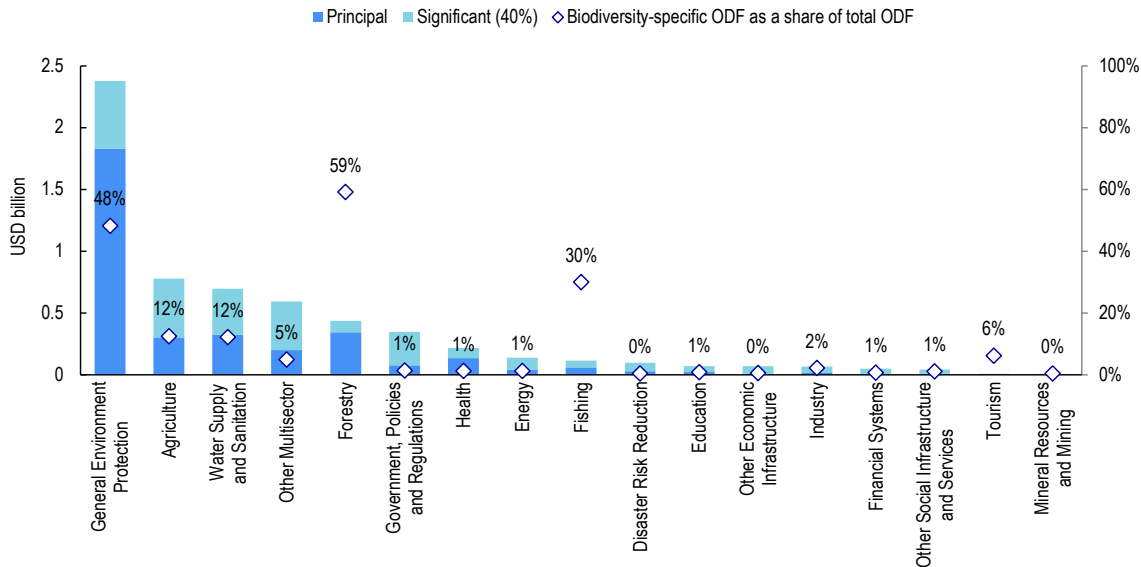


Note: \*Biodiversity-related ODF corresponds to development finance integrating biodiversity objectives within the nature-dependent sectors showcased (agriculture, forestry, fishing, water supply and sanitation, energy, biodiversity, and biosphere protection) (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021). Other ODF may also be targeting nature-dependent sectors and be biodiversity-related, but this is not reflected in this figure. For more information on the classification of nature-dependent sectors, see Annex A.

While differences in how providers report their biodiversity-related ODF to the OECD may partly explain these variations, they also highlight the significant challenge ahead in aligning development co-operation with biodiversity action and the KMGBF. Figure 2.6 shows that the main sectors targeted by DAC members' biodiversity-related development finance over 2015-24 were forestry (59%), general environment protection (48%) and fishing (30%). In most cases, biodiversity-specific activities have been targeting biodiversity objectives as a significant objective (light blue portion), except in the general environment protection and forestry sectors, where they mostly represent the principal objective of the activities (dark blue). Variations in the share of biodiversity considerations across sectors highlight the need to integrate biodiversity more effectively – particularly through safeguard policies, screening tools, risk management frameworks, and taxonomies (Chapter 5). In effect, while such climate-related alignment tools and methodologies are widely available and increasing in use (TCFD, n.d.; OECD, 2019), only a few tools are available to align finance with biodiversity (WWF, 2021). Ultimately, differences among DAC members may also arise due to national priorities and mandates, economic capacities and institutional commitments, and may also reflect differences in how providers report their biodiversity-related finance to the OECD (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024).

Figure 2.6. Three sectors account for the lion’s share of DAC biodiversity-related development finance

2015-2024, USD billion, estimates with coefficients



Note: About 1% or USD 109 million of biodiversity-related ODF falls into the “unallocated” category, i.e. it is not earmarked to a sector, and so has not been included in this analysis. For further information on the classification of socio-economic areas please Annex A.  
Source: (OECD, 2026).

For providers, the limited integration of biodiversity considerations across nature-dependent sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and infrastructure presents a critical challenge to the effectiveness and coherence of development co-operation. When sectoral investments fail to account for biodiversity impacts and dependencies, there is a heightened risk of financing activities that inadvertently undermine ecological integrity, thus jeopardising both conservation outcomes and long-term development objectives. This fragmentation not only reduces the sustainability of ODF-supported interventions but also increases the vulnerability of partner countries to climate and ecological shocks, eroding returns on development finance. Moreover, without mainstreaming biodiversity into broader sectoral dialogue and budget processes, ODF would remain isolated, underleveraged and often marginal in scale. Failing to promote cross-sectoral integration also limits the uptake of NbS and constrains the ability of partner countries to access emerging biodiversity finance mechanisms, ultimately weakening global progress toward climate and biodiversity targets. To address these risks, donors would need to embed biodiversity into all aspects of development co-operation, through safeguards, policy dialogue, integrated planning and by supporting partner countries in aligning biodiversity goals with their sectoral investments and national budgets. The next chapter outlines a framework to guide development co-operation providers in strengthening their biodiversity action and ensuring effective alignment with the KMGBF goals and targets, touching upon these elements.

# **3**

## **An actionable framework to align development co-operation with biodiversity action**

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The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) contains 4 goals and 23 specific time-bound targets, all of which are related in one way or another to the provision of development co-operation. This chapter proposes a framework containing key actions that can help providers strengthen their biodiversity action and ensure effective alignment with the KMGBF goals and targets.

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## The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework requires development co-operation support

### *The KMGBF goals have direct relevance for development co-operation*

Aligning development co-operation with the KMGBF will mean ensuring that provider activities contribute effectively to achieving the framework's targets by 2030 and goals by 2050 (CBD, 2022). The KMGBF has 4 goals supported by 23 specific, time-bound targets that are related in different ways to the provision of development co-operation. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the ways in which these four goals are relevant to development co-operation. Goals A (integrity, connectivity and resilience of ecosystems) and B (sustainable use and management of biodiversity) state the desired ecological outcomes of the KMGBF by 2050, through the implementation of targets by 2030. Goals C (Access and Benefit-sharing) and D (means of implementation) and their related targets provide the conditions, tools and instruments for the success of the KMGBF. Of these, Goal D is of direct relevance to providers of development co-operation, as it aims at closing the biodiversity finance gap of USD 700 billion per year and aligning public and private financial flows with the KMGBF.

**Table 3.1. The KMGBF goals are all relevant to development co-operation**

| KMGBF Goals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Relevance to development co-operation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goal A</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050; human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels; the genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.                                                                                                | Halting and reversing biodiversity loss is central in the KMGBF and reducing harmful development finance flows will contribute to this goal. To further align with this goal, providers will need to integrate biodiversity into existing development interventions, as well as create additional efforts specifically targeting biodiversity conservation and restoration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Goal B</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | This goal implies that providers will need to continue investing in the sustainable management of natural resources across a range of sectors – on top of activities that promote the conservation and restoration of biodiversity. To do so, providers will need to embed biodiversity into decision-making processes and seek additional mainstreaming opportunities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Goal C</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples, and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protected, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments. | This goal aims at justice and equity in the use of biodiversity, meaning that providers would need to include these considerations in the design and implementation of their interventions. This includes supporting the fair and transparent sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, digital sequence information, including traditional knowledge; and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples, and local communities in managing biodiversity, and acknowledging their key role as active biodiversity stewards.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Goal D</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the KMGBF are secured and equitably accessible to all Parties, especially developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of USD 700 billion per year, and aligning financial flows with the KMGBF and the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.                                          | This goal calls for public and private institutions to reduce their negative impacts (e.g. eliminating harmful subsidies, controlling for harmful impacts, ceasing the finance to activities that harm biodiversity) by aligning their financial flows to support the implementation of the KMGBF, and ensuring that more finance supports biodiversity and those that are at the forefront of the biodiversity crisis, as well as conservation and restoration efforts. This includes the mobilisation of private finance, increased financial commitments from all sources, including government, private sector and philanthropies, and further engagement across stakeholders for biodiversity and |

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | closing the finance gap. |
|--|--------------------------|

Source: adapted from CBD (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, 2022), *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*, <https://www.cbd.int/gbf>.

Overall, viewing these goals as a holistic package rather than individual goals can help providers identify and invest in activities that complement one another and achieve all four goals more effectively.

Aligning with the KMGBF goals therefore requires supporting them financially and through mainstreaming, while also avoiding undermining them by updating safeguard policies and screening tools – such as checklists and project risk management frameworks. The KMGBF calls on providers to seek opportunities to contribute indirectly to these goals, particularly through mainstreaming biodiversity considerations or policy coherence for sustainable development (as reflected in goal B). Alignment with goal D, in turn, involves increasing development finance that directly supports the KMGBF, fostering innovative solutions, and mobilising additional financial resources for developing countries, including private sector investments. By aligning with goals A to C, providers can further create opportunities to contribute to goal D (e.g. by redirecting financial flows away from activities that harm biodiversity).

The goals are supported by 23 action-oriented targets to be achieved by 2030. These targets outline specific actions needed to achieve the goals, effectively translating the long-term vision into concrete steps.

***The KMGBF targets focus on specific areas for biodiversity support***

The 23 KMGBF targets can be organised into various blocks (Table 3.2): KMGBF targets 1 to 13 aim at reducing threats to biodiversity (targets 1 through 8) and meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing (targets 9 through 13). These can be sub-divided into targets that focus on protecting biodiversity (targets 1-4) and addressing drivers of biodiversity loss (in particular 5-13). Targets 14 to 23 provide *Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming*. Again these may be broken down into targets that aim at creating an enabling environment to align with the KMGBF and on resource mobilisation from all stakeholders, including providers (targets 14 to 19); and those aiming at fostering capacity and knowledge, including through the meaningful participation and representation of Indigenous peoples, local communities, and women and girls (targets 20 to 23).

In parallel, several KMGBF targets call for mainstreaming, notably targets 14 (ensure full integration of biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations, planning and development processes), 15 (encourage businesses to assess, disclose, and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts), 16 (enabling sustainable consumption choices), and 22 (ensuring full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making) Table 3.2 summarises the relevance of KMGBF targets to development co-operation.

Table 3.2. The KMGBF targets point development co-operation towards concrete actions

| KMGBF targets                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Relevance to development co-operation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Reducing threats to biodiversity and meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Target 1.</b> Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss<br><b>Target 2.</b> Restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems<br><b>Target 3.</b> Conserve 30% of land, waters and seas<br><b>Target 4.</b> Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>These targets focus provider action on stopping the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance and protecting and restoring 30% of Earth's lands, oceans and coastal areas and inland waters. These targets focus their attention on sectors with a direct physical impact (i.e. agriculture, energy or mining) and will require a focus on spatial planning, restoration of priority locations, searching for ecological integrity, expanding conserved areas, and improving the management and governance of these areas. The targets will require working with Indigenous peoples and local communities to ensure their rights are respected in the design and implementation of activities to achieve this goal.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Target 5.</b> Ensure sustainable, safe and legal harvesting and trade of wild species<br><b>Target 6.</b> Reduce the introduction of invasive alien species by 50% and minimize their impact<br><b>Target 7.</b> Reduce pollution to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity<br><b>Target 8.</b> Minimise the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience                                                                                                                                                     | <p>These targets focus provider action on reducing pressures on biodiversity from human activities, including from plastic pollution; the use of fertilisers, pesticides and other hazardous chemicals (target 7); or from climate change. Actions include employing nature-based solutions to build resilience to climate change (target 8). Action is most relevant in sectors with high pollution and damage to biodiversity, including high emitting sectors (i.e. agriculture, chemicals, fisheries, manufacturing, mining, energy and transport). This will require policy development in all sectors linked to the sustainable use of natural resources in order to address national gaps, and will include analytical support for policy development and implementing measures to map and promote activities, products and services that generate benefits to biodiversity and people. Additional and complementary financing will be needed to promote sustainable production practices (for sectors with high impacts) and to support implementation of prevention, detection, control, etc. measures (target 6).</p> |
| <b>Targets 9-13</b><br><b>Target 9.</b> Manage wild species sustainably to benefit people<br><b>Target 10.</b> Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry<br><b>Target 11.</b> Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people<br><b>Target 12.</b> Enhance green spaces and urban planning for human well-being and biodiversity<br><b>Target 13.</b> Increase the sharing of benefits from genetic resources, digital sequence information and traditional knowledge | <p>These targets aim at meeting people's needs in relation to biodiversity, including through the sustainable management of agriculture, aquaculture, fishing and forestry (target 10). NbS can be used in this context and are key for target 11 to address underlying vulnerabilities of climate change. In turn, target 12 focuses on valuing biodiversity in urban settings. Here, too, policy development related to the sustainable use of natural resources and additional financing to overcome barriers will be essential. Finally, for target 13, providers will need to support the full implementation of the Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming (a)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Target 14.</b> Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Providers can contribute to implementing the KMGBF by mainstreaming biodiversity into policies, strategies and decision making, progressively aligning all relevant public and private activities and financial flows with the KMGBF. This will require focusing on policy coherence for sustainable development and integrating biodiversity and its multiple values into policies, regulations and development processes – as well as developing and implementing NBSAPs that are co-ordinated and aligned with NDCs, NAPs and other national development strategies and plans. This implies the need to dialogue with other providers, notably multilateral development banks, to reinforce mainstreaming and alignment with the KMGBF.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Target 15.</b> Businesses assess, disclose and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts                                      | Providers that are acting as financial institutions are encouraged to identify, monitor, assess and disclose their risks, dependencies and impacts on biodiversity, with the aim of responding to these and reducing harm to biodiversity, identifying opportunities to increase positive impacts and promoting sustainable consumption patterns. This implies the need for policy coherence for sustainable development and to collaborate and dialogue with other providers, notably multilateral development banks, and to define a process to respond and contribute to the changes required to align with this target.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Target 16.</b> Enable sustainable consumption choices to reduce waste and overconsumption                                                  | Providers can provide partner countries with policy, legislative or regulatory support, improve education and awareness raising, as well as other activities that promote sustainable consumption choices, pollution, food waste or circular economy. Providers would also need to look at ways to reduce their own footprint.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Target 17.</b> Strengthen biosafety and distribute the benefits of biotechnology                                                           | Providers can establish, strengthen capacity for, and implement biosafety measures, and measures for the handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits in partner countries. Additional support will be needed for the full implementation of the Nagoya and Cartagena Protocols.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Target 18.</b> Reduce harmful incentives by at least Usd 500 billion per year, and scale up positive incentives for biodiversity           | Providers could support the identification and reform of harmful incentives in partner countries by 2025, thus contributing to reducing these by USD 500 billion per year by 2030, and helping countries scale up positive incentives for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use. This also emphasises the need for policy coherence for sustainable development (notably to reduce unsustainable practices).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Target 19.</b> Mobilise USD 200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including USD 30 billion through international finance | Developed countries and other Parties which voluntarily assume the obligations of the developed country Parties would need to increase their biodiversity related international financial resources to USD 20 billion per year by 2025 and USD 30 billion per year by 2030, thus contributing to mobilise at least USD 200 billion per year by 2030 from all sources. This could be done through official development assistance, leveraging private finance, blended finance, innovative schemes such as payments for ecosystem services, green bonds, biodiversity offsets and credits, benefit-sharing mechanisms, the use of environmental and social safeguards, and optimising synergies between biodiversity and climate action. These actions will strengthen the overall resource base for biodiversity beyond development finance. |
| <b>Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming (b)</b>                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Target 20.</b> Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity                | Providers need to use all modalities of capacity development to promote technology transfer and scientific and technical co-operation for biodiversity, including through triangular co-operation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Target 21.</b> Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action                                              | This target highlights the importance of education, awareness, communication and data, including Indigenous knowledge, in biodiversity decision making. Providers would need to support partner countries in these areas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Target 22.</b> Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all               | The KMGBF emphasises full recognition and integration for the rights to land, resources and territories of Indigenous peoples, and local communities, and of their culture and traditional knowledge. Providers would need to seek a human rights-based, gender-responsive and socially equitable approach to biodiversity. Additional resources will be needed to support Indigenous peoples', and local communities' stewardship and governance, to strengthen their organisational and individual capacity, and support site-based conservation with financed strategies to increase access and availability of resources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Target 23.</b> Ensure gender equality and a gender-responsive approach for biodiversity action                                             | Providers would need to ensure gender equality in implementing the framework, including by recognising women's equal rights and access to land and natural resources, and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation and leadership at all levels of action, engagement, policy and decision making related to biodiversity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

Source: adapted from CBD (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, 2022), *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*, <https://www.cbd.int/gbf>

While all targets require development co-operation support if they are to be achieved, KMGBF target 19 (and in particular target 19a) is directly relevant to providers, as it sets clear financial commitments – calling for biodiversity-related international financial resources from developed countries, including official development assistance, to reach at least USD 20 billion per year by 2025 and at least USD 30 billion per year by 2030 – while also emphasising the need to mobilise private finance for biodiversity through development finance. Target 14 is equally critical, as it calls for aligning all activities and financial flows, including development finance, with the KMGBF. Additionally, Target 15 focuses on monitoring, assessing, and disclosing risks, dependencies, and impacts on biodiversity – an essential aspect of responsible development finance. Targets 2 and 3 are also important for providers, as they relate to biodiversity conservation and protection, areas where development co-operation plays a crucial role in practice. Meanwhile, targets 20 and 21 emphasise capacity development interventions, which in many ways form the “bread and butter” of development co-operation efforts (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Sedemund, Strengthening capacity for climate action in developing countries. Overview and recommendations., 2022). Overall, the need to strengthen awareness, data, monitoring, knowledge-sharing and evidence-based policy and decision making is emphasised across the KMGBF (e.g. targets 5, 12, 19, 21 and 22) – areas where development co-operation plays a critical role.

## A comprehensive framework aligns development co-operation with biodiversity action

The KMGBF presents a significant opportunity for development co-operation providers to reshape their biodiversity activities. However, as seen in the previous chapter, progress to date has been slow. Part of the reason has been a lack of a clear framework to guide and inspire development co-operation providers when increasing their ambition. This report proposes a framework to help development co-operation integrate biodiversity into development co-operation in a more systematic, impact-driven way.

Providers can integrate biodiversity and development in several ways, depending on the level of ambition and capacity they have, including:

- They can look for biodiversity projects on an ad hoc basis.
- They can identify win-win solutions that address both development and biodiversity goals (and other goals, such as climate).
- They can screen policies, programmes, and projects systematically to ensure biodiversity is considered (e.g. using safeguards) and, ideally, to limit harm (proactive integration).
- They can redesign their policies, programmes and projects from a biodiversity perspective (mainstreaming).

Mainstreaming requires that providers move beyond ad hoc biodiversity efforts towards a systematic, impact-driven integration of biodiversity into development co-operation. Biodiversity mainstreaming, as defined by the CBD and UNEP, emphasises the integration of biodiversity considerations into decision making across sectors (CBD, 2024). Effective mainstreaming requires that provider institutions have a mandate for integrating biodiversity issues across policies, plans, budgets and activities at all stages of the programming cycle, and that biodiversity protection is seen as an essential foundation for achieving sustainable development.

The KMGBF advocates for a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach, emphasising that addressing biodiversity loss requires action from all stakeholders, including development co-operation providers – and not just those from countries that are Parties to the CBD or that are considered traditional providers (CBD, 2022). Providers are also urged to align all of their activities with the KMGBF – a call that reflects the broader mandate of development co-operation to promote sustainable development and support partner countries in achieving the SDGs. Official development finance is required to focus on the

economic development and welfare of developing countries (OECD, n.d.), which builds on the integration of biodiversity considerations – recognised as the foundation of all sustainable development.

Adopting a whole-of-society, people-centred approach – whereby providers recognise and support the multiple ways that partner countries and other stakeholders value and depend on biodiversity – is also essential to mainstream biodiversity. Where government capacity or leadership is lacking, providers can play a role in supporting their partners by taking a people-centred approach (e.g. ensuring the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples, and local communities, or recognising the role of women in decision making). In doing so, providers need to align with partner country NBSAPs and National Biodiversity Finance Plans (NBFPs).

The framework proposed here reflects the above considerations. It is structured around five action areas, each outlining specific steps that development co-operation providers can take to better align their efforts with biodiversity. Table 3.3 summarises the actions and the steps involved for each. While biodiversity-related strategies and development finance can drive biodiversity action, effective tools are needed to assess dependencies and risks, and instruments are needed for mainstreaming, financial tracking, monitoring, evaluation and learning. In turn, engaging partners (partner countries and implementing partners) ensures ownership, and amplifies impact and coherence across finance and policy. Finally, research on biodiversity provides data to refine strategies and to strengthen decision making. The framework follows the full development co-operation policy cycle, including both financial and operational dimensions.

Taken together, these five action areas can help development co-operation contribute meaningfully to implementing the KMGBF, and support climate-related goals (and the implementation of the Paris Agreement) and sustainable development in partner countries:

- **Action area 1: Institutional and governance arrangements.** By integrating the KMGBF vision and mission into their strategies, policies and sectoral plans, providers will ensure better mainstreaming of biodiversity (target 14). This will also mean developing their internal capacity and adapting their governance instruments in order to embed biodiversity, while ensuring coherence across environmental, climate, development and economic goals. This is particularly relevant for climate change policy, which demands high levels of attention, and where the alignment process needs to reconcile halting and reversing biodiversity loss with climate action, for example through the use of nature-based solutions (targets 8 and 19).
- **Action area 2: Operational tools for biodiversity.** Providers need to assess their dependencies and impacts on biodiversity across sectors and geographies, update their tools and approaches, and reinforce social and environmental safeguard policies. Providers could also incorporate nature valuation tools and natural capital accounting in programming, and recognise that net-zero climate objectives cannot be achieved without biodiversity playing a role. Providers need also to ensure that biodiversity promotes people-centred approaches. These actions will avoid providers undermining the KMGBF and instead set the stage for them to contribute to it, as set out in all KMGBF goals, and specifically targets 14 and 19 (as well as targets 5 to 13).
- **Action area 3: Partnering for biodiversity: supporting national plans and global policy coherence.** In aligning with partners' needs, providers can support partner countries to integrate biodiversity into planning and financial systems through their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, National Biodiversity Finance Plans and similar instruments. They can also support them in incorporating biodiversity into UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans, with broader national development strategies as the main reference point. Aligning action with the pathways laid out in these documents will require capacity development, including technical assistance. In addition, providers can promote strategic partnerships for biodiversity across partner countries; other bilateral and

multilateral providers; and implementing partners, such as civil society, academia, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and the private sector, to develop inclusive and science-based biodiversity strategies. Finally, dialogue needs to involve all possible stakeholders to ensure effectiveness (targets 21-23, in particular) and to promote policy coherence for sustainable development (targets 9-14 and 18). This will avoid discussing biodiversity, climate change and social goals separately, thus reaping synergies and addressing trade-offs, leading to holistic management of biodiversity issues.

- **Action area 4: Biodiversity-related development finance.** Closing the global funding gap for biodiversity involves two critical actions for providers: (1) increasing and prioritising public and international development finance for biodiversity; and (2) mobilising private and domestic finance. Providers can dedicate more funding for activities with biodiversity as a principal objective by scaling up funding for conservation and restoration, mainstreaming biodiversity into key productive sectors, aligning biodiversity finance with climate goals, and ensuring that funds reach biodiversity-rich and high-risk areas, especially in least developed countries. Additional finance can be mobilised from the private sector for biodiversity by strengthening enabling environments, acting as intermediaries between public and private actors, and promoting biodiversity-positive investments. Together these actions align with Goal D and targets 16-20.
- **Action area 5: Focus on learning and evidence.** Providers could enhance their own monitoring, evaluation and learning by improving comprehensive data collection and conducting impact assessments to track biodiversity-related progress, impact and effectiveness, rather than tracking biodiversity-related development finance alone. This could also facilitate learning from the on-going alignment process to help implement all goals and targets. Providers could also support research on biodiversity-related issues to raise awareness on how functional ecosystems help sustain livelihoods and development, and to assess the nature-dependencies of provider activities. This will help improve understanding of the interconnections between biodiversity and other areas, support more effective policy and programming, and help implement all goals and targets.

**Table 3.3. The development co-operation biodiversity action framework consists of five interlinked action areas**

| Action area                                                                                       | Location         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>1. Institutional and governance arrangements</b>                                               | <b>Chapter 4</b> |
| ✓ Establish a coherent vision and, where appropriate, measurable objectives for biodiversity      |                  |
| ✓ Develop internal capacity and the right governance arrangements to align with the KMGBF         |                  |
| ✓ Strengthen the integration of biodiversity considerations into climate change action            |                  |
| <b>2. Operational tools for biodiversity</b>                                                      | <b>Chapter 5</b> |
| ✓ Understand and assess the dependence and impacts on biodiversity across sectors and geographies |                  |
| ✓ Update tools and approaches to mainstream biodiversity                                          |                  |
| ✓ Reinforce policies for social and environmental safeguards                                      |                  |
| ✓ Ensure that biodiversity action promotes people-centred approaches                              |                  |
| <b>3. Partnering for biodiversity: supporting national plans and global policy coherence</b>      | <b>Chapter 6</b> |

|           |                                                                                     |                  |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| ✓         | Align with partner country strategies, notably NBSAPs and NBFPs, and visions        |                  |
| ✓         | Enable alignment of the international development co-operation system               |                  |
| ✓         | Foster policy coherence for sustainable development                                 |                  |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Biodiversity-related development finance</b>                                     | <b>Chapter 7</b> |
| ✓         | Use development finance for biodiversity strategically                              |                  |
| ✓         | Mobilise additional finance from the private sector for biodiversity                |                  |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Focus on learning and evidence</b>                                               | <b>Chapter 8</b> |
| ✓         | Update tracking systems to reflect the KMGBF                                        |                  |
| ✓         | Enhance impact, learning and innovation in biodiversity monitoring                  |                  |
| ✓         | Deepen the evidence base on the links between development, climate and biodiversity |                  |

The actions outlined in this report offer a comprehensive framework for enhancing biodiversity action. Each of the action areas shown in Table 3.3 is explored in depth in the five chapters which follow.

Implementing these actions may require adjustments to business models, and providers can either adopt this framework in full, implement it gradually or apply it selectively, depending on their size, capacity, priorities and ambitions. Providers are at different stages in implementing the KMGBF, have different priorities when engaging in biodiversity, and vary in their capacity to operate in this area. Hence, the uptake of these actions will vary across providers – they should not be seen as a linear “one-size-fits-all” approach and will need to be tailored to provider and partner country circumstances. A provider might start with an initial set of biodiversity-related priorities (e.g. those in sectors representing the most significant physical risks or most significant impacts, or simply where action is feasible) and expand the coverage and scope of their activities over time to fully respond and contribute to the KMGBF. This could be done in parallel with raising awareness across its organisations and partners on biodiversity-related issues, which can build upon the general broad political agreement on the importance of aligning with the biodiversity and development agendas. Other providers might select another route that focuses on engaging with the multilateral system and developing strong risk assessment tools to ensure biodiversity is not harmed through the actions of their implementing partners.

# **4**

## **Institutional and governance arrangements for biodiversity**

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Action area 1 of the KMGBF guides providers on the institutional and governance arrangements needed to align development co-operation with biodiversity and the KMGBF. It contains three specific action areas: reflecting the KMGBF vision and mission across providers' strategies, policies and sectoral plans; developing their internal capacity and adapting their governance instruments to mainstream biodiversity; and ensuring coherence across environmental, climate, development and economic goals. The chapter also looks at how providers can reap co-benefits from biodiversity and climate action, notably through the use of nature-based solutions.

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As the global community advances the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), development co-operation providers have a pivotal role to play in ensuring that their strategies, operations and financing align with global biodiversity goals. Recognising the inseparable links between biodiversity and sustainable development, providers are increasingly integrating biodiversity considerations into their agendas. Yet progress remains uneven and often ad hoc, due in part to the lack of dedicated strategies, clear targets and internal capacity. To support more systematic and impactful contributions to the KMGBF, three institutional and governance actions emerge as priorities: (1) embedding biodiversity and the KMGBF into strategic and operational frameworks; (2) building internal capacity and governance for alignment; and (3) strengthening the integration of biodiversity into climate change action.

These actions provide the first level of a comprehensive roadmap for mainstreaming biodiversity within development co-operation. By establishing a coherent vision and measurable targets (Action 1.1), providers can shift from fragmented efforts to structured approaches that guide investments and partnerships. Strengthening internal capacity and institutional governance (Action 1.2) is essential to ensure that biodiversity becomes a cross-cutting concern, embedded in decision making across sectors and teams. Finally, leveraging the deep interconnections between biodiversity and climate (Action 1.3) can help unlock synergies through nature-based solutions, align financing more effectively, and maximise sustainability outcomes.

### Action 1.1. Establish a coherent vision and, where appropriate, measurable objectives for biodiversity

#### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 8.** Minimize the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

Most development co-operation providers recognise that biodiversity and sustainable development are inseparable, as reflected in their mandates and strategies, and biodiversity-related finance targets are becoming more common. Most DAC members have developed approaches to reflect biodiversity concerns across their activities. However, dedicated biodiversity strategies or policies remain rare (though Box 4.1 offers some examples). The lack of a clear vision and indicators to guide results and performance frameworks could lead to ad hoc biodiversity action rather than a systematic approach to biodiversity (OECD, 2019).

### Box 4.1. Examples of DAC member approaches to mainstreaming biodiversity

Austria's Development Agency (ADA) has defined a set of project-level standards that serve as an integrated framework for environmental sustainability and climate activities (Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, 2022). For example, the first standard (Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management) reflects the objectives of the CBD and recognises that conserving biodiversity, maintaining ecosystem services, and sustainably managing natural resources are fundamental to sustainable development and to strengthen the resilience to environmental and social changes and shocks, including from climate change (UN, 1992).

Canada ensures the integration of environmental issues (including climate and biodiversity), and alignment with the Paris Agreement at the project and policy, plan and programme levels through two main instruments, one of which relates to biodiversity, namely the Environmental Integration Process tool, which embodies the requirements of the Impact Assessment Act and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (Government of Canada, 2016).

Denmark's Aid Management Guidelines make preparatory context analyses mandatory to ensure that environment, climate and biodiversity considerations are integrated and mainstreamed into all development co-operation activities. These analyses need to confirm that the proposed activities are compatible with global and national environmental policies and goals, and provide the basis for identifying and formulating projects and programmes that have these considerations as their principal or significant objective (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark / DANIDA, 2021; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark / DANIDA, n.d.).

The European Union has recently updated its mainstreaming guidelines, and they include a practical Greening EU Co-operation Toolbox (European Commission, 2016). These guidelines define the EU's approach to environment and climate integration in international partnerships and identify entry points, measures and tools to support the design and implementation of actions aligned with the green and clean transition, including the KMGBF.

Finland has developed guidelines for cross-cutting objectives, including biodiversity, in its development policy (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2021).

### ***A clear vision can drive mainstreaming***

Aligning with the KMGBF requires a clear vision and strategy for biodiversity across all development co-operation activities. A well-articulated vision would outline the steps required for KMGBF alignment and how the framework will shape the provider's activities. It could build upon the commitments made in the KMGBF, notably its overall mission: "To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation" (CBD, 2022). Developing a clear vision would also allow providers to send strong signals to internal teams, partner countries, implementing partners and other stakeholders on the place biodiversity will take in its future activities. Beyond strategic alignment, this vision can raise awareness and enhance understanding of biodiversity's relevance, setting an appropriate level of ambition and identifying areas where the provider can effectively contribute, partner with others and/or take the lead (Díaz, COP15 biodiversity plan risks being alarmingly diluted, 2022). These areas could be identified based on the years of experience in mainstreaming biodiversity across provider activities. All in all, a strong biodiversity vision can drive further mainstreaming efforts, help expand partnerships, and catalyse biodiversity action across partner countries.

### ***Quantifiable targets can help keep the vision on track***

To support implementation of the vision, biodiversity-related policy and/or financial targets can guide internal priority-setting processes and enhance transparency in tracking progress. These targets could be linked to the monitoring framework of the KMGBF targets and focus on:

- The state of biodiversity (species, habitats, ecosystems), thus providing information on KMGBF targets 1 through 4;
- Drivers of biodiversity loss (land-use change, pollution, overexploitation, climate change), informing on KMGBF targets 5 through 8;
- Benefits received from biodiversity (e.g. ecosystem services, poverty reduction, human well-being), linking to KMGBF target 1;
- Policy and management responses to changes in biodiversity, drivers, and benefits; thus helping inform on KMGBF targets 14 and 15;
- Social considerations (e.g. tools to safeguard rights and ways of life, ensuring that Indigenous peoples, and local communities, women and youth are considered and engaged in the development of financial commitments); informing on all KMGBF targets.

Where appropriate and feasible, providers may consider measurable or quantifiable objectives, taking into account their respective mandates, policy frameworks, capacities and partner-country priorities (see Box 4.2). Monitoring progress (discussed in Action area 5) will require detailed biodiversity baseline data and the development of partner country data ecosystems to track changes across sectors and geographies. A basic starting point could be for DAC members to use the OECD biodiversity marker not just for tracking finance, but also to evaluate performance and set biodiversity-related policy targets.

#### **Box 4.2. Biodiversity targets drive transformation and transparency in the French Agency for Development**

The AFD Group developed a biodiversity roadmap for 2019-22 which included two main targets: (1) build the group's financial contribution towards biodiversity to reach EUR 1 billion (USD 1.05 billion) by 2025; and (2) ensure that 30% of the group's climate finance is nature-positive. Implementing this roadmap led to internal changes: AFD merged the climate and biodiversity teams to ensure synergies, enhance coherence and accelerate the transformation of AFD into a nature-positive public development bank. The AFD also committed to adjusting its financial products and technical assistance to meet biodiversity and nature-positive finance targets.

In addition, AFD developed a set of tools and methods to facilitate this process and allow robust and detailed accountability on resource mobilisation for biodiversity. For instance, it developed standard criteria to further assess ex ante the impact of investments on biodiversity and nature. AFD now verifies the contribution of an investment to biodiversity by looking at several levers, including: (1) protection and conservation; (2) restoration of natural ecosystems; (3) integrated spatial planning; (4) integrated policies/strategies, biodiversity governance and financial resource mobilisation for biodiversity; (5) sustainable management of natural resources and value chains; and (6) ecological efficiency of an investment. These are linked to a series of eligibility criteria and monitoring indicators that are used to qualify the effectiveness of the investment's contribution to a given lever.

Source: (AFD, 2023; AFD, n.d.).

## Action 1.2. Develop internal capacity and the right governance arrangements to align with the KMGBF

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

**Target 15.** Businesses assess, disclose and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts

**Target 16.** Enable sustainable consumption choices to reduce waste and overconsumption

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

### *Biodiversity teams can guide action*

Alignment requires a supportive institutional environment that prioritises biodiversity and the KMGBF. This is likely to involve turning the focus inwards to familiarise staff and leadership with the KMGBF. Where teams that work on the environment or on biodiversity already exist, they can help build bridges with other operational teams, with a view to updating tools to jointly screen risks, identify opportunities, explore potential actions, co-design activities and assess project impacts. Biodiversity teams may need to grow, or new teams may need to evolve. Merging teams provided good results for biodiversity in AFD (Box 4.2). If biodiversity teams or experts do not exist, staff could be trained in biodiversity, potentially those working on issues such as pollution, circular economy or climate change, or in country teams.

### *Bringing leadership on board is vital*

To systematically integrate biodiversity considerations across all levels of development co-operation, providers can strengthen internal knowledge and processes, including for the institutions' leadership. Securing leadership buy-in is essential for:

- linking the biodiversity agenda to high-priority issues such as climate change, health and poverty reduction;
- influencing agendas and strategies outside biodiversity and climate teams;
- establishing internal biodiversity targets and ensuring their mainstreaming across policies and operations;
- enhancing decision-making processes by incorporating biodiversity considerations into broader development frameworks.

### *Assessing providers' own environmental footprint helps lead by example*

Although most biodiversity-related impacts are linked to providers' own projects and programmes in partner countries, providers themselves – as large organisations – may affect biodiversity through their everyday operations, depending on their recycling and travel policies, and the amount and type of electricity used (Klöwer, Hopkins, Allen, & Higham, 2020; Rosen, 2017; Findler, Schönherr, Lozano, Reider, & Martinuzzi, 2019). This calls for providers to assess their own environmental footprint to quantify, minimise and potentially offset operational impacts, as well as update their procurement policies. Such assessments are also useful for raising awareness within the organisation of the actions, and some of the barriers and challenges involved, in reducing harm, evaluating impacts, setting targets and communicating findings. They may also lead them to exclude implementing partners and/or suppliers with practices in key biodiversity sensitive locations, and provide incentives for those offering process improvements that reduce resource extraction, pollution and waste (e.g. technology roll-out), or wind down the use of certain highly

polluting substances. Norway's Agency for Development Co-operation (Norad), for example, has set climate and environmental objectives, including for its own operations (Box 4.3).

### Box 4.3. Norad's environmental objectives and internal environmental requirements

Norad has adopted an environmental policy, set environmental objectives, and developed an action plan for greener development co-operation. Environment and climate concerns are to be integrated into Norad's work, aiming to reduce any negative environmental impacts and reinforce positive impacts of development co-operation. To achieve this, Norad aims to:

- implement small changes in current management procedures to reduce the negative effects on environment and climate of all its development co-operation;
- ask partners to focus on environmental considerations, and prioritise applicants and projects that demonstrate sound environmental management and good environmental performance;
- invest additional time and resources in selected projects and partnerships where the opportunity for improvements is particularly significant;
- promote and support partners' own green transition to contribute to improvements beyond the activities directly supported through Norwegian development co-operation;
- strengthen partner countries' efforts to fulfil their national commitments under the Paris Agreement and other international environmental goals.

Norad took steps to strengthen its internal capacity on environment and climate issues. It developed an environmental management system, set internal environmental goals and enhance internal co-ordination to reap synergies across environmental, sectoral and country teams. It also strengthened due diligence processes to ensure that its grant recipients and suppliers reduce their own emissions and contribute to the Paris Agreement and other international environmental goals. Further, Norad reduced the environmental footprint of its own operations, with the aim of halving its emissions by 2030. This included reducing duty travel CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% in 2022 compared to 2019; and establishing environmental requirements for procuring goods and services and for managing its offices.

Source: Norad (Norad's Action Plan for Greener Development Cooperation, 2021), *Norad's Action Plan for Greener Development Cooperation*, <https://www.norad.no/contentassets/1a1226eb406e4bfab94358363a79e3e7/norads-action-plan-for-greener-development-cooperation.pdf>.

## Action 1.3. Strengthen the integration of biodiversity considerations into climate change action

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 2.** Restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems

**Target 3.** Conserve 30% of land, waters and seas

**Target 4.** Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts

**Target 8.** Minimize the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience

The interdependence between climate change and biodiversity loss means that neither issue can be addressed effectively in isolation. Climate change is expected to become an increasingly dominant driver of biodiversity loss (IPBES, 2019; IPBES and IPCC, 2021), potentially undermining biodiversity efforts. For example, even if ecosystem restoration succeeds in achieving KMGBF target 2 (restore 30% of all

degraded ecosystems by 2030), the effects of accelerated global warming could undermine these gains. While several mitigation strategies exist, including nature-based solutions (NbS; see Box 1.2 for a definition) and geo-engineering approaches, achieving greenhouse gas emissions reduction and carbon neutrality requires close alignment with global KMGBF implementation efforts (Mori, et al., 2024).

The share of biodiversity-related ODF that addresses climate change increased from 78% in 2015 to 89% in 2023. Biodiversity objectives were only reflected in 21% of total climate-related ODF on average over 2015-2023, a decline from 24% in 2015 (OECD, 2025). This imbalance suggests that although providers are exploring synergies between climate and biodiversity policies, much greater integration is possible (Maxwell, et al., 2019).

By aligning climate and biodiversity actions, providers can enhance resilience, sustainability and long-term development outcomes. Some key actions that providers could consider include:

- Set explicit biodiversity objectives, including for NbS, within climate change policy.
- Dedicate a proportion of climate-related development finance for biodiversity and for maximising co-benefits from climate and biodiversity-related development finance.
- Ensure that safeguards avoid negative biodiversity impacts of climate programming.
- Broaden existing climate-focused dialogues to include biodiversity.
- Leverage key UNFCCC documents and processes, including Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans and Long-Term Strategies, for biodiversity action, while strengthening co-ordination and alignment of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans with these and other national development plans and strategies (see Box 4.5 on the UNFCCC process).
- Develop capacity and staff skills to identify synergies, including through NbS.

### ***Nature-based solutions can integrate climate and biodiversity efficiently and cost-effectively***

To maximise impact, providers can deepen their understanding of biodiversity and climate-related risks, identify synergies and trade-offs, and further integrate biodiversity into climate planning, particularly through NbS. Properly designed NbS can provide systematic, efficient and cost-effective ways to promote biodiversity while addressing climate change (UNEP, 2022). Moreover, NbS can offer “triple-dividend” benefits, as they can simultaneously tackle social, economic, and environmental challenges, including gender equality, pollution, and poverty reduction (see Box 4.4 for an example).

#### Box 4.4. Achieving “triple dividend” benefits through nature-based solutions in Sri Lanka

The Mangrove Restoration and Coastal Resilience programme in Sri Lanka, supported by Germany (via GIZ and the International Climate Initiative under the Pacific Coastal Ecosystem Programme) runs from 2018 through 2025. It illustrates how provider-supported nature-based solutions can deliver climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and local development benefits simultaneously. This programme provides environmental benefits, as it promoted the restoration degraded mangrove ecosystems to strengthen coastal biodiversity, sequester carbon, and protect against storm surges and erosion. It also provides social benefits, as it involves and trains local women’s groups and fisher communities, increasing local ownership, environmental awareness, and social inclusion. Finally, it provides economic benefits by developing sustainable livelihoods through eco-tourism, fisheries enhancement, and mangrove-friendly aquaculture, creating income while conserving ecosystems.

Source: (UN, 2024).

#### Box 4.5. Nature-based solutions are increasingly part of the UNFCCC process

Following UNFCCC COP28 in 2023, 46% of publicly announced actions aimed at accelerating NbS implementation still lack sufficient evidence of progress. While the pace remains slow, this figure represents some progress on the 54% share noted before COP28. Among the commitments that were upgraded, six were global multilateral commitments, two were Africa-based, and two were from Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the Nature4Climate NbS Commitment Tracker, 22 additional NbS-related commitments were announced during COP28. New analysis highlights a significant shift toward inclusivity – more than half of these 22 new commitments include explicit references to Indigenous peoples, and local communities, a notable improvement on pre-COP28 levels, where only 11% of commitments mentioned these groups. However, commitments alone are not enough; they need to be translated into tangible actions that drive real impact on the ground.

Source: (Nature4Climate, 2024).

### ***Prioritising actions that deliver multiple sustainability benefits will maximise benefits***

Providers can also incorporate climate considerations into their KMGBF implementation plans to ensure that synergies and trade-offs between biodiversity and climate are managed effectively. However, if a provider already has a climate strategy or plan in place, it may be more practical – at least initially – to integrate biodiversity within the existing climate action framework rather than develop a separate biodiversity strategy. Integrating the two themes ensures that the interactions between biodiversity and climate are fully recognised and managed, ultimately moving towards a more integrated strategy over time. In all cases, providers could prioritise actions that deliver multiple sustainability benefits rather than those addressing only a single objective, while also acknowledging and managing any trade-offs that arise. This integrated approach is already common among DAC members with important biodiversity activities, but could be further scaled up. Several recent strategies exemplify this integration at strategy and programme level (Box 4.6).

#### Box 4.6. Integration of climate and biodiversity by DAC members

Denmark's Tropical Forest Initiative aims to reduce deforestation and degradation of natural forest in response to climate change and to protect biodiversity (OECD, 2025).

The EU's Global Forest Finance programme identifies finance solutions for forests in selected partner countries, thus contributing to both the NDCs and NBSAPs in partner countries (OECD, 2025).

France's AFD has been promoting NbS for many years, but their integration into projects has been especially growing since 2021, driven by the commitment to integrate climate and biodiversity issues (AFD, 2024). AFD intends to better integrate these solutions into all its sectors of intervention by systematically studying the opportunities to use them when preparing project feasibility studies.

Ireland's International Climate Finance Roadmap recognises the interdependence of climate and biodiversity and calls for joint action (Government of Ireland, 2022). Its Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean (to 2025) includes efforts to preserve and sustainably manage the Amazon rainforest, and integrates both climate and biodiversity objectives (Government of Ireland, 2022).

Luxembourg's International Climate Finance Strategy (2021-2025) incorporates natural capital, biodiversity, forestry and land use as key funding themes. It prioritises NbS to bridge gaps between climate and biodiversity policies (Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, 2021).

Norway's NbS financing goes through the Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative, which preserves the world's tropical forests and fosters climate adaptation (NICFI, n.d.). Since its launch in 2008, support for partner countries' own policies has been key and a prerequisite for entering into bilateral agreements. In addition to Norway's state-to-state agreements with countries, the initiative provides support to a wide portfolio of strategic partners within different sectors, such as law enforcement, agroindustry and civil society (NICFI, n.d.).

Spain's Araucima programme supports countries in Latin America and the Caribbean on climate change, while preserving the environment and promoting sustainable development (AECID, n.d.).

#### ***Embedding biodiversity into climate planning avoids more costly future actions***

Providers may also identify "no or low-regret" actions that deliver clear benefits regardless of future uncertainty, including whether or not projected biodiversity loss, climate impacts, or economic changes occur exactly as expected. Examples include water efficiency projects, which reduce nature-related risks while enhancing climate resilience; urban green spaces, which mitigate urban heat island effects while providing habitat and recreational benefits; and NbS that integrate climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation (e.g. mangrove restoration buffers coastal communities from storm surges, erosion, and sea-level rise, while providing critical habitat for fish, crustaceans, and migratory birds, and supporting coastal ecosystem health and biodiversity recovery), avoiding costly trade-offs and future retrofits. By embedding biodiversity into climate planning, providers can maximise synergies, minimise conflicts and drive holistic sustainability outcomes in partner countries.

To conclude this chapter, and as the implementation of the KMGBF gathers pace, development co-operation providers are uniquely positioned to drive transformative change by integrating biodiversity across strategies, operations and financing. Realising this potential requires more than high-level commitment: it demands the systematic embedding of biodiversity into institutional frameworks, the strengthening of internal capacity and governance structures, and the full integration of biodiversity within climate change action. Together, these priorities form the foundation of a coherent, scalable and measurable approach to biodiversity mainstreaming. By setting a strategic vision aligned with the KMGBF,

building the necessary institutional architecture, and leveraging synergies with climate objectives through nature-based solutions, providers can move beyond fragmented or reactive efforts towards a proactive model of development co-operation that delivers durable benefits for people and planet alike. The success of this transition hinges on providers' ability to turn commitments into operational reality, ensuring that biodiversity is not only protected but restored, and that development pathways are firmly rooted in ecological resilience and long-term sustainability.

# **5**

## **Operational tools to integrate biodiversity across development co-operation**

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Action area 2 of the KMGBF focuses on the tools that development co-operation providers can use to systematically integrate biodiversity across their activities, sectors and geographies. It highlights the importance of assessing dependencies and impacts on nature, updating existing tools and methodologies, and reinforcing environmental and social safeguards to ensure biodiversity considerations are embedded throughout the project cycle. The chapter also examines the application of nature valuation tools and natural capital accounting in programming, underscoring the essential role of biodiversity in achieving net-zero climate goals. It also emphasises the need to ensure that biodiversity action supports people-centred approaches, recognising the interlinkages between ecosystems, livelihoods and social equity in sustainable development.

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Effective alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) requires a more strategic, integrated and people-centred approach to biodiversity. This chapter outlines four critical actions that development actors can take to operationalise this alignment: (1) understand and assess dependencies and impacts on biodiversity across sectors and geographies; (2) update tools and approaches to reflect the KMGBF and latest science; (3) reinforce social and environmental safeguard policies; and (4) ensure biodiversity and development action promote inclusive, people-centred outcomes. Together, these actions help embed biodiversity into the core of development planning and financing, ensuring that development efforts do not undermine the natural systems on which societies depend. They also support compliance with the KMGBF's targets and goals, while enhancing the effectiveness, sustainability and legitimacy of development co-operation.

Each action addresses key operational gaps and opportunities. First, assessing dependencies and impacts enables providers to understand how sectors such as agriculture, energy, or infrastructure rely on and affect nature, and to direct finance accordingly. Second, updating tools and approaches – such as incorporating natural capital accounting and spatial planning – helps to mainstream biodiversity across sectors and decision-making processes. Third, stronger safeguard policies and risk management frameworks that better reflect KMGBF priorities help to avoid or mitigate harm and reinforce accountability, while also aligning with global standards and emerging biodiversity taxonomies. Finally, by prioritising people-centred approaches and inclusive partnerships, providers can ensure that biodiversity actions respect rights, reduce inequalities, and support a just transition for Indigenous peoples, local communities, women and youth. Taken together, these four actions form the next level of a comprehensive blueprint for integrating biodiversity into development co-operation in a way that is both ambitious and equitable.

## Action 2.1. Understand and assess the dependence and impacts on biodiversity across sectors and geographies

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 1.** Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss

**Target 4.** Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts

**Target 10.** Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry

**Target 11.** Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

**Target 15.** Businesses assess, disclose and reduce biodiversity-related risks and negative impacts

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

Over time, many activities can contribute to biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation if sustainability is not embedded in their management. Even sectors like energy, transport, banking and IT (PwC, 2023), which may appear less directly nature-dependent, are still underpinned by ecosystem services and can have negative effects on biodiversity and ecosystems if they are not adequately considered. By assessing and understanding the dependence and impacts on biodiversity of their projects and activities, providers can ensure that support aligns with the KMGBF. This can involve the use of:

- **Sectoral and context-specific assessments:** these are crucial for understanding which activities, partner countries, geographies, and populations are most dependent on biodiversity and most vulnerable to biodiversity loss (OECD, 2023). These assessments allow providers to develop criteria for investing in ecosystems and locations, analyse the biodiversity footprint of

their activities and operations, and inform safeguard policies, taxonomies and mainstreaming mechanisms.

- **Early-stage assessments of trade-offs and synergies:** conducting these assessments at an early stage, such as the project design phase, increases the likelihood of identifying trade-offs and synergies with biodiversity. This proactive approach facilitates dialogue between project teams, implementing partners and partner countries. For example, see OECD (OECD Development Co-operation Peer Reviews: France 2024, 2024) for the case of AFD.
- **Specific tools and approaches for biodiversity assessment:** there are several specific tools that providers can use to identify, assess and manage nature-related risks and dependencies. These include footprint modelling tools to assess the impact of activities on habitat integrity; threat assessment tools to evaluate how activities contribute to the extinction risk of sensitive species; and broad biodiversity screening tools, such as the ENCORE Biodiversity Module (ENCORE, n.d.) or the SBTN Materiality Screening Tool (SBTN, n.d.). Assessments often require sectoral and geographical data, which can vary in availability, accuracy and reliability. In such cases, providers may need to rely on alternative data sources, such as Indigenous knowledge and new technologies like satellite-based monitoring. These tools provide structured methodologies for quantifying biodiversity impacts and integrating them into decision-making processes. For example, the European Union's sustainable finance taxonomy identifies activities that contribute to biodiversity (European Commission, 2021); while the UK's greening finance roadmap provides information to enable every financial decision to factor in climate change and the environment (UK Government, 2021).

When performing biodiversity assessments on dependencies and risks, providers can leverage various nature-based tools that focus on different metrics of biodiversity. These include:

- SEED Index (SEED index, n.d.)
- Living Planet Index (WWF and ZSL, n.d.)
- Biodiversity Intactness Index (Natural History Museum, n.d.)
- Adaptation, Biodiversity and Carbon Mapping Tool (FAO, n.d.)
- Species Threat Abatement and Restoration Metric (IBAT Alliance, n.d.)
- Global Biodiversity Score (CDC Biodiversité, 2020)
- Biodiversity Footprinting for Financials (PRé Sustainability, n.d.).

To date only a few providers have tested these tools or use them regularly: for example, AFD and EBRD have conducted joint pilots (AFD, 2024); and AFD has used the Global Biodiversity Score to measure the impact of companies and their value chain on biodiversity (AFD, EBRD and The Biodiversity Consultancy, 2023).

### ***Screening can be a useful tool for mainstreaming biodiversity and identifying nature dependence***

Safeguard policies (see Action 2.3) are often supplemented and operationalised through screening tools to identify high-risk projects (or assets). Indeed, most providers have environmental risk screening tools in place, while others integrate specific screening for climate change risks into existing environmental and social safeguards screening processes (IIED, 2019). For example, Switzerland has developed the Climate, Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction Integration Guidance Tool to screen strategies and projects systematically for environmental, climate and disaster risks, aiming to understand whether the activity creates new risks or exacerbates existing ones. Another example is the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's approach to assessing environmental risks (Box 5.1). At project (or asset) level, providers also use additional risk management measures, which are typically laid out in the

safeguard policies, and usually refer to the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability (IFC, 2012) to help prevent, mitigate and respond to adverse risks and impacts, including on biodiversity.

### Box 5.1. Sida's approach to assessing environmental risks

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is committed to protecting the environment and to proactively promoting environmentally sustainable development, addressing biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of its mandatory environmental assessments. In fact, Sida's guidelines ensure that environmental and climate perspectives permeate its operations to avoid harm to the environment and climate (Sida, 2022; Sida, 2017). An environmental assessment is carried out for each activity, including those of implementing partners, which are required to carry out an assessment of positive contributions or potential risks to climate, the environment and biodiversity, and any risks and/or vulnerabilities posed by climate or other environmental factors to the achievement of project objectives (Sida, 2023; Sida, 2022).

The assessment must include an analysis of and measures to deal with: (1) the opportunities for the project/programme to improve the environment/climate; (2) the risks of the project/programme for the environment/climate; and (3) the risks from climate change/environmental degradation for the project/programme. Sida's review of the assessment is included in the due diligence process and informs its dialogue with partners and the design and appraisal of an activity (Sida, 2022; Sida, 2023; Sida, 2022).

Providers also use screening tools that use checklists and taxonomies (i.e. structured classification systems that categorise economic activities based on environmental performance criteria). These taxonomies help assess whether activities are sustainable, neutral, or harmful to biodiversity, guiding investment and policy decisions. Recent efforts to develop such taxonomies have emerged within financial institutions (and the private sector) to better manage nature-related risks, impacts and dependencies. One example is the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD, n.d.), which is creating a disclosure framework and sector-specific guidance to help the private sector to identify and report on their dependencies and impacts on nature, ultimately supporting alignment with the KMGBF, and which could be adapted to providers. Other frameworks include the EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities, which defines environmentally sustainable economic activities, and the Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, which offers principles and tools to integrate biodiversity into financial decision making. These tools help identify projects and activities with positive contributions to nature-related objectives and subsequently direct investments towards these activities, thereby promoting alignment. While many of these are not yet directed at development co-operation, they could be adopted by providers to strengthen environmental screening, promote coherence and align financial flows with the KMGBF.

One taxonomy that is already applicable to development co-operation (through the European Commission and the European Investment Bank) is the EU's Taxonomy Regulation,<sup>8</sup> which includes criteria for economic activities that make a substantial contribution to one or more of the following non-climate environmental objectives: sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control, and protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems (European Union, 2023). In addition to contributing to biodiversity and other environmental goals, the taxonomy mandates minimum safeguards and "do no substantial harm" (DNSH) criteria. For example, it includes criteria to avoid impacts on critical ecosystems, such as Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA,

<sup>8</sup> Annex VI of the EU's Environmental Delegated Act 2023/2486.

n.d.) or Natural World Heritage Sites (UNESCO, n.d.), and mandates the implementation of environmental impact assessments, as well as relevant mitigation and compensation measures.<sup>9</sup>

Some of these screening tools also draw up exclusion lists: a predefined set of activities, sectors or practices that are excluded from financing or approval due to their high or irreversible negative impact on biodiversity, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources, transition to a circular economy, pollution prevention and control, and protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems (ESMA, 2023). By listing sectors and activities that are environmentally harmful, they essentially create a “dirty taxonomy”. Examples include the extended taxonomy of the EU’s Platform on Sustainable Finance, or UNEP FI’s Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles’ Exclusion List (UNEP FI, 2021). These exclusion lists help avoid exposure to physical and transition risks from biodiversity loss, thus promoting alignment with the KMGBF and supporting the phasing out of activities that harm biodiversity. Typical exclusions include projects resulting in deforestation, degradation of critical habitats, logging of primary or old growth forests or in forests that are not sustainably managed; production of fertilisers, agricultural chemicals and pesticides; drift net fishing and deep-sea bottom trawling; transboundary movement of waste; deep sea mining (UNEP FI, 2022); coal, oil and gas drilling, exploration, production, storage and transportation; and trading of endangered IUCN Red List Species (IUCN, n.d.).

## Action 2.2. Update tools and approaches to mainstream biodiversity

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

Mainstreaming biodiversity effectively within development co-operation requires updating existing tools to ensure coherence with the KMGBF (e.g. screening and risk assessment tools, footprint and impact tools, environmental and social safeguards and standards, planning and strategic integration tools, or financial and reporting frameworks). Ideally, these would reflect the urgency of addressing both direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, doing no harm to biodiversity, and be based on the latest science on biodiversity loss, the interdependencies across sectors and ecosystems (where many potential actions come from outside the conservation area, as highlighted through several KMGBF targets), and the potential for systemic risks.

The tools available for providers to mainstream biodiversity are many, and partially build upon safeguard policies (see Action 2.3), screening tools (see Action 2.1), tracking tools and other approaches (e.g. valuing biodiversity in programme design and accounting processes, mapping ecosystem services, developing results-frameworks and biodiversity indicators, and identifying synergies and potential trade-offs with other policy areas). A pragmatic option is to embed mainstreaming within broader frameworks on the environment, natural capital or climate change (IIED, 2020). Most DAC members already use a variety of mainstreaming tools to support environmental integration, including climate change, across development

<sup>9</sup> Other examples of taxonomies are provided by Colombia, which has developed environmental performance criteria for activities in the livestock industry, agriculture and forestry (Gobierno de Colombia, 2022); the Brazilian Sustainable Taxonomy (Ministério da Fazenda, 2024); BIOFIN’s Global Biodiversity Expenditures Taxonomy (BIOFIN, 2024); or the Working Group on Sustainable Finance Taxonomies in Latin America and the Caribbean, supported by the IFC, in collaboration with other multilateral institutions (IFC, 2024).

programmes (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2019; OECD, 2023). Yet, to date only a few tools reflect the KMGBF. One example is Finland's *Guideline for the Cross-Cutting Objectives in the Finnish Development Policy and Cooperation*, which acknowledges that the CBD and the KMGBF, among other multilateral environmental agreements, are binding on Finland and instrumental in achieving the SDGs (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2021). The International Development Finance Club (IDFC) has developed a toolbox to integrate biodiversity and the KMGBF into the strategies and operations of development finance institutions, their clients and any other willing financial institution, which may offer a useful model for DAC members (IDFC, 2022).

Yet, despite the use of these tools, mainstreaming biodiversity is often difficult in practice: ecosystem services are not always valued or accounted for; biodiversity-harmful actions are not always effectively identified, averted, minimised and/or addressed; and due diligence processes do not always include biodiversity concerns effectively. Further, mainstreaming is only monitored to a limited extent within development co-operation projects (Brörken, et al., 2022) and the application of project screening tools for biodiversity is often incomplete (Maron, et al., 2024).

### ***Natural capital accounting helps to embed biodiversity values in project planning***

Better valuation, accounting and reporting of biodiversity-related impacts and risks can help with mainstreaming. For example, natural capital accounting can ensure that biodiversity enters balance sheets, helping drive decision making by making the economic case for biodiversity. The implementation of an ecological accounting system provides tools to quantify and monitor the evolution of natural capital over time, which can help with drawing up National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and National Biodiversity Finance Plans. A commonly used tool, the Co\$tingNature policy support system, could help with natural capital accounting and analysing the ecosystem services provided by natural environments (King's College London, n.d.). For example, the UK uses this tool and has developed guidance to value nature in programme design and to treat nature as an asset in its own accounting processes (Government of the UK, 2024). This approach helps to mainstream biodiversity by identifying the beneficiaries of ecosystem services, assessing the impacts of interventions, and understanding the resource and trade-offs of protecting nature and important and valuable ecosystem services.

Providers could also support the World Bank's natural capital accounting work, which integrates natural resources, economic valuation and analysis to understand development progress and its impacts on society and the environment. Such work can provide detailed statistics for better management of the economy, like accounts for the sectoral inputs of water and energy, and outputs of pollution that are needed to model green growth scenarios, providing a basis for adequately embedding nature and its contributions into policy and decision-making in partner countries (World Bank, n.d.).

### ***Integrated land-use and seascape approaches promote ecologically sound planning***

Finally, other ways to mainstream biodiversity involve an integrated approach to land-use and spatial planning, river basin planning, as well as other land and seascape approaches. For example, integrated coastal management can provide a coherent governance framework to guide coastal area development in an ecologically sustainable fashion (OECD, 2024). Several DAC members use such approaches (Box 5.2).

### Box 5.2. Integrated approaches to foster mainstreaming by DAC members

Austria's ADA promotes ecosystem approaches to ensure that off-site and upstream-downstream impacts in its projects and programmes are identified, planned, managed and monitored (Austrian Development Agency, 2023).

Canada supports landscape management and nature-based solutions to address climate change or water-related vulnerabilities across landscapes and protect the integrity and benefits of ecosystem services and biodiversity in the projects and programmes that it supports (OECD, 2025).

The European Union develops its programmes on ocean conservation and sustainable use through a comprehensive "seascape approach" (European Commission, 2022). This approach identifies specific regions with critical biodiversity challenges or opportunities and identifies the stakeholders and economic activities in these areas (e.g. local stakeholders, such as coastal communities dependent on fisheries, aquaculture or tourism) when developing activities.

Germany also uses integrated, circular and cross-sectoral approaches (such as Integrated Water Resource Management and Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus approach), which are systems-based and integrated ways of managing natural resources and planning development) (BMZ, 2017).

New Zealand works to enhance co-ordination, collaboration and integration for the sustainable development, management and conservation of the Pacific Ocean and its resources (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.).

## Action 2.3. Ensure that policies for social and environmental safeguards reflect the KMGBF

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 1.** Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss

**Target 4.** Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

Developing countries have substantial development needs, which are primarily met through investments in sectors that can potentially harm nature. These include projects in sectors like mining, large-scale transport infrastructure, or energy developments that could lead to habitat destruction, pollution, or other harm to biodiversity unless carefully managed.

A key step in ensuring biodiversity protection in development co-operation is to apply safeguards, which outline specific measures to help minimise and manage adverse biodiversity impacts (Narain, et al., 2023) (see Box 5.3 for definitions). The mitigation hierarchy and precautionary approaches in project design and implementation are critical for protecting, conserving and sustainably managing biodiversity (World Bank, 2016). Biodiversity offsets have been used to balance development and environmental goals, compensating for residual impacts and thus fostering alignment with the KMGBF (doing no harm, helping halt biodiversity loss).

### Box 5.3. Key approaches to avoiding, mitigating and managing harm to nature

#### Safeguards

Safeguards are policies, procedures or measures designed to prevent or minimise potential negative environmental, social or economic impacts of a project or activity. They are often used to protect vulnerable communities, biodiversity and ecosystems. Examples include Environmental Impact Assessments, social inclusion requirements, Indigenous rights protection mechanisms and health and safety protocols.

#### Mitigation hierarchy

The mitigation hierarchy is a stepwise approach typically used in environmental and social impact management to address adverse impacts. Most development co-operation providers follow this hierarchy in their safeguards policies and follow a four-step framework for addressing direct, attributable biodiversity impacts (Maron, et al., 2024):

1. Avoid the impact where possible.
2. Minimise the impact through project design and implementation.
3. Restore or remediate biodiversity affected by the impact.
4. Offset any residual impact to achieve no net biodiversity loss (despite methodological limits), i.e. to compensate for residual biodiversity losses from development in one location by achieving equivalent biodiversity gains elsewhere.

The application of these four steps helps ensure that harm is addressed in the most effective and least damaging way possible. The application of safeguards may be more or less strict – with some providers only applying steps 1 to 3 and relinquishing projects that would require offsetting.

#### Offsets

Offsets are measurable conservation or social outcomes intended to compensate for unavoidable residual impacts after mitigation efforts have been applied. They aim to achieve "no net loss" or even a "net gain" of biodiversity, ecosystem services, or social well-being. Examples include biodiversity offsets (e.g. creating or restoring habitats elsewhere), carbon offsets (e.g. investing in reforestation to balance emissions) or social offsets (e.g. community investment programmes to counterbalance displacement).

However, there are not always clear rules on when to move from one level to another along the mitigation hierarchy for development co-operation. Clear and specific guidance on what steps can be taken to first avoid and mitigate impacts, as well as requiring these steps to be documented when developing activities, is essential for ensuring offsetting is appropriately employed. In addition, challenges such as biodiversity measurement, finding equivalent offsets, understanding what "net zero" or "net gain" mean in practice, and the irreversibility of species loss can complicate their effectiveness (Yirdaw, Kanninen, & Monge, 2023). Providers would need to ensure offsets are well-designed by requiring adherence to international good practices, demonstrating full application of the mitigation hierarchy, ensuring scientific credibility, long-term viability, stakeholder inclusion, and linking offset performance to funding conditions. All in all, risk mitigation strategies need to be supported by robust governance structures, clear metrics and well-defined targets for monitoring progress (WEF, 2020).

DAC members may consider reviewing, as appropriate, whether relevant biodiversity considerations reflected in the KMGBF are adequately taken into account in their existing safeguard, screening and risk-management approaches, consistent with their respective mandates and institutional frameworks. They also would need to be updated to account for the evolving understanding and the latest science on

environmental and social damage caused by various economic sectors and the highly location-specific nature of biodiversity loss. This would require strengthening internal capacity and technical expertise to apply these policies meaningfully across diverse contexts and avoid them from just being procedural checklists. Greater embedding of these safeguards into the earlier stages of programming would lead to more resilient, inclusive and environmentally-sound development outcomes. Such updates would need to apply to all development co-operation instruments and require dialogue across partners, sectors and among providers themselves, to ensure as level a playing field as possible.

All development co-operation providers apply safeguard policies, screening and risk management tools to assess whether activities could increase environmental and social vulnerability. These measures operate at multiple levels, including project-level risk management and use taxonomies<sup>10</sup> to guide sustainable investment and policy decisions. Developing or adopting taxonomies may help include biodiversity-relevant issues within their scope and avoid conceiving developing or reinforcing “dirty” activities. This was the case when providers aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change, which led DAC members to phase out investments in fossil fuels (OECD, 2021).

Currently, safeguard policies vary among providers, with several having recently reinforced them (Box 5.4). Providers could develop their own safeguard policies or base them on established frameworks used by international organisations. Among these are the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework (World Bank, 2016), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability (IFC, 2012), which are also applied by the World Bank Group’s Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).<sup>11</sup> Some DAC members aim for no net loss of biodiversity, going beyond basic compensation requirements, while others prohibit offsets altogether. For example, Germany’s KfW and AFD allow the use of offsets, but specifically as a last resort option, while other providers – such as Austria’s Development Agency – do not (and neither do Australia and Belgium).

#### Box 5.4. Recently updated safeguard policies of DAC members and multilateral providers

The Austrian Development Agency’s (ADA) *Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual* ensures that environmental, gender and social risks and adverse impacts are avoided, minimised, mitigated or managed (Austrian Development Agency, 2023). The promotion of environmental, gender and social standards and safeguards must be considered at the earliest stage of intervention design, systematically addressed during implementation and followed up through monitoring and evaluation. As project activities and local land-use choices interact with and impact upon biodiversity and ecosystem services, ADA adopts an ecosystem approach to ensure that off-site and

<sup>10</sup> A classification system that defines what activities can be considered as having positive, neutral or harmful impacts on ecosystems and species.

<sup>11</sup> The World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework applies to broader financial co-operation (e.g. Environmental and Social Standard 6 on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources or Environmental; and Social Standard 7— Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities). Other relevant policies include the World Bank’s Safeguard Policies (e.g. Operational Policy 4.04 on Natural Habitats, Operational Policy 4.36 on Forests and Operational Policy 4.10 on Indigenous People), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards (PS) on Environmental and Social Sustainability (IFC, 2012). In particular, PS6 on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources helps identify direct and indirect risks and impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services-related projects, making investments conditional on safeguarding biodiversity (IFC, 2012); while PS7 on Indigenous Peoples’ Environmental and Social Sustainability focuses on Indigenous peoples, and local communities.

upstream/downstream impacts are identified, managed and monitored. Risk reduction measures under this standard follow a mitigation hierarchy that favours avoidance of potential negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services over minimisation, mitigation, and restoration. Mitigation and restoration activities should be designed to achieve at least no net loss of biodiversity. In this context, ADA excludes the use of offsets of any residual impacts.

New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is working to improve its approach to environmental safeguards (OECD, 2023). This includes internal guidance for activity managers to identify opportunities that go beyond doing no harm to nature towards protecting and supporting biodiversity.

In the United Kingdom, Rule 5 of the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Programme Operating Framework (ProF) ensures that all programmes assess climate and environmental risks, and take steps to avoid environmental harm. Programmes must consider how climate and biodiversity will be impacted and how to mitigate this risk and support the climate and environment (FCDO, 2023). This rule draws on the IFC's PS6 on Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources (IFC, 2012) as well as existing mapping tools, including (KBA, n.d.; IUCN, n.d.; IUCN, n.d.). Further, the FCDO's Nature Facility, launched in June 2023, provides technical assistance to staff and partners on integrating nature into policies and programmes and ensures they are aligned with UK climate and environment commitments. These include the ProF Rule 5 for programmes described above, and the legal requirement to have due regard to the Environmental Principles Policy Statement when making policy (REDAA, 2023).

The International Fund for Agricultural Development applies the Social, Environmental and Climate Change Assessment Procedures (IFAD, 2021) to all its investments. The procedures note that if biodiversity conservation is applicable in a project, the potential impacts of the project on biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services need to be examined as an integral part of assessing the project's full range of potential adverse social and environmental impacts. If a project is deemed to present significant risks to biodiversity, or likely to have adverse impacts on biodiversity, the grant recipient/borrower is required to develop and implement a biodiversity management plan, which involves gathering baseline data on the relevant biodiversity attributes and ecosystem services, as well as monitoring biodiversity data as project implementation progresses.

### ***The effectiveness of these instruments may be limited, hampering biodiversity action***

For a development project to comply with international good practice in applying the mitigation hierarchy, it must achieve at least no net loss for biodiversity (Milner-Gulland, et al., 2021). This requires first avoiding potential impacts on biodiversity (e.g. through re-siting or cancelling projects), minimising unavoidable impacts, and restoring or rehabilitating project sites, and – if appropriate – offsetting any remaining impacts. However, providers need to establish limits to the use of offsets and compensation schemes, especially for species at risk of extinction and ecosystems at risk of collapse. Improving transparency around the environmental performance of projects, and devising tools to analyse impacts ex post, can all reinforce the accountability of provider activities and help with the alignment of activities with the KMGBF.

However, recent studies show that environmental impact assessments are not always used or are not always effectively applied due to capacity constraints in operational teams and limits to how biodiversity is conceptualised internally among providers (Sida, 2020). Decision makers in provider agencies often lack awareness of the biodiversity loss crisis and associated risks, and there is a perception that addressing it is too burdensome or not cost-effective, resulting in decision makers not taking adequate action – a situation that cascades downwards through an organisation (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024).

Also, some tools and policies are highly reliant on (structured) qualitative judgements and checklists, which may be relatively easy to implement but have limited connection with actual biodiversity impacts. Sometimes they apply different screening “weights”, which may seem arbitrary. For example, an activity that contributes to nature protection might be given a weight of 100 in some cases, whilst restoration activities might be given a weight of 80 – but this may not always correspond to delivering the best biodiversity outcomes in a local context, since the tool is used *ex ante*. Another challenge with screening processes that rely on economic taxonomies is that they class all economic activities under a given category as making the same contribution to biodiversity, which does not reflect the variation in biodiversity impacts from specific economic activities (e.g. classifying all agricultural activities as positive for biodiversity under a taxonomy would ignore the fact that organic, regenerative farming has different impacts than intensive monocultures that use pesticides). Another common issue is linked to the fact that these tools would also need to be applied by implementing partners, but it is often hard for a provider to trace how these partners implement them through due diligence, and project monitoring and evaluation activities.

There is also limited information on the actions taken along the mitigation hierarchy. A 2020 review on the use of such policies by public development banks found that implementation of biodiversity safeguards is variable in its robustness, leading to patchiness (WWF & The Biodiversity Consultancy, 2021). A review of multilateral development bank safeguards found that only some include supply chain impacts of their products, which leaves certain biodiversity impacts outside the scope of their safeguards (zu Ermgassen, Talitha, Bull, & Milner-Gulland, 2023). Failure to comply with the principle of no net loss of biodiversity is common and widespread across many providers, and there is an over-reliance on offsetting rather than avoidance, even though biodiversity offsets are not always considered a credible solution (Milner-Gulland, et al., 2021; Griffiths, Bull, Baker, & Milner-Gulland, 2018). There is also limited monitoring and compliance and insufficient institutional knowledge and capacity, leading to non-equivalence between biodiversity gains and losses (Milner-Gulland, et al., 2021; Maron, et al., 2021; Maron, et al., 2024). Offsets can cause social disparity and inequity, and it is unclear which costs and benefits to people are acceptable when applying this tool, which is particularly challenging in cases where badly planned offsets exacerbate poverty amongst people who depend on natural resources (Griffiths, Bull, Baker, & Milner-Gulland, 2018).

In conclusion, while many development co-operation providers have taken important steps towards aligning their activities with global biodiversity goals, significant gaps remain in both the application and effectiveness of existing tools and safeguards. Limited internal capacity, low institutional awareness and reliance on overly simplistic or poorly contextualised screening tools hinder the accurate assessment and mitigation of biodiversity impacts. Moreover, inconsistent application of the mitigation hierarchy, inadequate tracking of implementation by partners, and an over-reliance on offsets – often without sufficient monitoring or equity safeguards – further weaken biodiversity outcomes.

Moving beyond procedural compliance and investing in more robust, evidence-based, and locally grounded approaches that prioritise biodiversity outcomes and social equity would help providers strengthen their alignment with the KMGBF. To address these gaps, providers would need to invest in developing internal expertise on biodiversity, ensuring that staff across sectors understand the relevance of biodiversity risks and dependencies. They would also need to strengthen screening processes by integrating context-specific biodiversity data and moving beyond generic checklists to more nuanced, science-based assessments. Providers would also need to improve the application of the mitigation hierarchy by requiring clear evidence of avoidance and minimisation before accepting offsets, and by ensuring that offsets are independently monitored and socially equitable. Strengthening monitoring and reporting systems to track biodiversity outcomes throughout project implementation, not just at the approval stage, is also essential, as will be seen later. Finally, engaging local stakeholders and Indigenous peoples in the design and evaluation of biodiversity measures could help ground safeguards in local realities and contribute to more just and effective conservation outcomes.

## Action 2.4. Ensure that biodiversity action promotes people-centred approaches

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 9.** Manage wild species sustainably to benefit people

**Target 11.** Restore, maintain and enhance nature's contributions to people

**Target 22.** Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all

**Target 23.** Ensure gender equality and a gender-responsive approach for biodiversity action

The KMGBF underscores the importance of respecting the rights of partner countries to determine their own development pathways, while also recognising the rights of Indigenous peoples, and local communities, youth, women and girls. This emphasis acknowledges the people-nature interactions that shape biodiversity outcomes and calls for approaches that reflect the diverse values of nature, including biophysical, health and sociocultural dimensions (IPBES, 2022). Working to establish partnerships with these groups would allow providers to ensure justice, equity and inclusivity in biodiversity action.

### ***Recognising women's role in biodiversity protection is important***

Addressing gender inequalities is particularly critical for achieving long-term biodiversity goals. Women, especially those in marginalised and low-income communities, often bear primary responsibility for collecting water and fuel supplies (OECD, 2021; UN Women, 2022), making them disproportionately affected by ecosystem degradation (Förster, 2022). There is strong evidence that women's participation in development projects catalyses biodiversity action and enhances natural resource management, reinforcing the interconnection between gender and biodiversity policy (OECD, 2021). However, a review of the implementation of the CBD's Gender Plan of Action (2015–2020) revealed persistent gaps in capacity development, collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data, reporting, and financing for gender mainstreaming in CBD implementation (Elias, et al., 2024; CBD, 2020). To address these gaps, the CBD's latest Gender Plan of Action (2022–2030) provides indicative actions to promote gender-responsive implementation of the KMGBF (CBD, 2022). It calls for recognising gender-specific ecological knowledge in biodiversity policies and planning; and institutional policies that promote gender-responsive finance. These include gender-responsive budgeting, requirements for gender equality advancement in projects, dedicated budgets for gender action plans, use of gender markers and indicators to track progress, reporting on gender-related results in biodiversity programmes, and incorporating gender expertise in financing decisions, including participation from gender experts and women-led grassroots organisations.

### ***Biodiversity finance can be inclusive and equitable***

Providers can also leverage existing tools to guide their actions in ensuring a just and inclusive transition. The transition envisioned by the KMGBF is expected to generate widespread societal benefits, such as large-scale job creation, strengthened environmental protection, and the upholding of human rights. However, these benefits – along with the associated societal costs – will not be automatically or equitably distributed. To ensure a just transition, providers would not only need to consider the social implications of KMGBF implementation, but also engage with affected communities and stakeholders throughout the planning and execution phases. Guidance for providers in this area is limited, although the International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed *Guidelines for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All* (ILO, 2016). These guidelines emphasise that environmentally sustainable economies need to be developed in a way that is fair and inclusive, benefiting

workers, enterprises and communities by creating decent work opportunities, promoting social inclusion and eradicating poverty – ensuring that no one is left behind (Muller & Robins, 2024). For example, jobs in fishing and aquaculture are often hazardous and low paid, and closely dependent on functioning marine ecosystems, highlighting the importance of both labour protection and sustainable marine resource management (Muller & Robins, 2024). Integrating just transition principles into KMGBF implementation would also support the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) principles, especially country ownership and inclusive partnerships (GPEDC, n.d.).

Reflecting their commitment to leave no one behind, providers can strategically allocate funding to activities that empower historically marginalised and oppressed groups, ensuring that biodiversity finance is inclusive and equitable. While funding for Indigenous peoples, and local communities (IPLCs) has increased since 2020 – partly due to initiatives like the IPLC Forest Tenure Pledge – direct financial support for local organisations remains limited (RRI and RFN, 2024). Recognising and respecting the rights of IPLCs is essential, as they play a critical role in biodiversity stewardship through their traditional knowledge and sustainable resource management practices (Schleicher, et al., 2019). This, in turn, would help providers align with the GPEDC principle of "inclusive partnerships," which emphasises the importance of involving diverse stakeholders in development processes (GPEDC, n.d.). It recognises that inclusive participation fosters mutual accountability, ownership and transparency, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of development outcomes.

### ***Projects co-developed with Indigenous peoples, and local communities will avoid doing harm***

Currently, an estimated 247 million people live within protected areas, and if 50% of all land was to be protected, this number could rise to 760 million. The expansion of protected areas would have to carefully consider the involvement of local populations, as their participation can lead to both positive and negative impacts (e.g. if not well designed, local participation in protected area expansion can lead to social tensions, unequal benefit-sharing, increased burdens without support, restrictions on traditional livelihoods, and the marginalisation of vulnerable groups) (IIED, 2019). For instance, nature-based tourism can bring economic benefits to local populations but may also lead to cultural disruption (Pacheco, Méndez de la Cruz, Buchori, & Salazar-Bravo, 2024). In Peru, the transformation of fishing villages into tourism destinations resulted in land governance conflicts, uncontrolled urbanisation, and restricted land access for traditional fishing communities (González Velarde, 2019). While NbS can help achieve net-zero emissions and enhance human well-being, for these solutions to be effective and equitable, it is important that they be co-developed with Indigenous peoples, and local communities (see Box 5.5 for an example of how providers can foster Indigenous rights through development co-operation). These challenges highlight the need for inclusive governance structures and equitable land management policies to ensure that conservation efforts do not marginalise local populations or exacerbate environmental vulnerabilities. By prioritising direct funding to IPLCs, integrating local voices in conservation decision making, and fostering sustainable, culturally sensitive development, providers can strengthen biodiversity efforts while advancing social justice and human rights.

### Box 5.5. Expanding Indigenous fishing communities' rights in Kenya

The Elmololo are a traditional fishing community along the Kenyan coast, part of a broader group of Indigenous peoples whose land, water and aquatic resources have been increasingly threatened. Over time, these communities have lost their living areas due to forestry, agriculture, mining and the expansion of conservation zones. Additionally, outside groups have encroached on Indigenous lands, leading to the erosion of cultural traditions and natural resource bases.

To address these challenges, Finland led a project which enabled multiple Indigenous peoples to unite in their efforts to strengthen biocultural continuity and advocate for Indigenous rights at local, national and international levels. The project leveraged international conventions and treaties supporting Indigenous peoples' rights, helping these communities push for land rights and biodiversity protection. A key component of this initiative was the development of community biocultural protocols which document traditional knowledge, cultural structures and management systems related to land and natural resources; challenges facing Indigenous territories and ecosystems; and legal and policy instruments that can strengthen community rights and protections.

Through the project's implementation and outputs, key stakeholders, including government authorities, researchers and civil society actors, have gained a deeper understanding of Indigenous legal rights and cultural heritage. This initiative serves as a model for empowering Indigenous peoples, ensuring that their land rights, cultural traditions, and biodiversity conservation efforts are recognised and strengthened through legal and policy frameworks.

Source: (OECD, 2025).

Comprehensive stakeholder consultation processes can inform new activities and interventions, such as strengthening land rights, creating biodiversity-related employment for Indigenous peoples, and local communities, and enhancing Indigenous peoples' access to finance. They may also prompt shifts in provider approaches, including expanding the evidence base on people-nature linkages, updating screening tools and safeguard policies, and ensuring the right to free, prior, and informed consent before project development. For example, under IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Change Assessment Procedures (IFAD, 2021), projects define the biodiversity values that different stakeholders, particularly project-affected communities, attach to potentially impacted biodiversity and ecosystem services. Similarly, New Zealand values Pacific and other developing countries' cultural frameworks, acknowledges the role of Indigenous knowledge, and is committed to supporting Indigenous-led projects in ways that respect their history, culture and expertise. Based on this, it works to develop and deliver appropriate solutions to service delivery at the local level (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.).

To conclude this chapter, aligning development co-operation with the KMGBF effectively requires a transition towards more integrated, science-based and inclusive approaches to biodiversity. This calls for operational changes that embed biodiversity across sectors, strengthen institutional safeguards and prioritise equity and local engagement. Development co-operation providers can no longer treat biodiversity as an isolated concern; instead it would need to be recognised as a foundational pillar of sustainable development, tightly linked to climate resilience, social inclusion and economic stability. The four critical actions outlined above provide a practical and comprehensive roadmap for this transformation. By strengthening analytical capacity, adopting harmonised tools and standards, and meaningfully engaging Indigenous peoples, local communities, women, and youth, providers can move from fragmented efforts to coherent, impactful action. This evolution is essential not only to comply with KMGBF targets, but also to enhance the legitimacy, effectiveness and sustainability of development co-operation in the face of deepening environmental and social challenges.

# **6**

## **Partnering for biodiversity: Supporting national plans and global policy coherence**

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Action area 3 of the KMGBF explores how development co-operation providers can align effectively with partner country priorities by supporting the integration of biodiversity into their national planning and financial systems. It highlights the importance of using country-owned instruments, such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, National Biodiversity Finance Plans, and other climate and broader development strategies, as central reference points. Achieving this alignment requires investing in capacity development and technical assistance, as well as promoting inclusive, science-based biodiversity strategies through strategic partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society, Indigenous peoples, local communities, academia and the private sector. The chapter also underscores the need to foster global policy coherence for sustainable development as a key lever to achieve alignment with the KMGBF and biodiversity action.

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Achieving the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) requires development co-operation providers to take deliberate, systemic action that aligns their support with country-led biodiversity strategies and strengthens co-ordination and coherence across the international development architecture. This chapter identifies three key actions to guide providers in this effort:

1. Aligning with partner country priorities and planning instruments, such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and National Biodiversity Finance Plans (NBFPs). Importantly, these instruments need to be part of the country's broader development policymaking and co-ordination.
2. Enabling alignment across the broader development co-operation system, including through the work with other providers (e.g. multilateral institutions) and stakeholders (e.g. private sector)
3. Fostering policy coherence for sustainable development at domestic level, with global impacts.

Taken together, these actions are critical for ensuring that development co-operation is not only environmentally sound, but also responsive to national contexts, inclusive, and coherent across climate, biodiversity and development objectives.

This chapter highlights that effective alignment with the KMGBF begins with supporting the development and implementation of partner country biodiversity plans through capacity development, financial and technical assistance, and inclusive stakeholder engagement. It further explores how providers can use governance levers and due diligence frameworks to influence multilateral development banks and other actors in the development finance system to prioritise biodiversity. Strategic partnerships – especially those that involve civil society, Indigenous peoples, and local communities – are vital to this effort, as is stronger policy coherence for sustainable development across sectors and instruments, from export credits to subsidy reform.

### Action 3.1. Align with partner country strategies, notably NBSAPs and NBFPs, and visions

#### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 1.** Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss

**Target 2.** Restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems

**Target 3.** Conserve 30% of land, waters and seas

**Target 4.** Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts

**Target 10.** Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

The implementation of the KMGBF targets depends on the Parties to the CBD and the plans laid out in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). NBSAPs enable countries to identify risks and opportunities in planning the protection, restoration and sustainable management of biodiversity across all relevant sectors. Today, nearly all countries have an NBSAP, and they can be accessed centrally via the CBD's Clearing-House Mechanism (CBD, n.d.). The KMGBF provides fresh impetus to ensure that NBSAPs play a greater role in biodiversity planning, especially in partner countries. The development and update of NBSAPs and national targets is a crucial step in the process of moving from the ambitions stated in the KMGBF to its actual implementation. It is also an opportunity to embed biodiversity policy into

national development strategies and to prioritise biodiversity in decision making across government institutions in all sectors (UNDP, 2016). At the CBD COP15, Parties committed to revising and updating their NBSAPs by COP16 (October 2024), with 44 CBD Parties submitting revised NBSAPs, although their quality varies. However, their submission is only the first step in the national policy development required for achieving the KMGBF's goals and targets, and ultimately the Convention's objectives (Kok, et al., 2024).

To support the implementation of the KMGBF, Parties can complement their NBSAPs with National Biodiversity Finance Plans (NBFPs), which facilitate the strategic planning of biodiversity financing by identifying appropriate financial sources and instruments. Over 130 CBD Parties have initiated NBFPs, which play a crucial role in analysing the dependencies and pressures of key economic sectors on biodiversity, particularly in relation to KMGBF targets 10 (sustainable biodiversity use in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries) and 14 (mainstream biodiversity across policies and planning at all levels), and integrating biodiversity considerations into economic decision making. These plans also help facilitate dialogue between public and private stakeholders on financing needs and policy responses. Given that developing countries differ significantly in their biodiversity richness, vulnerability, access to finance, and capacity to address biodiversity loss, NBFPs need to reflect these differences and be developed through a bottom-up approach, ensuring alignment with each country's development trajectory and local priorities. Countries can also evaluate all available biodiversity financing solutions, including taxes, subsidies, conservation trust funds, and biodiversity credits, while recognising that developing innovative financial instruments can be complex and resource-intensive. To be effective, NBFPs should clarify the role of each financial instrument and how different funding mechanisms interact within a broader biodiversity financing strategy. Development co-operation providers can support this process by offering technical assistance, expertise on biodiversity finance instruments, and capacity development on financial governance and mobilisation.

As partner countries update their NBSAPs and NBFPs, providers have an opportunity to support their development through a stepped approach:

- Identify the status and quality of existing NBSAPs. Providers could assess the extent to which existing NBSAPs are up to date, aligned with the KMGBF, and supported by robust implementation and monitoring frameworks. This involves reviewing the scope, targets, financing strategies and the degree of integration into national development plans.
- Where NBSAPs and NBFPs are not yet fully developed, providers can engage with CBD national focal points to better understand key biodiversity priorities. Collaborating with national focal points under the CBD would allow providers to align support with the country's stated biodiversity priorities, knowledge systems, and institutional capacities. Early and sustained engagement would help ensure development co-operation is relevant, complementary and country-led.
- Complement NBSAPs with NBFPs. Where NBSAPs lack detailed financing strategies, providers can support the development of NBFPs to identify funding needs, sources, and mechanisms. NBFPs help translate strategic biodiversity goals into actionable and costed interventions, improving resource mobilisation and financial tracking.
- Mainstream NBSAPs and NBFPs into national planning processes. Importantly, these documents also need to be part of the partner country's policy making and co-ordination processes, including with international partners. Otherwise, there is a risk that biodiversity strategies do not drive the country's policy making and action. Providers also have a key role in supporting this process.

## ***Organising stakeholder consultations can promote a whole-of-government approach to biodiversity***

Many government ministries are critical to the whole-of-society approach advocated by the KMGBF and extend beyond environmental agencies to include those responsible for agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy, economy, finance, business, industrial planning, infrastructure and international affairs, among others. Engagement can also involve business and trade associations, academia, civil society and Indigenous peoples, ensuring that diverse perspectives are integrated. Consultations with all these groups could emphasise the co-benefits of biodiversity action with broader societal goals, including the reform of environmentally harmful subsidies, the creation of markets for NbS, and sector-specific policy reforms that eliminate unsustainable practices and better safeguard biodiversity. Several development co-operation providers have adopted innovative approaches to supporting the cross-government development and implementation of NBSAPs and related biodiversity strategies (Box 6.1).

### **Box 6.1. Examples of DAC member support to NBSAP development and implementation**

The BIODEV2030 project, financed by AFD and implemented by IUCN and WWF France under the co-ordination of Expertise France, offers a notable example of experimental biodiversity mainstreaming. Its core innovation lies in its experimental, science-based approach to biodiversity mainstreaming, meaning it does not apply a one-size-fits-all model, but instead adapts to the complex realities of each partner country. Implemented across 15 pilot countries with diverse socio-economic, ecological and governance contexts, BIODEV2030 focuses on embedding biodiversity into national development and economic planning processes, rather than treating it as a standalone environmental issue. (BIODEV2030, n.d.). A key feature of the project is its emphasis on multi-stakeholder dialogue, bringing together ministries of finance, planning, agriculture, and infrastructure with environmental actors to co-design solutions. This whole-of-government approach encourages policy coherence and builds ownership beyond traditional biodiversity institutions. The project also promotes the use of scientific evidence and data to inform policy and investment decisions, helping governments identify development pathways that are both economically viable and positive for biodiversity. Importantly, BIODEV2030 can be seen as a testbed for policy integration, capacity development, and institutional innovation. By working flexibly with countries to identify entry points for biodiversity mainstreaming, whether through public finance, sector planning, or private-sector engagement, it provides lessons that can be scaled across regions. Furthermore, its experimental, learning-oriented approach allows for adaptation and refinement based on local feedback and evolving global biodiversity frameworks like the KMGBF.

The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has institutionalised its commitment to sustainability through the creation of an Office of Sustainability in 2023, marking a significant organisational shift toward embedding environmental and social sustainability, including biodiversity, more systematically across its operations. This office acts as a central coordination point for mainstreaming sustainability principles, helping to ensure that biodiversity considerations are no longer siloed within environmental programmes, but are factored into infrastructure, agriculture, and broader development initiatives. The creation of this office reflects a strategic innovation in governance, aiming to institutionalise environmental accountability at all levels of decision making (JICA, 2023). In parallel, Japan's Biodiversity Fund supports the CBD by facilitating regional workshops focused on NBSAP development and implementation. These workshops are designed not only to provide technical guidance but also to foster peer-to-peer learning, where government representatives and technical experts from different countries can share challenges, good practices and lessons learned. This emphasis on mutual exchange rather than one-directional training is particularly innovative, as it promotes context-relevant capacity development and cultivates regional communities of practice that

can support ongoing biodiversity planning and implementation efforts beyond the workshops themselves. Together, these initiatives show how Japan is combining institutional innovation (through internal mainstreaming mechanisms like the Office of Sustainability) with inclusive, regional-scale capacity development (via the Biodiversity Fund) to strengthen country ownership and technical capability in biodiversity policy.

The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has adopted an innovative, strategic planning model through its use of Country Business Plans (CBPs), which serve as a structured framework for defining thematic priorities and overarching development objectives in partner countries. These plans are designed to ensure that UK-supported initiatives are aligned with the long-term national strategies of partner countries (including biodiversity, climate, and broader sustainable development goals), rather than operating in parallel or at cross-purposes. The CBPs allow FCDO teams to tailor support based on the maturity and quality of a country's biodiversity plans, such as NBSAPs. In countries where NBSAPs are well developed, the UK can focus on targeted support for implementation. In contexts where NBSAPs are outdated, weak, or yet to be revised, FCDO uses the CBP process to identify entry points for contributing to the design and strengthening of those strategies. This ensures that UK development co-operation remains context-sensitive, adaptive and capable of filling critical gaps. Moreover, this planning model reinforces coherence across the UK's climate and nature portfolios, helping to ensure that climate finance or development finance does not inadvertently undermine biodiversity outcomes. It also supports more transparent and accountable programming by setting clear objectives and tracking progress against shared country priorities (Government of the UK, 2024).

### ***Providers can support the integration of NBSAPs and NBFPs into national policy and planning processes***

Integrating biodiversity into broader partner country policymaking and co-ordination is equally crucial for sustainable development and to meet KMGBF commitments. The previous generation of NBSAPs often included specific "mainstreaming" targets to embed biodiversity across sectors, and some partner countries see reciprocal uptake of biodiversity goals in national development plans (e.g. targets on deforestation rates or forest cover) (OECD, 2018). This integration fosters policy coherence: for example, Uganda formed a high-level working group on "biodiversity for development, wealth creation and socio-economic transformation" to incorporate biodiversity into its development agenda (OECD, 2018), and subsequently ensured biodiversity objectives were mainstreamed into the country's national development plan. Many governments are also establishing vertical and horizontal co-ordination mechanisms – at least nine countries had set up inter-ministerial committees on biodiversity in 2018 – to align sectoral policies and subnational actions with national biodiversity goals (OECD, 2018). Many national strategies now explicitly link biodiversity with economic and social objectives; for instance, Indonesia's Green Growth Strategy and Ethiopia's poverty reduction plan integrate biodiversity considerations alongside development targets (OECD, 2018). Such efforts also need to be at the centre of the new generation of NBSAPs and NBFPs, as embedding biodiversity into core development planning will enable partner countries to better implement the KMGBF.

To achieve this, providers can refer to other partner country commitments and action plans, such as their UNFCCC Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) National Action Plans. Aligning with these frameworks can integrate biodiversity within provider activities, promoting coherence between biodiversity and broader environmental goals. For example, many NDCs include nature-based solutions and therefore can be important to align with partner country needs and to leverage synergies between climate and biodiversity (NDC Partnership and GIZ, 2024). Other useful resources that providers can refer to include national or regional policy frameworks, green growth

strategies, sector transition plans and voluntary national reviews on SDG implementation. Leveraging these national documents (as well as NBSAPs and NBFPs) would help providers align with the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) principle of "country ownership," ensuring that developing countries set their own development priorities, strategies, and processes, and take the lead in planning, implementing and evaluating development initiatives (GPEDC, n.d.). This principle acknowledges that sustainable development outcomes are most effectively achieved when efforts align with nationally and locally defined goals, contexts, and capacities. Country ownership ensures that external support is harmonised with national priorities, enhancing relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. It also supports developing stronger national institutions and local capacities, fostering resilience and self-reliance over the long term.

Sector-level integration is equally central. For instance, in the agriculture and forestry sectors, mainstreaming biodiversity helps maintain the ecosystem services that underpin food security and livelihoods (CEBioS, 2021). Healthy, biodiverse ecosystems support crop pollination, soil fertility, and water regulation, making agricultural systems more resilient and productive. By adopting biodiversity-friendly practices (e.g. agroecology or sustainable land use) in agricultural plans, countries can increase yields while conserving habitats, thereby aligning rural development goals with biodiversity conservation. In infrastructure and land-use planning, integrating biodiversity can guide project design to avoid critical ecosystems and use nature-based solutions. For example, South Africa's national ecosystem assessment provided spatial data to identify priority areas for conservation, which has been used to develop sectoral plans and integrate biodiversity into activities like water infrastructure development and mining operations (OECD, 2018). This kind of evidence-based mainstreaming ensures that development projects mitigate harm to ecosystems and even enhance services like flood protection and water supply. Likewise, integrating biodiversity into finance and economic decision-making leads to more coherent policy outcomes. Several countries are working with finance ministries and central banks to value natural capital and include it in national accounts. Through the World Bank's WAVES partnership, for instance, countries such as Botswana, Colombia and Indonesia have introduced natural capital accounting to mainstream natural resource values in development planning (World Bank, 2025). Such approaches ensure that fiscal and investment decisions account for ecosystem values and long-term sustainability, aligning financial flows with biodiversity objectives. Overall, sectoral integration of biodiversity leads to synergies: development initiatives in agriculture, infrastructure and finance are designed in ways that protect and leverage natural systems, resulting in more durable economic gains and the conservation of biodiversity in tandem.

Development co-operation plays a pivotal role in supporting and scaling up this integration of biodiversity into policies and sectors. Beyond funding, development co-operation provides technical assistance and partnerships to help countries mainstream biodiversity. For example, the United Kingdom and Germany have funded the Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Development Initiative, which builds capacity in eight African countries to integrate biodiversity into national and subnational planning (OECD, 2018). This initiative has developed tools, supported ministries across sectors, and facilitated learning networks to embed biodiversity considerations into development policies. Many DAC providers back global programmes that enable integration – for instance, several provide support to UNDP's BIOFIN, which helps countries design biodiversity finance plans, and to natural capital accounting initiatives that involve ministries of finance. Development co-operation can thus act as a catalyst for policy coherence by aligning development assistance with biodiversity objectives. By working with partner countries to embed NBSAP targets into sector strategies, strengthen inter-ministerial co-ordination, and finance nature-based solutions, OECD DAC members are helping to align development and biodiversity goals on the ground.

## Action 3.2. Enable alignment by the international development co-operation system

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 1.** Plan and manage all areas to reduce biodiversity loss

**Target 2.** Restore 30% of all degraded ecosystems

**Target 3.** Conserve 30% of land, waters and seas

**Target 4.** Halt species extinction, protect genetic diversity, and manage human-wildlife conflicts

**Target 10.** Enhance biodiversity and sustainability in agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, and forestry

**Target 14.** Integrate biodiversity in decision-making at every level

Providers can use their governance and shareholder functions to work with MDBs and UN organisations to enable KMGBF alignment and expand their biodiversity-related activities. Given their financial leverage and influence in partner countries, MDBs play a central role for biodiversity, for example by developing and promoting natural capital accounting standards in-house and in partner countries; structuring biodiversity-sensitive financial instruments, such as sustainability-linked or green bonds, debt-for-nature swaps, or biocredits; and providing regulatory and policy expertise to help governments strengthen biodiversity frameworks. As governing board members, providers have multiple touchpoints where they can advocate for KMGBF-aligned strategies:

- Integrating biodiversity risks into investment and risk management policies, including climate finance and NbS, building on MDB nature “stress tests” and dependency analyses of portfolios, as well as on-going TNFD pilots.
- Increasing biodiversity-related investments and ensuring they are transparent and measurable.
- Developing internal capacity within MDBs to handle biodiversity considerations, including to track finance for nature/biodiversity, and co-ordinate across bi- and multilateral providers.
- Enhancing portfolio- and project-level impact disclosure and reporting on biodiversity-related financial inputs (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021).
- Incorporating biodiversity risks and spending, building upon MDB diagnostics, analyses and technical assistance, including the World Bank Debt Sustainability Analyses, and the International Monetary Fund and World Bank’s Country Climate and Development Reports (CCDRs).
- Introducing sovereign debt with biodiversity-linked interest rates, where financing costs depend on biodiversity performance indicators.
- Embedding biodiversity into debt restructuring efforts, ensuring environmental sustainability in debt relief frameworks (van Tilburg, Bosma, & Simic, 2022).
- Supporting policy and subsidy reform for improved environmental outcomes, including in sustainable agriculture and other key sectors.

Recognising these opportunities, many DAC members have developed specific approaches for their role as provider-shareholders in MDBs (Box 6.2).

### Box 6.2. How DAC members engage with multilateral institutions on biodiversity

Austria's co-operation with international finance institutions is based on six guiding principles, laid out in the *Strategic Guideline of the Ministry of Finance for International Finance Institutions* (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2023). One of the principles is "Ecological sustainability and climate action", which notes that as Austria is committed to protecting the planet, conserving natural resources and biodiversity, and mitigating and adapting to climate change at all levels, these institutions need to align with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. The guideline also notes that promoting biodiversity in these institutions' projects is an important concern for Austria, such as through advancing NbS and making natural capital measurable. For example, recent support has been dedicated to NbS in mountainous regions in Europe and Central Asia through Austria's programmatic co-operation with the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. The new *Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2025-2027* further includes the commitment to increase funding (from all sources, including contributions to the multilateral system) for international biodiversity financing (Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, 2025).

The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Policy Letter to Parliament notes that it expects to increase biodiversity financing through the MDBs and that it will encourage the European Commission to strengthen its external expenditure on biodiversity through the Multiannual Financial Framework (Government of the Netherlands, 2023). It will also make sure that its implementing partners strengthen their biodiversity-related instruments and standards, where necessary. This means, among other things, ensuring the application of the IFC Performance Standards (IFC, 2012) where possible and necessary.

Germany's latest strategy on multilateral development policy commits the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to strengthening multilateral efforts in protecting and provisioning global public goods, including climate, biodiversity, pandemic prevention and peace and security (BMZ, 2023).

Norway stepped up its dialogue with major multilateral development actors that channel Norwegian development finance on their role in the green transition and how they can support the shift to climate-resilient, low-emission development (Norad, 2021). Its development agency, Norad, expects continuous improvement of multilateral organisations' environmental performance; and will request that they play a key role in the development of partner countries in a way that supports rather than undermine the national implementation of the Paris Agreement and other environmental agreements. Finally, Norway will leverage its contact points with multilateral organisations, including through their board positions, grant management, technical co-operation and other Norwegian involvement to ensure greater consideration of biodiversity objectives.

Switzerland calls on the MDBs and environmental funds to enhance systemic co-ordination, including on environmental issues at country level, and to harmonise their policy frameworks and standards (SECO, 2024). For example, methodologies to account for nature/biodiversity finance help assess transformational impacts and align with the Paris Agreement and the KMGBF. Switzerland leverages its membership of the governing bodies of various multilateral funds and MDBs to enhance access to climate and biodiversity finance by developing countries.

The UK's 2023 Green Finance Strategy outlines its work to support MDBs' efforts to integrate climate and nature investment into national development plans, and for the development and implementation of ambitious long-term strategies for low carbon, climate-resilient development (Government of the UK, 2023). This includes the World Bank's Country Climate and Development Reports, a diagnostic tool which integrates climate and development. The UK has been asking MDBs to stretch their balance

sheets and to unlock additional finance (including a significant share for climate and nature); and aims to support them to implement the commitments in the COP26 Joint Statement on Nature, People and the Planet to mainstream nature in their policies, investments and operations (MDBs, 2021) (see Box 6.3).

In the case of MDBs, growing pressure, including from DAC members, is pushing these institutions to increase biodiversity investments (OECD, 2023) and mitigate risks associated with biodiversity loss (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2020). This has led to concrete MDB action plans (Box 6.3) and the integration of biodiversity into project planning. Similar trends are visible in other multilateral organisations, as demonstrated by the joint initiative between the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to enhance co-ordination and develop a shared vision (GEF, 2021); and a broader joint action plan to enhance complementarity and coherence of the GCF, GEF, Adaptation Fund and Climate Investment Funds (Adaptation Fund, 2024). Similarly, within the United Nations system, the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity also seeks to align KMGBF targets and goals with the mandates of 52 UN agencies and organisations, fostering a “culture of nature” across UN institutions (UNCEB, 2021).

### Box 6.3. Multilateral development banks are working to align and harmonise approaches to track nature finance

In 2021, at the UNFCCC COP26, ten MDBs<sup>1</sup> put forward the *Joint MDB Statement on Nature, People and Planet* (MDBs, 2021), committing them to further mainstream nature into their policies, investments and operations. MDBs committed to developing tools and methodologies to track and strengthen reporting on “nature-positive” investments, as well as to enhance public reporting on nature overall. On Nature Day at the UNFCCC COP28 in 2023, MDBs further defined a set of common principles to help identify, track and report nature-positive finance to improve the comparability of MDBs’ respective screening and tracking processes (MDBs, 2023). These common principles help guide the development of MDBs’ frameworks and internal methodologies for tracking nature-positive finance in a systematic manner, while providing support to countries and the private sector in implementing the KMGBF.

MDBs have also established a taskforce to co-ordinate their approaches and identify how to develop capacity within each of these institutions (i.e. African Development Bank Group, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank Group). The initial outcomes and pilot results from these initiatives were presented at CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia, in October 2024, and MDBs are committed to continue working on these issues in the coming years. Joint work has started to co-ordinate and align tracking methodologies with the OECD, shareholders and other international partners, aiming to support aggregated reporting for KMGBF targets and mitigating the risk of divergent approaches and methodologies.

MDBs are also taking steps to strengthen biodiversity safeguards. For instance, the EBRD, EIB, and ADB have reviewed and updated their environmental and social safeguards. Additionally, several MDBs – including the ADB, EBRD, and IDB – have published or are in the process of publishing Nature Strategies (EBRD, 2023) or Action Plans (IDB, 2024). Some MDBs are also enhancing data collection and disclosure (EBRD, 2023) and establishing partnerships to create synergies across actors (EBRD, 2023).

Finally, MDBs are increasingly conducting nature “stress tests” and dependency analyses of their portfolios to assess and mitigate risks associated with biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, ensuring greater environmental resilience and sustainability of their investments. Pilot initiatives under

the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) are also being undertaken to enhance transparency and systematically integrate biodiversity risks and opportunities into financial decision-making processes.

Note: <sup>1</sup> Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank Group, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Invest, Islamic Development Bank, and World Bank Group.  
Source: (MDBs, 2021; MDBs, 2023).

Providers frequently collaborate with a diverse range of implementing partners, including civil society organisations, the private sector and academia. These partnerships offer multiple benefits, such as leveraging the expertise and legitimacy of other actors to drive development-supportive reforms (OECD, 2022). As providers work to align with the KMGBF, they can continue supporting implementing partners in incorporating biodiversity considerations into their activities. Over time, providers could prioritise funding for partners who have a clear plan to implement or align with the KMGBF or are actively developing one. Ideally, these plans would not only outline changes within the partner's own operations, but also consider the broader impact of their engagement with other stakeholders. One example of how implementing partners can be supported on biodiversity-related issues is the European Commission's Green Deal Knowledge Hub, specifically the Greening Facility, which offers training and awareness raising to ensure biodiversity and green transition objectives are embedded across all programmes and instruments (European Commission, n.d.). By strategically leveraging partnerships, providers can accelerate KMGBF alignment, promote biodiversity-friendly investments, and enhance the effectiveness of biodiversity-related development co-operation. When DAC members channel development co-operation through implementing partners, they rely heavily on these institutions' operational tools, such as safeguard policies, screening mechanisms, and mainstreaming approaches. Therefore, ensuring that partners align with the KMGBF is essential to ensuring that the entire development co-operation landscape moves in a unified direction.

### Action 3.3. Foster policy coherence for sustainable development within provider countries

#### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 16.** Enable sustainable consumption choices to reduce waste and overconsumption

**Target 18.** Reduce harmful incentives by at least \$500 billion per year, and scale up positive incentives for biodiversity

To ensure full alignment with the KMGBF, biodiversity needs to be integrated into policy coherence assessments for sustainable development. Policy coherence involves incorporating economic, social, environmental and governance dimensions at every stage of domestic and international policymaking, ensuring that domestic activities do not undermine the KMGBF. Providers can promote policy coherence for sustainable development by identifying, within their respective mandates, relevant interactions between development co-operation and other policy areas that may affect development outcomes and biodiversity. This may include, where relevant and consistent with domestic policy frameworks, interactions with trade, investment and officially supported export finance policies. Recognising this need, the OECD Council adopted a Recommendation on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development in 2019, providing guidance for countries to improve the consistency of their domestic and international policymaking (OECD, 2024). Many governments use interministerial and interdepartmental committees to promote a whole-of-government approach, though achieving full consistency across policy areas remains a challenge.

Providers can promote policy coherence for sustainable development in a variety of ways. These include agriculture and food security, trade and investment promotion, innovation, technology and infrastructure, or taxation and public financial management policymaking (OECD, 2024). One significant mechanism is the provision of officially-supported export credits through Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) to assist developed country exporters competing in overseas markets. ECAs may be government institutions or private entities acting on behalf of governments, and their financing decisions can either support or undermine biodiversity. For instance, ECAs have historically financed fossil fuel industries, one of the drivers of biodiversity loss. To mitigate this risk, some providers are greening their export credit instruments. The Netherlands, for example, is reforming its export credit insurance framework to integrate sustainability considerations (OECD, 2019). Given the impact of ECAs on biodiversity, the OECD approved the Recommendation on Common Approaches for Officially Supported Export Credits and Environmental and Social Due Diligence in 2024 (OECD, 2024). This recommendation promotes the use of stringent international standards and good industry practices among export credit providers, ensuring that export financing contributes to sustainable development rather than harming biodiversity.

### ***Subsidy reform can reduce biodiversity loss***

Another source of incoherent policies is the use by most governments of subsidies that harm biodiversity, including in partner countries. Some providers are seeking to help reform harmful subsidies (see the example of fisheries subsidies in Box 6.4). For example, the UK supports partner countries to repurpose agricultural subsidies to ensure that farming does not harm biodiversity. Sweden works with LDCs on reforming fisheries subsidies and the UNDP's BIOFIN is conducting a global campaign to repurpose harmful subsidies. Development finance can actively support policy reforms, capacity development, and institutional strengthening aimed at identifying, evaluating, and mitigating environmentally detrimental financial flows. Specifically, biodiversity-related development finance can facilitate transition pathways by incentivising sustainable alternatives, fostering dialogue among stakeholders, and enhancing transparency and accountability in subsidy allocation. Moreover, aligning biodiversity finance with national policy processes ensures coherence, driving systemic changes that not only reduce biodiversity loss, but also promote economic practices beneficial to both nature and people.

#### **Box 6.4. Entry points to support fishery subsidy reform**

Over 2020-22, the 41 countries and territories covered by the OECD Fisheries Support Estimate database (OECD, n.d.), which together accounted for 79% of the global production of aquatic animals by volume over the period, provided average annual support of USD 10.7 billion to the fisheries sector (OECD, 2025). In OECD countries, 49% of the support provided over the period was targeted at ensuring productive and sustainable fisheries through spending on management, monitoring, control and surveillance. This was followed by support to infrastructure and to income (both at 16% in 2020-22). On the other hand, support to fuel accounted for 3% of the OECD mix, having fallen by 55% since 2010-12 (from USD 371.9 million to USD 166.9 million). In contrast, in non-OECD countries the policy support mix had a different configuration during the 2020-22 period, with support to income (36%) being the largest form of support provided, followed by support to fuel (21%), and support to management, monitoring, control and surveillance (8%).

### ***Unsustainable production and consumption in developed countries can be tackled***

Another way to promote policy coherence by reducing the drivers of biodiversity loss is to target developed countries' production and consumption patterns (Obura, et al., 2022). The EU Regulation on Deforestation-Free Products, for instance, requires any operator or trader placing certain commodities on the EU market,

or exporting from it, to prove that their products do not originate from recently deforested land or contribute to forest degradation. By enforcing strict traceability and due diligence requirements, this regulation helps ensure that global supply chains align with biodiversity conservation goals, reducing the EU's contribution to deforestation and ecosystem degradation worldwide (European Union, 2023). Commodities include cattle, wood, cocoa, soy, palm oil, coffee, rubber, and some of their derived products, such as leather, chocolate, tyres, or furniture. These regulatory measures are accompanied by development co-operation activities and partnerships to support compliance and to enable certification. The EU is also working to fight illegal fishing and combat fraud in seafood products through its regulations. In another example, Luxembourg's sustainability check (*Nohaltegkeetscheck*) assesses the country's legislative plans with respect to sustainable development, which includes a section on environmental degradation and the sustainable use of natural resources (Gouvernement du Grand Duché de Luxembourg (Nohalteg), 2023).

To conclude this chapter, achieving the transformative ambitions of the KMGBF will depend on the ability of development co-operation providers to move beyond project-level interventions to support systemic, country-led action. This requires aligning development finance and programming with NBSAPs and NBFPs, ensuring they are part of national development strategies and plans, while strengthening institutional coherence across multilateral, bilateral, and private channels. By leveraging their governance roles and financial influence, providers can accelerate biodiversity integration throughout the broader development finance architecture, promoting robust due diligence, consistent safeguards, and nature-aligned investment frameworks. Equally important is fostering inclusive, strategic partnerships with Indigenous peoples, local communities, civil society, and international institutions to amplify impact and ensure equitable outcomes. Finally, policy coherence across trade, investment, subsidies and supply chains could be elevated from a peripheral concern to a central pillar of biodiversity-aligned development. When pursued together, these actions not only align development co-operation with the KMGBF but also help create an enabling environment for integrated, sustainable, and locally-driven biodiversity outcomes.

### ***Responsible business conduct can help private sector action align with the KMGBF***

In the case of private sector actors, providers could encourage the adoption and implementation of the OECD Guidelines for Responsible Business Conduct (OECD, 2023). The guidelines recommend that companies undertake risk-based due diligence to identify their potential and actual impacts on biodiversity loss. More precisely, they state that enterprises should contribute to the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. Enterprises need to avoid land, marine and freshwater degradation, including deforestation. In addition, the guidelines foresee a regenerative approach where enterprises also contribute to sustainable land and forest management, including restoration, afforestation, reforestation, and the reduction of land, marine and freshwater degradation. In essence, these guidelines can serve as a tool to help practitioners and policy makers to avoid unintended environmental and social impacts associated with environmental actions, as well as defining expectations across stakeholders (OECD, 2024).

# **7**

## **Using development finance to optimise biodiversity finance**

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Target 19a of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) calls for biodiversity-related international financial resources from all sources, including official development assistance, to reach at least USD 20 billion per year by 2025 and at least USD 30 billion per year by 2030. Action area 4 identifies the role for development co-operation providers in helping to close the gap. It focuses on two main areas: increasing and prioritising development finance for biodiversity and mobilising other sources of finance for biodiversity in partner countries.

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Goal D of the KMGBF aims at “progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of USD 700 billion per year and aligning financial flows with the KMGBF and the 2050 Vision for biodiversity”. To meet these ambitious financing targets, urgent and co-ordinated action is needed to increase and diversify financial flows for biodiversity. This chapter identifies two critical actions for providers in advancing this goal: (1) use development finance for biodiversity strategically; and (2) mobilising private and domestic finance. These actions are not only essential to close the global biodiversity finance gap, but also to build trust among CBD Parties, support formulation and implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and Biodiversity Finance Plans (NBFPs), and catalyse transformative biodiversity action at the country level.

At the same time, mobilising private finance requires providers to strengthen enabling environments, act as intermediaries between public and private actors, and promote biodiversity-positive investments through tools such as biodiversity finance taxonomies, green bonds, blended finance instruments and demonstration projects. These efforts need to be anchored in partner country strategies, align with the KMGBF’s overarching goals, and be implemented in a way that supports inclusive, people-centred approaches.

### Action 4.1. Use development finance for biodiversity strategically

#### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 19.** Mobilize \$200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including \$30 billion through international finance:

- Target 19a. Increase total biodiversity related international financial resources from developed countries to reach at least USD 20 billion per year by 2025 and at least USD 30 billion per year by 2030
- Target 19b. Significantly increase domestic resource mobilization
- Target 19e. Optimise co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises

Having met the Aichi target 20 on resource mobilisation (OECD, 2023), providers are now focused on achieving target 19a of the KMGBF (CBD, 2022). Bilateral and multilateral providers are still 6.4% off target 19a (OECD, 2026), though a strong jump from 2021 to 2024 (Figure 2.1) closed the gap considerably in one year. If this rate of growth continues, the target would be within reach.

To reach target 19a, providers will need to adopt a strategic and diversified approach: scaling up funding for conservation and restoration, mainstreaming biodiversity into key productive sectors, aligning biodiversity finance with climate goals, and ensuring that funds reach biodiversity-rich and high-risk areas, especially in least developed countries (LDCs). Providers might want to consider the following steps:

- Establish finance-related goals where these do not yet exist. As seen in Chapter 0, some DAC members already have financial targets, while others dedicate a share of climate-related development finance to biodiversity objectives. Members could develop targets using other metrics, e.g. spending relative to other DAC members with comparable GDP levels (zu Ermgassen, Bull, & Groom, UK biodiversity: close gap between reality and rhetoric, 2021), or relative to the DAC average, or based on their ecological footprint, their capacity to pay or population size (ODI, 2024). At a basic level, DAC members could also use the OECD biodiversity marker to set targets (e.g. a target to increase principal or significant marker allocations by a certain amount) (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members’ Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024).

- Direct finance to biodiversity-rich and high-risk areas, e.g. partner countries where biodiversity is abundant, globally valuable for its ecosystem services, and at risk — necessitating urgent conservation or restoration.
- Consider increasing finance for the poorest countries: finance for biodiversity needs to target LDCs and other regions where biodiversity sustains livelihoods, but where financial capacity is low (OECD, 2026). Indeed, LDCs and other low-income countries (LICs) received 32% of biodiversity-specific development finance from DAC members over 2015-24 [below total ODF allocations at 35% (OECD, 2024)], and despite repeated calls for greater ODF allocations to LDCs.
- Strengthen support with biodiversity as the principal objective: only 46% of biodiversity-specific development activities in 2024 had biodiversity as a principal objective – down from 70% in 2015 (OECD, 2026), see Figure 2.3. Investing in conservation-focused development co-operation is essential to address many of the challenges facing biodiversity, from habitat fragmentation and degraded ecosystems to invasive species management, poaching and wildlife trade (WWF, 2024).
- Increase the share of ODF where biodiversity is a significant objective: continue to encourage partner countries to integrate biodiversity considerations into production practices in nature-dependent sectors, i.e. agriculture, agroforestry, forestry or fisheries (as seen in Figure 1.1) and seek policy coherence for sustainable development, as mentioned earlier.
- Maximise co-benefits with climate-related development finance: for example, biodiversity could be integrated into climate-related initiatives, such as afforestation and reforestation projects, so that they generate voluntary carbon credits while enhancing biodiversity. This would be in line with KMGBF target 19e and would support the implementation of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) agreed upon at UNFCCC COP29,<sup>12</sup> and contribute to a net-zero transition (e.g. by providing nature-based solutions that deliver both climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes, while simultaneously enhancing ecosystem resilience and contributing to sustainable development goals).
- Identify complementary sources of domestic and private finance for biodiversity: This would contribute to KMGBF sub-targets 19b and 19c and would have a multiplier effect on the total finance available for biodiversity.<sup>13</sup> Providers could engage bilaterally through their capacity development activities to mobilise domestic finance, or work through multilateral organisations with dedicated expertise in this area. For example, providers could engage in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), which helps develop comprehensive Biodiversity Finance Plans, drawing on over 150 practical instruments, tools and strategies that are already being utilised across the world (UNDP-BIOFIN, n.d.; UNDP-BIOFIN, n.d.). BIOFIN support can strengthen public financial management for biodiversity action (e.g. biodiversity expenditure, and budgetary, finance policy and institutional reviews) (BIOFIN, 2025).
- Support partner countries to reform their fiscal policies and financial regulations. This could play a crucial role in biodiversity outcomes by reforming harmful subsidies, introducing

<sup>12</sup> The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) is the new global climate finance target of USD 300 billion to replace the previous USD 100 billion per year goal set under the UNFCCC. The NCQG aims to reflect increased needs, scale, and priorities of developing countries in addressing climate change in a more comprehensive manner.

<sup>13</sup> Target 19b of the KMGBF calls to “significantly increase domestic resource mobilization, facilitated by the preparation and implementation of national biodiversity finance plans or similar instruments according to national needs, priorities and circumstances”; while Target 19c aims at “leveraging private finance, promoting blended finance, implementing strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encouraging the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments” (CBD, 2022).

economic incentives, and incorporating nature-related risks into financial regulation and due diligence processes. These can help close the global biodiversity funding gap through greater mobilisation of domestic financial resources.

Taking a diversified approach to financing biodiversity is particularly crucial given that international public biodiversity finance alone will not be sufficient to meet future needs, especially considering the estimated global biodiversity finance gap of USD 700 billion annually (CBD, 2022) and the current international context. Meanwhile, there are also large finance gaps for other developmental and humanitarian needs, which underscores the importance of using biodiversity-related development finance within the context of sustainable development in partner countries.

Finally, meeting target 19a does not just concern bilateral providers – it also depends on multilateral development finance. Providers need to co-ordinate their action with that of multilateral organisations, through their bilateral engagement or through joint initiatives. For example, the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures and AFD have established the Development Finance Hub, a platform that facilitates expert exchange on scaling up biodiversity finance. It could be used to support learning, foster the sharing of good practices, and enhance co-ordination for joint initiatives aimed at mobilising additional support for partner countries (Finance for Biodiversity Initiative, 2021). Providers could also create an international coalition of Finance Ministers for Biodiversity or extend the mandate of the current Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action to include biodiversity (van Tilburg, Bosma, & Simic, 2022).

## Action 4.2. Mobilise finance from the private sector for biodiversity

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 19.** Mobilize USD 200 billion per year for biodiversity from all sources, including USD 30 billion through international finance:

- Target 19c. Leverage private finance, promote blended finance, implement strategies for raising new and additional resources, and encourage the private sector to invest in biodiversity, including through impact funds and other instruments

As public finance alone is insufficient to bridge the biodiversity funding gap, providers can take significant further action to scale up the mobilisation of private finance for biodiversity (CBD, 2022). Biodiversity and ecosystem services are the basis of new business opportunities, and all businesses depend on biodiversity and ecosystem services. At the same time, some businesses may act at the expense of nature, for example, by converting tropical rainforest into farmland. To address these challenges, businesses can assess their biodiversity-related risks and dependencies, set science-based targets and adopt practices that are positive for biodiversity across their operations and value chains. By adopting the following strategies, providers can play a pivotal role in unlocking private finance for biodiversity, aligning financial flows with KMGBF objectives, and ensuring long-term sustainable investments (CPI and iCS, 2024; Finance for Biodiversity Foundation and UNEP, 2024):

- Act as a bridge between governments and the private sector, ensuring that private sector actions align with NBSAPs, and facilitating broad partnerships (WWF, 2021). For instance, Germany – with collaboration from KfW, NORAD and AFD – has established the Legacy Landscapes Fund to support long-term conservation efforts through public-private match-funding and supporting lasting partnerships (LLF, 2023).
- Develop and showcase demonstration projects in priority sectors with high nature-related impacts and dependencies. These projects, conducted in partnership with developing countries, MDBs, and other stakeholders, can illustrate how negative environmental impacts

can be mitigated and help analyse upfront investment needs to ensure alignment with the KMGBF.

- Guide public and private actors in assessing biodiversity-related dependencies and risks, helping them adopt frameworks that enable such assessments. For example, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has developed a Biodiversity Finance Reference Guide to support the mobilisation of financial resources in line with KMGBF target 19 (IFC, 2023). This guide serves as a practical tool for policymakers, helping them design biodiversity finance taxonomies and policies, thereby contributing to KMGBF target 14 (mainstreaming biodiversity) and the broader alignment of financial flows. It includes an indicative list of investment projects and activities that support biodiversity conservation, sustainable management of natural resources, and the protection of ecosystem services.
- Promote standards; encourage regulations, policies and market mechanisms; and generally support the development of an enabling policy environment for aligning investment with biodiversity action (e.g. by derisking transactions, providing technical assistance, creating favourable conditions for investments, supporting the design and implementation of projects) and preventing the private sector from financing activities that harm biodiversity in partner countries.
- Leverage additional and innovative private funding sources, including for NbS, by facilitating issuance of green bonds and biodiversity credits; supporting the development of debt-for-nature swaps and blended public-private finance; extending concessional financing and microfinance loans; providing technical assistance; and adapting carbon pricing mechanisms to create clear investment signals for biodiversity finance. Box 7.1 provides examples of how providers of development co-operation are engaging in several of these areas to mobilise private finance for biodiversity through development finance.

### Box 7.1. How development providers are mobilising private finance for biodiversity

Providers are mobilising private finance for biodiversity through several angles and financial instruments. While mobilisation for biodiversity remains limited [i.e. USD 1.8 billion in 2023 according to (OECD, 2024)], there are several promising avenues:

- **Technical assistance:** Germany is supporting the Biodiversity Finance Accelerator Southern Africa in Malawi and Zambia to mobilise biodiversity investments by developing a pipeline of bankable market-based solutions, increasing the understanding of conservation finance and designing financial leveraging instruments for biodiversity (IKI, 2024). The accelerator provides capacity development and empowers biodiversity-friendly micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to access growth finance and amplify biodiversity impacts. In turn, Luxembourg's partnership with the Center for International Forestry Research and the Global Landscapes Forum's Finance for Nature Platform also aims to catalyse and accelerate the mainstreaming of sustainable finance through knowledge sharing and capacity development to scale financing models that contribute to NbS (Global Landscapes Forum, n.d.).
- **Debt-for-nature swaps:** Portugal signed debt-for-nature and climate swaps agreements with Cabo Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe in 2023 (IIED, 2023). In the case of Cabo Verde, Portugal converted EUR 140 million (USD 162 million) of Cabo Verde's sovereign debt into investment in an environmental and climate fund, redirecting scheduled debt repayments, including an initial EUR 12 million (USD 14 million) through 2025, into

nationally managed initiatives supporting energy transition, marine conservation, and water and sanitation projects. Unlike traditional debt-for-nature schemes overseen by external NGOs, this deal empowers Cabo Verde's government systems and local stakeholders to define and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs) covering areas such as renewable energy deployment and ocean-based conservation. By aligning financial relief with domestic development and climate priorities, and using an all-creditor approach to enhance scale and efficiency, this innovative structure has unlocked green and blue bond issuance, fostered regional investment, and provided a replicable model for sustainable finance in highly indebted, vulnerable countries (IIED, 2023).

- **Green bonds:** Spain supports the Amazon Bond initiative which, inter alia, addresses the environmental challenges faced by Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, and with a special focus on Indigenous peoples (AECID, 2023). The bond is led by the Inter-American Development Bank in co-ordination with the World Bank, and is an innovative financing mechanism designed to channel private and public capital to Amazon conservation and sustainable development. Under the Amazonia Bond Investment Guidelines, which are aligned with the International Capital Market Association's green, social, and sustainability bond principles, a standardised "Amazonia Bonds" sub-label was created to finance projects that benefit local communities, protect biodiversity and prevent deforestation. The initiative has already seen early success through the issuance of a private sector bond aimed at fostering a bioeconomy in the Amazon region by supporting clean energy, water and sanitation, and sustainable resource use. Stakeholder engagement, including consultations with Indigenous peoples, and Afro-descendant communities, ensures the bonds are locally relevant and socially inclusive. Through use-of-proceeds structures and sustainability-linked metrics, Amazonia Bonds offer a replicable and credible model, anchored in rigorous impact criteria, to mobilise investment at scale and align financial flows with regional environmental priorities.
- **Blended finance:** these are financial structures in which multiple DAC members and other providers engage. Biodiversity examples include the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund managed by Mirova, and the Eco.Business Fund managed by Finance in Motion. Both funds actively invest in emerging countries, enabling the transfer of technology and protection of biodiversity. Another example is Canada's contribution to Convergence Blended Finance Inc. for the Catalytic Climate Finance Facility, which aims to contribute to developing a pipeline of investable solutions for the private sector in supporting NbS. Finally, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United States collaborate through the Investment Mobilisation Collaboration Agreement to increase the mobilisation of private finance for climate through NbS (World Climate Foundation, n.d.).
- **Equity:** the Moringa Fund is a private equity vehicle to invest in agroforestry companies with a biodiversity focus in Africa and Latin America. Its shareholders include the GEF, Spain, France's Proparco, the African Development Bank, the Dutch entrepreneurial development bank (FMO), and FinnFund. It provides financial and technical expertise to its partners, leveraging both its internal resources and third-party affiliates (CPI and iCS, 2024).
- **Investment vehicles:** the Restoration Seed Capital Facility (RSCF) enables private fund managers and investment advisers to set up dedicated investment vehicles to promote forest landscape restoration. The RSCF is funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment and the Luxembourg Ministry of the Environment, and co-finances support for fund, pipeline and project development through outright and reimbursable grants. This helps to build strong pipelines of investable opportunities and increase the number of investments that reach financial close. The facility provides support on a cost-sharing basis, with six selected partners from 2021 to 2023 mobilising USD 67 million in private capital (CPI and

iCS, 2024).

- **Partnerships:** Switzerland's multi-donor SDG Impact Finance Initiative pools concessional funding from providers and private foundations for impact finance funds and solutions for nature, amongst other areas (SDG Impact Finance Initiative, n.d.).

To conclude this chapter, closing the global biodiversity finance gap and achieving the targets of the KMGBF will require an urgent and strategic transformation in the scale, diversity and delivery of biodiversity-related development finance. Development co-operation providers have a central role to play both in scaling up their own biodiversity-related investments and in catalysing additional finance from private and domestic sources. This entails prioritising finance for high-risk and biodiversity-rich areas, reinforcing conservation efforts, mainstreaming biodiversity across productive sectors, and aligning finance with climate and development goals. At the same time, mobilising private capital would depend on providers' ability to strengthen enabling environments, build technical capacity, and deploy tools that reduce risk and incentivise biodiversity-positive investments. By embedding biodiversity finance into national planning processes and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration, providers can ensure that resources flow effectively, equitably, and in alignment with national priorities. Ultimately, meeting KMGBF target 19 demands not just more money, but smarter, more strategic finance anchored in partnerships, guided by robust metrics, and designed to generate long-term ecological and societal returns.

# 8

## Focusing on learning and evidence

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Supporting research and generating evidence on biodiversity-related issues can help providers raise awareness, monitor progress, improve policy coherence, and inform more effective, cross-sectoral programming. Action area 5 explores how development co-operation providers can strengthen the alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) by enhancing monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems. It focuses on three areas: updating tracking systems to reflect and monitor progress towards KMGBF objectives; enhancing impact, learning and innovation in biodiversity monitoring; and deepening the evidence base on the links between biodiversity, climate and development.

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The Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) underscores the importance of robust monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems to ensure effective implementation, adaptive management and accountability. It calls for science-based, participatory monitoring aligned with a global indicator framework and supported by national reporting and review cycles (CBD, 2022). For development co-operation providers, several targets are especially relevant: Target 14 on reforming incentives and aligning finance with biodiversity goals; Target 15 on mobilising diverse resources; Target 20 on strengthening capacity-building and technical co-operation; Target 21 on promoting shared knowledge systems and methodologies; Target 22 on ensuring rights-based, inclusive approaches; and Target 23 on integrating biodiversity into education and awareness. These targets provide clear entry points for providers to support MEL through investments in national systems, data generation, policy coherence, and participatory evaluation, thereby aligning development finance with the goals of the KMGBF.

Aligning with the KMGBF therefore requires tracking progress, as well as increasing learning, on biodiversity activities and the alignment process. Tracking progress can be done through financial input tracking or, more broadly, through monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks. This chapter identifies three interlinked actions essential to this process: (1) updating tracking systems to reflect KMGBF objectives; (2) enhancing impact, learning and innovation in biodiversity monitoring; and (3) deepening the evidence base on the links between biodiversity, climate, and development. Together, these actions will help providers move beyond simple financial reporting towards more meaningful, outcome-oriented approaches. By modernising tracking tools like the OECD biodiversity Rio marker (Box 2.2 and Annex A), investing in biodiversity-specific impact metrics, and promoting a culture of learning and transparency, providers can generate the insights and accountability necessary to improve biodiversity outcomes and fulfil KMGBF goals.

DAC members and many other countries and institutions track and report on their biodiversity-related development finance to the OECD using the biodiversity Rio marker, against which allocable development finance flows should be screened. However, tracking funding and activities is not enough to monitor progress, or understand biodiversity impacts and the alignment process more generally. While tracking financial inputs helps assess the scale of investments directed towards biodiversity and sustainability goals, MEL frameworks provide a more systematic approach by evaluating the effectiveness, impact and long-term outcomes of biodiversity-related interventions. Implementing robust MEL frameworks enables providers to continuously assess progress, identify challenges and adapt strategies to ensure alignment with the KMGBF. Most DAC members use specific operational tools to systematically integrate environmental considerations into their MEL frameworks (OECD, 2019), but biodiversity action and the KMGBF still need to permeate the methods and systems of most providers of development co-operation. At the same time, strengthening the scientific and evidence base, particularly through partnerships with Indigenous peoples, researchers and local communities, ensures biodiversity action is contextually grounded and informed by diverse knowledge systems.

## Action 5.1. Update tracking systems to reflect the KMGBF

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

All DAC members use the OECD DAC Rio marker on biodiversity to estimate the development finance associated with biodiversity-related projects – and the use of this methodology has improved over time (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024). Tracking biodiversity flows helps providers align with the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) principle of "transparency," which underscores the importance of openly sharing accurate, timely and comprehensive information among all stakeholders involved in development co-operation (GPEDC, n.d.). Transparency facilitates mutual accountability by enabling partners – including governments, providers, civil society, the private sector, and local communities – to clearly understand how resources are allocated, managed and used. By promoting open data, transparent governance processes and regular reporting on development outcomes, this principle strengthens trust, reduces the risk of corruption, and enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of development initiatives. Ultimately, transparency contributes to informed decision making, improved co-ordination and greater collective impact toward achieving development objectives.

The reporting process to the OECD using the biodiversity Rio marker is currently being updated to ensure that reporting standards (i.e. definition, eligibility criteria and accompanying guidance) align with the KMGBF. Members could engage in this process to understand the type of activities that can now be aligned with the KMGBF, for example by sharing views and concrete examples on projects and programmes that are seen to be aligned and discuss those that pose challenges. Members could also exchange on what type of guidance could be most useful for statistical reporters, who may not be biodiversity or KMGBF experts and who change posts frequently (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024). Finally, for members without a dedicated biodiversity programme, engaging in the on-going update of the Rio marker on biodiversity could help them identify activities in their environment or climate change portfolios that support or have an impact on biodiversity. These steps will help with transparency, accountability and building trust among CBD Parties and other countries working on biodiversity.

In addition, the application of the biodiversity Rio marker and reporting to the OECD DAC CRS can still improve. More training and internal guidance materials could be produced to support expert and non-expert policy officers (across the whole system, both in headquarters and in the field), as well as statistical reporters, to better identify what an aligned activity looks like, and on the use the marker, thus providing clarity and consistency in using the marker. Additional internal review and quality assurance tools (notably by exploring the use of artificial intelligence and machine learning) could support these steps and alleviate the burden of reporting on biodiversity, improve data quality and provide solutions when capacity is limited.

## Action 5.2. Enhance impact, learning and innovation in biodiversity monitoring

### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

While tracking biodiversity-related development finance is a necessary step towards greater transparency and accountability, it is insufficient on its own to assess whether development co-operation is contributing to the goals of the KMGBF effectively. The KMGBF places a strong emphasis on implementation and results, which requires moving beyond input-level tracking toward robust MEL systems that assess actual biodiversity outcomes and inform adaptive decision making. MEL frameworks can play a critical role in

identifying what works, under what conditions, and for whom, thus generating the evidence base needed to scale effective approaches, avoid repeating mistakes, and promote mutual learning among partner countries, providers, and other stakeholders and implementing partners.

To achieve this requires investing in biodiversity-related data collection, sharing and analysis. This includes developing monitoring infrastructure, data platforms and reporting mechanisms to accurately assess biodiversity trends when biodiversity is the direct or indirect object of a project, and to assess the impact on biodiversity of other provider activities. Strengthening data availability and accessibility is crucial for evidence-based decision making, and for improving MEL systems (discussed below). However, a major challenge in biodiversity tracking is the overwhelming number of available metrics that can only help assess progress on the KMGBF at high cost. The CBD has agreed a monitoring framework for the KMGBF (CBD, 2024), and the Nature Positive Initiative is developing a set of metrics that can help monitor progress on the KMGBF, which would be the reference for providers. The WWF estimates that over 600 biodiversity measurement tools exist to measure these indicators. This plethora of tools makes it difficult for providers to decide which to use, often leading to inaction, especially when biodiversity is not the primary or secondary objective of a project. Additionally, there are significant data gaps for measuring progress towards SDGs targets, particularly for environment-related SDGs (UN Environment Programme, 2021). This creates a trade-off between rigorous measurement to demonstrate biodiversity outcomes and the investment required in time, resources and capacity.

A common, robust, cross-operational standard set of tools and metrics aligned with the KMGBF would greatly enhance coherence and reduce fragmentation across sectors. Such a standard would align directly with the KMGBF and its monitoring framework using a tiered system of indicators, ranging from core, universally applicable metrics to more advanced and context-specific ones. This would ensure both comparability and flexibility. It would establish common methodologies, data units, and spatial-temporal baselines, while also promoting integration with climate and nature-based solutions metrics. In line with the KMGBF's monitoring framework [CBD Decision 15/5; (CBD, 2024)], a suite of complementary indicators would need to be used to reflect the state, pressures, benefits, and responses associated with biodiversity. These could include spatial indicators (e.g. habitat loss or protection), species-level metrics (e.g. extinction risk or population trends), and socio-economic indicators (e.g. ecosystem service benefits to communities). Where appropriate, these diverse metrics can be aggregated into composite indices to inform higher-level planning and communication, without obscuring local complexity.

### ***Providing reliable and accessible data is a key challenge***

To be effective, these indicators require reliable and accessible data. Development co-operation providers can support this by investing in national biodiversity monitoring systems, strengthening statistical and institutional capacities, supporting data ecosystems for biodiversity monitoring, and promoting the use of open-access tools and platforms. An example is Australia's support for Pacific Small Island Developing States through the Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific, which helps monitor, analyse and communicate climate and ocean data (Bureau of Meteorology, n.d.). Indicators could also be embedded in project design and evaluation frameworks from the outset, not as an afterthought, so that biodiversity considerations are genuinely mainstreamed across portfolios, rather than treated as standalone or compliance-driven.

There are other challenges to improving MEL systems. Understanding causal relationships in biodiversity loss is complex, and reliable baseline data is often lacking in partner countries, making it difficult to design effective interventions. Additionally, setting realistic biodiversity baselines and targets is complicated by uncertain operating environments in partner countries and limited knowledge on biodiversity dependencies and impacts. Moreover, positive biodiversity outcomes may be evident at the project level but become diluted or invisible at the country level (Morrison-Métiois & Lundgren, 2016), especially when governance and institutional capacity are weak (Moreira-Dantas & Söder, 2022). And as many biodiversity-related

activities require long-term timeframes (between 5 to 20 years) to show measurable results (Richerzhagen, Rodríguez, & Stepping, 2016), these lengthy horizons often reduce incentives for learning from evaluations, particularly for short-term projects (Drutshinin, Casado Asensio, Corfee-Morlot, & Roe, 2015). Consequently, learning and accountability gaps hinder the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation, limiting opportunities for providers to improve and learn from ongoing and future biodiversity-related interventions. Further, traditional biodiversity monitoring relies heavily on manual surveys, which often fail to capture the scale of biodiversity loss.

Advances in technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), satellite imaging, environmental DNA (eDNA), bioacoustics and robotics, are all revolutionising biodiversity assessments, making them more efficient, scalable and cost-effective. AI enhances species identification, processes large data volumes rapidly, and improves the spatial and temporal coverage of biodiversity monitoring. These innovations can reduce operational costs by approximately 40% in the long term, making biodiversity assessments more economically viable. AI is also helping monitor elusive species, such as insects, which play a critical role in ecosystems but have historically been difficult to track (MacWilliams, Kim, & Trueman, 2024). Additionally, real-time monitoring technologies such as the tool used by Global Fishing Watch to track global fishing activities demonstrate how technology and transparency can improve sustainable governance (OECD, 2025).

### ***Knowledge sharing amongst providers can be helpful***

Some providers have already integrated biodiversity indicators into development monitoring. Australia's International Development Performance and Delivery Framework requires reporting on a Climate Adaptation, Mitigation, Environment, and Biodiversity indicator (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2023). Other providers, such as the Netherlands and Norway, are considering similar approaches.

Learning from successful biodiversity interventions can scale up good practices and enhance impact. For instance, Norad conducts sector-specific studies and portfolio reviews to identify projects that contribute to environmental goals effectively and ensures that findings are integrated into future partnerships (Norad, 2021). Another example is Austria's decade-long support for Moldova's Lower Dniester wetland, where a long-term commitment, local partnerships, and an integrated approach to biodiversity, water, and climate change adaptation led to the establishment of a national park in 2022 (OECD, 2023).

Providers could enhance their learning further by sharing knowledge and experiences through existing platforms and broad partnerships. For example, the NbS Evidence Platform systematically reviews the effectiveness of different nature-based interventions for climate adaptation, providing an interactive map of proven solutions (Nature-based Solutions Initiative, n.d.). Such platforms allow providers to compare the social, economic and ecological impacts of different NbS approaches, helping them prioritise interventions based on evidence. In another example, providers behind the Ambatovy mine in Madagascar (i.e. European Investment Bank, Export Development Canada, and the African Development Bank) have been able to develop credible strategies that lead to overall improvements in biodiversity and achieve no net loss (Devenish, Desbureaux, Willcock, & Jones, 2022).

### Action 5.3. Deepen the evidence base on the links between development, climate and biodiversity through a collaborative approach

#### Key KMGBF targets linked to this action area

**Target 8.** Minimize the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and build resilience

**Target 20.** Strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, and scientific and technical cooperation for biodiversity

**Target 21.** Ensure that knowledge is available and accessible to guide biodiversity action

**Target 22.** Ensure participation in decision-making and access to justice and information related to biodiversity for all

Adopting a whole-of-society approach, as promoted by the KMGBF and echoed in the Paris Agreement, reinforces the need to engage multiple actors and knowledge systems in decision-making processes that address the intertwined challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, and development. This approach values the diversity of scientific knowledge (including both natural and social sciences) and supports integrated, policy-relevant research. Collaborative spaces such as technical dialogues, open-ended global review forums, and regional knowledge platforms provide opportunities for development providers to track progress, share lessons across sectors, and address entrenched barriers to integration, such as outdated sectoral policies or climate-blind economic models (Kok, et al., 2024). A genuinely integrated approach involves diverse stakeholders (including scientists, businesses, NGOs, Indigenous peoples and local communities) ensuring scientific insight is balanced with local knowledge and socioeconomic realities. Collaborative research and dialogue can help define ambition levels that respect ecological thresholds and climate limits, while scaling practices that generate co-benefits across multiple dimensions of sustainability. In particular, Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems offer critical insights not only for biodiversity management, but also for climate adaptation, and would need to be captured and applied in development programming.

Development providers can also invest in strengthening the biodiversity–climate–development knowledge landscape to ensure that their strategies are evidence-based and responsive to SDG interlinkages. Current gaps include a limited understanding of how biodiversity and ecosystem services interact with climate adaptation, poverty reduction, and economic development. Programmes like France’s AFD-led Ecopronat (2020-2024) exemplify how development finance can foster a pro-nature, climate-smart economy by integrating biodiversity into sectors such as agriculture, sustainable cities and urban planning, all of which are central to climate resilience and inclusive development (AFD, n.d.). Similarly, initiatives like the Commonwealth Blue Charter facilitate co-operation across 53 nations to assess the economic value of marine ecosystems while addressing climate vulnerability and promoting sustainable ocean-based industries (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2021). In this context, support to small-island developing states (SIDS), such as through UK-backed ocean mapping and marine research, strengthens their ability to manage coastal ecosystems that are critical to both biodiversity and climate resilience. These knowledge initiatives help countries design policies that simultaneously meet environmental, climate and development priorities (OECD, 2025).

Development co-operation plays a vital role in advancing the scientific and technological capacities that underpin integrated biodiversity and climate action, particularly in lower-income countries. For example, marine ecosystem mapping efforts in Cabo Verde, Gabon and Seychelles have improved knowledge of biodiversity hotspots while also supporting climate adaptation by identifying blue carbon ecosystems and informing maritime governance. Technology transfers, such as real-time vessel tracking, satellite monitoring, or ocean surveillance, enhance countries’ capacity to manage climate-biodiversity risks and promote sustainable blue economies (OECD, 2025). Initiatives like the Resilient Pacific Blue Economy

project (U.S. State Department) support countries such as Palau in managing marine resources, designating protected areas, and integrating climate vulnerability assessments into ocean governance. These efforts enable the integration of biodiversity and climate considerations into development policy (OECD, 2025). Furthermore, programmes like the Biodiversity and Development Prize and AFD Campus have trained practitioners in Southern Africa to apply systems thinking and nature-based solutions, highlighting how innovation, local knowledge, and capacity-building intersect to drive more coherent and effective development outcomes (AFD, 2021).

To truly deliver on the KMGBF's vision for transformative change, development co-operation providers need to shift from focusing primarily on financial inputs to tracking real-world outcomes that span biodiversity, climate and development goals. Tools like the OECD Rio markers remain important for tracking biodiversity and climate finance, but need to be complemented by modern MEL systems that assess results across interdependent dimensions. This requires strengthening national data systems, harmonising biodiversity and climate indicators, and building a shared evidence base that reflects the complexity of socio-ecological systems. Investments in digital technologies, open-access data platforms, and cross-sectoral metrics can improve the precision and transparency of monitoring efforts. Equally important is fostering a culture of learning, one that values Indigenous knowledge, supports local research institutions, and embraces adaptive management. By strengthening the scientific and participatory foundations of their biodiversity and climate strategies, providers can make informed, context-sensitive decisions that support integrated implementation of the KMGBF, the Paris Agreement, and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Continuous evaluation, inclusive knowledge-sharing, and real-time feedback loops are essential to ensuring that nature, climate, and development goals are pursued together, not in silos.

## Annex A. Data coverage and sources

### Official development assistance, other official flows and official development finance

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Secretariat collects individual aid activities on official development assistance (ODA) and other official flows (OOF) in the *Creditor Reporting System* (CRS). ODA is defined as flows to countries on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and core contributions to multilateral development institutions provided by official or executive agencies on the list of ODA-eligible international organisations (OECD, 2021). ODA must have the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective and be concessional in character – either flowing as grants or concessional loans (i.e. softer than market terms). In turn, OOF comprise transactions from governments to developing countries that do not qualify as ODA, e.g. non-concessional sovereign loans (OECD, 2021). This definition of OOF excludes official direct export credits. Together, the sum of bilateral ODA flows, bilateral OOF (except OOF grants and loans for commercial purposes), and all finance (grants and loans) by multilateral development institutions, define official development finance (ODF). As such, ODF is a broader measure of developing countries' official receipts for development purposes (OECD, 2021).

Countries and institutions reporting to the OECD on their ODF flows include biodiversity-related information through the biodiversity Rio marker, as well as through two Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) tags (for marine and terrestrial biodiversity), and two biodiversity-related purpose codes (see below). In other cases, biodiversity-related information needs to be searched manually in the CRS (e.g. through data mining).

### Data sources: The biodiversity Rio marker, SDGs 14 and 15, purpose codes, channels, project tiles and descriptions, and keywords

#### *The Rio marker on biodiversity*

To date, the Rio markers represent the most comprehensive, publicly available activity-level data on biodiversity-related development finance from bilateral providers. Since 1998, the DAC monitors development finance targeting the objectives of the Rio Conventions, including the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), through four “Rio markers” [biodiversity, desertification, climate change mitigation and adaptation (the latter introduced in 2009); for more information on the markers, see OECD (Questions & Answers: Rio Marker Climate and Environment-Related Development Finance Statistics, 2016)]. The Rio markers were designed to track the degree to which members integrate environmental considerations into their development co-operation activities, and to support members in preparing their national reports to the Conventions. Reporting on the Rio markers is mandatory for ODA from DAC members (but not for OOF or for multilateral and bilateral providers beyond the DAC members reporting to the OECD). Coverage of OOF with the Rio markers for bilateral providers is limited (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members' Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024).

For DAC members and countries and institutions voluntarily using the Rio markers, biodiversity-related activities ought to be screened and marked as either (i) targeting the objectives of the CBD, with a “principal

objective” or a “significant objective”; or (ii) not targeting the objective (the activity has no relation with the marker). Activities marked as “principal” would not have been funded but for that objective; activities marked as “significant” have other primary objectives but have been formulated or adjusted to help meet biodiversity concerns.

The activities identified with the marker should promote at least one of the three objectives of the CBD, namely: 1) the conservation of biodiversity; 2) the sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources); and 3) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources. The Rio marker methodology includes biodiversity-related finance from all sectors, not just the environmental sector. As such, an activity can be marked with the biodiversity Rio marker if it contributes to any of the following:

- a) the conservation of biodiversity;
- b) sustainable use of its components (ecosystems, species or genetic resources);
- c) fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the utilisation of genetic resources (OECD, 2025).

As mentioned above, an activity scores “principal” if it directly and explicitly aims to achieve one or more of the above three criteria. Alternatively, the marker identifies projects that can have “significant” co-benefits for biodiversity but for which biodiversity is not the primary focus (e.g. a project focused on enhancing agricultural production, while training smallholder farmers to combine native vegetation with crops for higher outputs and biodiversity protection). For a project to be identified as “significant” it must also comply with the eligibility criteria for the biodiversity marker, even if it is not the project’s primary focus.

The Rio markers were designed to track the degree to which members are mainstreaming environmental considerations into their development co-operation activities, and thus apply to the entirety of an activity reported – not to the allocation of finance associated with the biodiversity-specific component of that activity. Alternatively, in reporting against quantified international finance goals [such as target 19 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)], many DAC members report only a proportion of their ODF targeting biodiversity as a “significant” objective, estimating this through the use of coefficients to adjust the share of finance reported (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members’ Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024). A coefficient is applied because the Rio marker data applies to the entire activity reported by the provider, not the finance associated with the biodiversity-specific component of that activity. There is no agreed definition or common approach for this practice, but the most common coefficient applied is 40% to countries’ “significant” flows (Casado-Asensio, Blaquier, & Gualberti, Stock Take Report on Members’ Reporting Practices on Biodiversity-related Development Finance and Reporting against International Obligations, 2024), along with the full account (100% coefficient) of “principal” flows.

### ***Reporting on biodiversity-related SDGs: 14 and 15***

A specific field for reporting on the SDGs exists in the CRS [for more information see (OECD, 2020)]. This includes data on SDG 14 “Life below water” and SDG 15 “Life on land”, including their targets. SDG 14 aims to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources” by, for example, reducing marine pollution, sustainably managing and protecting marine and coastal ecosystems, and ending overfishing. SDG 15 aims to “sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss” by, for example, reducing the degradation of natural habitats, preventing the loss of biodiversity, supporting efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, and scaling up financial resources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems. Reporting on the SDG focus in the CRS is recent (introduced in 2018), experimental and voluntary (and can be done at the goal or target level) (OECD, 2021); the heterogeneity in reporting quality of this field implies that data extracted from this field may be inconsistent across providers.

Moreover, reporting on SDG focus areas often includes SDGs 14 and 15 along with many other SDGs, thus limiting the precision of estimates derived from this field. Notwithstanding, SDG data can help fill missing data gaps and provide additional information (e.g. to identify non-biodiversity-marked projects and for non-DAC countries and institutions that do not use the marker). Fields with either SDG 14 or 15 need to be verified manually, and to compare with Rio marker data, are considered as “significant-like”.

### ***Purpose codes and sector classifications***

In the CRS, data on the sector of finance destination are recorded using purpose codes (OECD, 2019), reflecting the specific area of the recipient’s economic or social structure that the transfer is intended to foster. Some contributions are not susceptible to allocation by sector and are reported as non-sector allocable aid. For this analysis, some purpose codes need to be reclassified into sector areas, seeking to depict activities captured through purpose codes within sector areas that are related by descriptions or functions. For more details on the classification of sectors, see Annex B in (OECD, 2024).

In the case of biodiversity, the CRS has two purpose codes that target biodiversity under 410 (general environmental protection), namely 41020 (biosphere protection, which includes air pollution control, ozone layer preservation, marine pollution control) and 41030 (biodiversity, includes natural reserves and actions in the surrounding areas, other measures to protect endangered or protected species and their habitats, e.g. wetland preservation).

In the case of identifying nature-dependent activities (i.e. agriculture, energy, forestry, fishing, water supply and sanitation, biosphere protection and biodiversity) within the CRS, the analysis uses the sectoral classification as found in (OECD, 2024).

### ***Other remarks on the data sources and coverage***

The analysis looks at available data on bilateral DAC members, and other bilateral providers including South-South and triangular co-operation providers, non-DAC providers, multilateral institutions, private finance mobilised through development finance and private philanthropies that report to the OECD (OECD, 2024) and to the International Forum on TOSSD (TOSSD, 2024).

For additional information and caveats regarding the analysis, see (OECD, 2024).

## **Private finance mobilised by DAC countries’ official development finance interventions**

In OECD-DAC statistics, mobilisation reflects the principles of causality between private finance made available for a specific project and an official intervention (OECD, 2021). Data on the amounts of finance mobilised by DAC countries’ ODF interventions are collected through regular CRS data collection for syndicated loans, guarantees, shares in collective investment vehicles, direct investment in companies, credit lines, project finance and simple co-financing arrangements (OECD, 2024). The methodologies for reporting on amounts mobilised are instrument-specific (OECD, 2021), and include a pro-rated attribution to avoid double counting in cases where more than one official provider is involved in a project mobilising private finance. The amounts mobilised from the private sector cover all private finance mobilised by ODF interventions regardless of the origin of the private funds (provider country, recipient country, third country). Private finance mobilised for biodiversity is identified when the DAC member reporting used the biodiversity marker, biodiversity-related purpose codes and selected keywords found in project descriptions and specific channels (e.g. Biodiversity International, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy).

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